

# ALCONBURY AND ELLINGTON INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

## Board Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020, 10am held remotely via Microsoft Teams.

**PRESENT:** H Raby (Chairman); K Baker, M G Baker, I Gardener, A Lensen, E A Ruston, J Sewell, D M Tysoe

**IN ATTENDANCE:** B Agass (Chief Executive & Clerk of the Boards), J Oldfield (Director of Operations), N Souter (Accountant), A Smith (Committee Clerk) and P Lovesey (Senior Operations Engineer).

The Chief Executive took the chair as Chairperson pro tem.

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REGISTER OF ATTENDANCE**

Apologies for absence were received from B Chapman and G Warrener

### **2 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3 ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON**

Mr H Raby was elected as Chairman, unanimously.

### **4 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

Mr J Sewell was elected as Vice-Chairman, unanimously.

### **5 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 MAY 2020**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 May 2020 were accepted as a true and accurate record for the Chairman to sign.

### **6 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

No matters arising from the minutes.

### **7 WORKS PROGRESS REPORT**

The Director of Operations and Senior Operations Engineer presented the Works Progress Report together with an A3 plan showing works completed in black.

He informed members that the appointed contractor was continuing to check grills complying with COVID safe requirements.

Discussion took place:

- One member advised there is a considerable amount of silt build up in the watercourse on the Stukeley side of the A14 near the sewage works. The Director of Operations agreed an engineer would attend site to inspect.
- Officer were also requested to inspect the watercourse adjacent to the road leaving Little Stukeley as this is overgrown and requires attention.
- A question of responsibility was asked regarding the watercourse between Brampton Hut and West End. The Director of Operations informed members this watercourse now runs on a different alignment

since A1/A14 works were carried out however is still recognised as an important watercourse and the Board still pro-actively exercise its permissive powers to maintain. A short section of this watercourse is landlocked by roads and therefore Highways England will be responsible for maintaining along with any road culverts as riparian/asset owner.

- It was questioned if the watercourse running from Buckden, through the Golf Course is due to be maintained. The Senior Operations Engineer will inspect the site however he advised members this work is usually carried out by the Golf Course as part of their course maintenance.

The member also added the section leading to the sewage treatment works is heavily overgrown. The Director of Operations explained this work has been inspected and classed as environmentally disturbing for little gain. The Senior Operations Engineer will discuss with the Board member and if required would be added into the future works programme.

- The director of operations presented the report on watercourse 5 at Brampton and explained that given the challenges from previous experiences, the contract was tendered on a day-rate basis and that unfortunately the work took significantly longer than originally estimated. The Chairman acknowledged the difficult problem the Board has faced at Brampton along watercourse 5 and he agreed the work carried out by ADC Drainage Ltd was essential and would also need to be carried out in the future. The Director of Operations agreed and added this demonstrates the Board conscientious effort to maintain watercourses in urban areas as well as rural. The Chairman asked how the banks are maintained. The Senior Operations Engineer explained ADC Drainage Ltd. removed silt from the centre of the channel as the banks are very soft. Community engagement is required with the riparian owners as some are unaware of their responsibilities and consents required to carry out the remedial work.

**Members accepted the Works Progress Report.**

## **8 TECHNICAL REPORT**

The Director of Operations presented the Technical Report.

### **Discussion took place-**

- A member asked for pressure to be maintained on the Environment Agency with regards to the work requested along the Ellington Brook.

**Members accepted the Technical Report.**

## **9 FINANCE REPORT TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2020**

The Accountant presented the Finance Report which included:

- a) Income and Expenditure Account (including Occupiers Rate Fund) for the period ending 30th September 2020
- b) Receipts and payments through the Board's individual bank account with Nat West from 1 April – 30 September 2020;
- c) Cheque list for 2020/21; and
- d) Investment and Bank accounts balances as at 30th September 2020;

The Accountant explained additional information has been provided as requested at the previous meeting regarding payments made into the Group account. She explained page 14 was for illustrative purposes based on the joint budget set in February, which shows the outcome if the joint board costs were to be split based on the annual value of the land in each board.

This shows that Alconbury & Ellington would be taking £38,954 of the costs if done in the same way as the Buckingham & River Ouzel and Bedfordshire & River Ivel Boards.

**Members approved the Finance Report.**

## **10 EXTERNAL AUDIT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2019-20**

The Chief Executive presented the External Audit report for the financial year 2019/20 and reported that an unqualified opinion had been given.

**Members approved the External Audit report.**

## **11 TO APPROVE THE UPDATE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The Chief Executive presented the Financial Regulations which had been updated to enable the timely approval of orders and payment of goods and services the financial regulations should identify that payments and orders for goods and services of up to and exceeding £5,000 may be authorised by either the Responsible Finance Officer or the Chief Executive.

The changes (shown in red) had been discussed and approved by the JMC.

**Members approved the updated Financial Regulations with changes outlined.**

## **12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Vacancies on the Board-**

The Chairman explained following the recent election there remains vacancies on the Board, he advised these could be advertised or members could be co-opted. It was requested this item is taken to the January meeting. Any suggestions would be gratefully received by the Chairman.

### **Environment Agency attendance-**

The Chairman advised that the recently appointed Operations Manager at the Environment Agency, had indicated that they would be pleased to attend future Board meetings if required. Members welcomed this suggestion.

### **ADA Conference-**

The Chief Executive reminded members the ADA Conference is being held remotely on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

### **Meeting start time-**

A member requested if meetings could start at 9am as opposed to the usual 10am start. The Chairman asked for this to be brought forward and discussed at the next meeting.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 28 January 2021**

The meeting closed at 10:57am.