

ROMNEY MARSHES AREA INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

A meeting of the Board was held at Brenzett Village Hall, on Wednesday 31st January 2018 at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT.

Elected Members:

D Cole Esq., L Cooke Esq., Mrs H Langrish, E Lovejoy Esq., C Ramus Esq., D Thompson Esq., D Wheeler Esq., A Wellsted Esq., S Wright Esq. and M Wrout Esq.,

Appointed Members:

Cllr R Bird, Cllr C Goddard, Cllr C Hill, R Langrish Esq., Cllr E Last, D Lovejoy Esq., R Nickerson Esq., Cllr P Osbourne, R Patten Esq., Cllr Mrs C Solly and Cllr D Wimble

Guests:

Cllr Mrs A Hicks (deputising for Cllr M Burgess), Ms C Beaumont (Rother District Council) and S Biggs Esq. (Rother District Council).

Staff:

N. Botting Esq., Clerk/Engineer to the Board, Mrs D Chalcraft, Financial Officer and R Monje Esq., Assistant Clerk/Engineer to the Board.

607. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

The Chairman welcomed the members and guests to the meeting; he then asked for members to stand for a minute's silence in respect of Board member Charles Jenkinson, who had recently passed away.

Apologies for absence were received from:

Elected Members;

A Clifton-Holt Esq., E Langrish Esq. and J Langrish Esq.,

Appointed Members;

Cllr M Burgess, Cllr P Coe, Cllr A Cragg, Cllr J Johnson, Cllr N Waters, Cllr Mrs S Prochak and Cllr R Wilkins.

608. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY 15TH NOVEMBER 2017.

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th November 2017, having previously been circulated to members prior to the meeting, were taken as read. The minutes were accepted as a correct record of the previous meeting and signed by the Chairman.

609. MATTERS ARISING.

The Clerk explained that the subject of gravel extraction and gravel pit expansion as mentioned in Minute 600 would be covered in Any Other Business.

610. ENGINEER'S REPORT.

The Engineer briefly covered the previously-distributed report and stated that recent rainfall had begun to recharge the area. D Thompson Esq. remarked that any rainfall prompted land drains to run but only for short periods, as soil absorbed the water. The Engineer agreed that the situation was delicately balanced and water levels were being carefully monitored.

611. CONSENTS.

The Engineer gave a description of two consents issued since the last meeting; 17/RM/270 for a surface water outfall at Cockreed Land, New Romney, and 17/WM/272 for an access culvert on the Clubbs Lane Petty Sewer at Brookland.

612. ADOPTION OF NEW BYELAWS.

The Clerk explained the need to update the Board's byelaws for its adopted watercourses as legislation had changed. He read through the changes which had been highlighted in the documentation previously supplied; after due deliberation, it was **PROPOSED** by Cllr P Osbourne, **SECONDED** by Cllr Mrs C Solly and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that the Clerk begin the process of advertising the Byelaws in preparation for their approval by the Minister.

613. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE.

The Vice-Chairman summarised the agreed minutes from the F and GP Committee. He informed the members that the weedcutting contracts had been awarded with no change to contractors although costs, as expected, had increased. The Vice-Chairman referred to the IDB/EA liaison meeting held in December; he stated that he believed the recommencement of the meetings provided a useful conduit for both parties and allowed for a better understanding of each authorities' working timetables and practices.

614. ACCOUNTS VOUCHERS.

A list of accounts paid since the last meeting had been circulated to members prior to this meeting. The list was approved.

615. BOARD INVESTMENTS.

The Financial Officer updated the Main Board on details of the maturity of the two Fixed Term Deposit accounts and the subsequent reinvestment into two Fixed Term Deposits with Nationwide.

616. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

The Financial Officer presented the Income and Expenditure statement to date; there were no issues raised.

617. RATES TO BE WRITTEN OFF.

Details of rates to be written off, which had previously been circulated, were discussed by the Financial Officer. It was **PROPOSED** by D Thompson Esq, **SECONDED** by S Wright Esq and voted unanimously that rates amounting to £75.40 be written off.

618. INVESTMENT STRATEGY.

The Financial Officer presented the Investment Strategy to the Main Board, which had been updated since it was last introduced in 2011. No questions were raised and it was **PROPOSED** by R Langrish Esq, **SECONDED** by R Patten Esq and voted unanimously that the Investment Strategy was adopted by the Board with immediate effect.

