

ROMNEY MARSHES AREA INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

A meeting of the Board was held online, on Wednesday 25th November 2020 at 2.00 pm.

PRESENT.

Elected Members:

A Clifton-Holt Esq., D Cole Esq., F Cooke Esq., L Cooke Esq., Mrs H Langrish, J Langrish Esq. E Lovejoy Esq., C Ramus Esq. and S Wright Esq.

Appointed Members:

Cllr G Allison, Cllr M Burgess, Cllr P Coe, Cllr K Gandy, Cllr ARJ Hills, Cllr C Hoggart, D Lovejoy Esq., Cllr A Mier, R Nickerson Esq., Cllr Rev H Norton, Cllr P Osbourne, Cllr S Prochak, Cllr C Solly and Cllr D Wimble.

Staff:

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

718. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Clerk, acting as Chairman, welcomed the members to the meeting and gave apologies from those who were unable to attend.

Apologies were received from:

Elected Members;

S Body Esq., P Boulden Esq., D Furnival Esq., D Thompson Esq., A Wellsted Esq. and M Wrout Esq.

Appointed Members;

Cllr A Cragg, Cllr C Goddard.

719. ELECTION 2020 - RETURNING OFFICER'S REPORT

The Clerk, acting as Returning Officer, explained that no poll had been necessary and the retiring members were therefore re-elected. He added that S Body Esq. had been nominated to be a member having been previously co-opted.

720. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

It was PROPOSED by L Cooke Esq., SECONDED by S Wright Esq., and agreed UNANIMOUSLY that D Lovejoy Esq. be appointed as Chairman to the Board for the following year.

721. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was PROPOSED by D Lovejoy Esq., SECONDED by S Wright and agreed UNANIMOUSLY that L Cooke Esq. be appointed as Vice-Chairman to the Board for the following year.

722. APPOINTMENT OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The Clerk explained that the Board would need to appoint a Finance and General Purposes Committee for the next three years and stated that two vacancies existed for Council-appointed members; one for the Rother district and the other for Romney. After brief discussion it was PROPOSED by D Lovejoy Esq., SECONDED by Cllr P Coe and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that Cllr Dennis Wimble be appointed as a Romney representative. It was then PROPOSED by L Cooke Esq., SECONDED by D Lovejoy and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that Cllr Paul Osborne be appointed as a Rother representative. The Clerk then asked the

Board to consider the remaining positions on the Committee, after a short discussion it was PROPOSED by D Lovejoy Esq., SECONDED by S Wright Esq. and RESOLVED that the Finance and General Purposes Committee be comprised of Mr L Cooke (Committee Chairman), Messrs A Clifton, P Coe, F Cooke, D Furnival, Mrs H Langrish, Messrs, D Lovejoy (Ex-Officio), R Nickerson, P Osborne, Mrs C Solly, Messrs D Thompson and D Wimble.

723. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY 22nd JULY 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd July 2020, 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 would be signed by the Chairman after the meeting.

724. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

725. ENGINEER'S REPORT

The Clerk/Engineer read through the report and asked for any contributions from members. Cllr ARJ Hills expressed concern over the EA's recently adopted weedcutting standards which he believed would compromise the flow of water in Main River and thus impede IDB watercourses from discharging adequately. The Clerk/Engineer agreed that there may be a knock-on effect and both he and the Vice-Chairman had made representations to the EA on behalf of the Board but to little avail. Cllr Hills stated he would bring the matter up with EA at the next opportunity. Cllr Hills advised members that Natural England were objecting to the Lydd Ranges Sea Defence Scheme, planning permission for which was sitting with the relevant planning authorities; he stated he would update the Board when further information was available.

726. CONSENTS ISSUED

The Clerk read through the list of consents issued in recent months, there were no issues raised.

727. APPROVED MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The Clerk gave an overview of the approved minutes from the F&GP Committee; there were no issues raised.

728. PURCHASE OF REPLACEMENT WORKS VEHICLE

The Clerk/Engineer stated that the Board's Land Rover had been replaced as the older vehicle was experiencing reliability issues and the servicing garage had advised that replacement of the vehicle would likely be the best way forward. He explained that a report had been presented to the F&GP Committee giving options regarding costs and potential available vehicles, and after debate the Committee had agreed to replace the vehicle with a newer Land Rover which would suit the Board's requirements. After further discussion, the Board instructed the Clerk to dispose of the older vehicle at auction as soon as possible.

729. ACCOUNTS VOUCHERS

A list of accounts paid since the last meeting had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. The Financial Officer explained that the Finance and General Purposes Committee had scrutinised the accounts paid and asked if members had any questions. Cllr Mrs S Prochak asked if the Covid-19 pandemic had added any significant costs to the Board's expenditure. The Financial Officer replied that existing budgets had covered expenses to date. Cllr D Wimble asked why Lodgeland Pumping Station had electricity costs higher than other pumps if it had not run; the Clerk replied that as well as a standing charge the pump control panel required a heater as it was in an external cabinet with no pump house being on site. There were no further questions.

730. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

The Financial Officer gave a breakdown of the figures in the Income and Expenditure Report for July to October 2020. No questions were raised.

731. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next Main Board meeting would be held at 2 pm on 27th January 2021, venue to be confirmed.

732. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

D Lovejoy Esq. offered his congratulations to Cllr Mrs S Prochak who had recently been awarded an M.B.E.

The Financial Officer reported that the Notice of Conclusion of the Audit had been received at the office after all paperwork for the meeting had been distributed. The External Auditor had commented that the figures in Boxes 1 to 7 should be stated net of VAT as the smaller authority prepares its Annual Return on an income and expenditure basis. The External Auditor had asked that the amendments are corrected in the prior year comparison when completing next year's return. The Financial Officer advised she had been in communication with the External Auditor and the Internal Auditor regarding the issues raised. She was working on the revised figures which would be checked by the Internal Auditor when he completes his Interim Audit.

There being no other business, the Clerk closed the meeting at 1440hrs.