619. INTERNAL CONTROL REVIEW.

The annual review of the organisation's internal controls was presented to the Main Board by the Financial Officer and she advised that there was no change to current practices on the paper that had been circulated. It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr E Last, **SECONDED** by M Wrouth Esq and agreed unanimously that the document be signed.

620. INTERIM AUDIT.

The Financial Officer discussed the findings of the Interim Audit, which had been previously circulated, which looked at the first six months of the financial year. No questions were raised and the Financial Officer advised that the Internal Auditor would return in May/June to complete the Internal Audit for the 2017/18 financial year.

621. FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2018-2019.

The papers detailing the revised estimates for 2017-18 and the proposed annual estimates for 2018-19 had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. The Clerk read through the statement and explained that the F&GP Committee had recommended a 2% increase in the penny rate for the following financial year. After debate, which recognised potential future financial pressure on the Board's resources, it was **PROPOSED** by Cllr E Last, **SECONDED** by L Cooke Esq. and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**:

- (i) that the financial estimates for the year ending 31st March 2019 be approved and adopted;
- (ii) (a) the Special Levy on Ashford Borough Council shall be £10,805
(b) the Special Levy on Rother District Council shall be £123,437
(c) the Special Levy on Shepway District Council shall be £452,253
- (iii) the Board do hereby make a drainage rate of 5.33p in the pound in respect of Agricultural Land and Buildings for the year commencing 1st April 2018;
- (iv) the purposes for which the said Special Levies and Drainage Rate are made and the amount in the £ for each of those purposes are as hereunder set out: -

	p	p
Expenses of Administration	1.326	
Works of Maintenance	1.737	
New and Improvement Works	-	
Environment Agency Precept	<u>2.394</u>	5.457
<u>Less:</u>		
Government Grants	-	
Environment Agency Contribution	0.235	
Other Income	<u>0.013</u>	<u>0.248</u>
		5.209
<u>Add for Adjustment to Balance</u>		<u>0.121</u>
		<u>5.330</u>

622. COMPLAINTS.

The model complaints procedure adopted by a number of Boards nationally was discussed briefly; the Clerk explained that it gave a clear set of steps for the public and other parties to follow should they have a legitimate complaint and that it formalised the Board's policy. It was thereby **PROPOSED** by Mrs H Langrish, **SECONDED** by S Wright Esq. and unanimously agreed that the Board adopt the complaints procedure.

623. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

It was resolved that the date of the next meeting of the Board would be held at 2pm on Wednesday 27th June at Brenzett Village Hall.

624. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

Cllr E Last made a statement on behalf of Lydd Town Council regarding the ongoing consultation by Kent County Council on the proposed expansion of the Lydd Gravel Pits. Cllr Last explained that the Council had concerns over the location of the new pits and the potential effect they might have on the environment, salinity of groundwater and water level management. He questioned why the aggregate used for sea defences could not be dredged from Dungeness Beach where it accretes from long-shore drift. The Engineer replied that the staff had held meetings with both the EA and Natural England regarding the current situation and the expansion of the pits; he explained that all organisations understood the possible impacts that future excavations may have and would be responding to the Consultation. He continued that the Board's interests

lay with its maintained watercourses and access to them, and the possible effect that dewatering had on maintaining sufficient water levels in its watercourses; he also added that as from January 1st 2018, the dewatering process was now a licensable activity which the EA would administer.

Cllr E Last stated that he had received an enquiry from a resident of Brenzett, who was very concerned over the drainage strategy of a local development which they believed might increase flood risk. The Engineer replied that he was aware of the situation and had asked the developer's engineer to consult Kent County Council, as Statutory Consultee, to assess the drainage strategy for suitability. He added that the development had received planning permission and one of the conditions set by the Planning Authority included the need for 78 metres of Ordinary Watercourse near the site to be adopted by the Board for future maintenance. This was subject to satisfactory silt and vegetation clearance by the developer, as the intention was to discharge treated foul and surface water from the site at an attenuated rate. This, he continued, would be a benefit to the immediate area and would be put formally to the Board at the next meeting in June; he acknowledged that local opposition to the development was strong for various reasons.

There being no other business the meeting ended at 1520hrs.