

A MEETING OF THE ALCONBURY AND ELLINGTON INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD WAS HELD AT BROOKFIELD FARM, GREAT STUKELEY AND VIRTUALLY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON TUESDAY, 30 MAY 2023 AT 9 AM.

Elected Members	Appointed Members
* M G Baker	Huntingdonshire DC
* K Baker	S Cawley
A Lensen	* I Gardener
* B Lumbers	Vacant Position
* H Raby	Vacant Position
* E Ruston	Vacant Position
* J Sewell	Vacant Position
* G Warrener	Vacant Position
Vacant Position	Vacant Position
Vacant Position	Vacant Position
Vacant Position	Vacant Position
Vacant Position	Vacant Position
Vacant Position	Vacant Position

* Present (32%)

Harry Raby in the Chair

Officers in attendance:

Phil Camamile (Chief Executive), Phillip Lovesey (Operations Manager), Alice Smith (Executive Assistant) and Nicole Souter (Principal Accountant)

ID	Alconbury & Ellington IDB, Minute	Action
17/23	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
17/23/01	Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Stephen Cawley and Andrew Lensen.	
18/23	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
18/23/01	The Chairman, Harry Raby, declared an interest in Agenda Item 18.10, the proposed adoption of the Chairman’s Allowance and Members Expenses Policy, as a potential beneficiary of this policy. RESOLVED that this be noted.	
19/23	MINUTES OF THE LAST BOARD MEETING HELD ON 02 FEBRUARY 2023	
19/23/01	The minutes of the last Board meeting held on 02 February 2023 were confirmed and signed as a true record. Arising therefrom:	

ID	Alconbury & Ellington IDB, Minute	Action
19/23/02	04/23/03 A14	
	<p>The Operations Manager confirmed that the Highways Valuation Office Agency counteroffer had been rejected and the original commuted sum of £10,763.26 still stood, as proposed by the Board. A further response had yet to be received.</p>	
19/23/03	<p>Liz Ruston suggested a compromise was offered to try and reach a conclusion. The Operations Manager suggested waiting until a response was received from National Highways before considering whether or not to suggest a compromise.</p>	PL
19/23/04	Alconbury Flood Group	
	<p>It was noted that the Chairman of the Alconbury Flood Group had been invited to the next Board Meeting in November 2023 where it was hoped a substantive update on the group's activities could be provided.</p>	PL/AS
20/23	ENGINEERING REPORT	
20/23/01	<p>The Engineering Report was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). Arising therefrom:</p>	
20/23/02	Planning Objection – Land East of Ivy Way, Spaldwick	
	<p>Ian Gardner advised members that a site meeting was due to take place to discuss/resolve the issues raised by both the Board and the Lead Local Flood Authority in relation to this application. It was agreed that Ian would extend an invitation to the Board's Engineer who provided the planning objection at the appropriate time.</p>	IG
	<p><i>Post meeting note: The Board's Senior Engineers Scott Brewster and Rachel Hughes attended a site meeting on 13 June 2023. Discussions are ongoing.</i></p>	
21/23	OPERATIONS REPORT	
21/23/01	<p>The Operations Report was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). Arising therefrom:</p>	
21/23/02	Environment Agency	
	<p>The Operations Manager provided a further update, following a recent meeting with the Environment Agency. The Board have proposed to undertake the flailing work along the Alconbury Brook through the Alconbury villages, flailing and clearing fallen trees along the Ellington Brook, flailing of the Brampton Brook to also include weed raking. Members felt that by undertaking the work on behalf of the Environment Agency a high standard of work could be achieved and provided good value for money.</p>	
21/23/03	<p>The Operations Manager also advised members that there was the potential to carryout flailing work from Alconbury Villages to the A14 and</p>	

any emergency tree works the Environment Agency were unable to undertake themselves.

21/23/04 Members were reassured that the Board's Maintenance Programme would be prioritised and would not be compromised as a result of carrying out work for the Environment Agency. RESOLVED that this be noted.

22/23 BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

22/23/01 The revised Biodiversity Action Plan (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. Arising therefrom:

22/23/02 It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to monitor progress in achieving the targets set out in the Biodiversity Action Plan. Furthermore, the Board should have oversight of progress made and it was agreed to include a section within the Operations Report to enable the Board to do this at future meetings.

22/23/03 It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to add an additional objective for 2023/24 to ensure that the Board delivered its environmental improvement targets set out in the Biodiversity Action Plan.

22/23/04 Members were advised that the updated plan demonstrated the Board's commitment to fulfilling its statutory duty as a public body to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

22/23/05 Members praised the work of the Board's Ecologist, Operations Manager and GIS Technician.

23/23 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2023 AND REAPPOINTMENT OF THE INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2023/24

23/23//01 The detailed Internal Audit Report for 2022/23 and the Internal Audit Report that forms part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2022/23 as prepared by the Board's Internal Auditor, together with the Management Team's responses and agreed actions, (copies of which are filed in the Report Book), were considered in detail and approved, subject to the following:

- (i)** the Board was satisfied that the Internal Auditor is independent (see Practitioners' Guide 2022 Paragraphs 1.36 and 4.11);
- (ii)** the Board retrospectively approved the internal audit programme of work, having regard to the key risks identified in the Risk Register (see Practitioners' Guide 2022 Paragraphs 1.36 and 4.16); and
- (iii)** the Board was satisfied with regard to the competence of the Internal Auditor and retrospectively approved the letter of engagement (see Practitioners' Guide 2022 Paragraphs 1.36, 4.1 and 4.13), including the signed letter of engagement.

23/23/02 The Internal Auditor's recording of a substantial level of assurance awarded on conclusion of the audit was noted.

23/23/03 It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to approve the re-appointment of TIAA Ltd. to undertake the Board's Internal Audit for the next financial year 2023/24.

24/23 FINANCIAL REPORTS AND RECONCILIATION TO THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2023

24/23/01 The Financial Report and reconciliation to the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2023 was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). Arising therefrom:

24/23/02 Income and Expenditure Account

The Principal Accountant reported a surplus of £29,180 for the year ending 31 March 2023, mainly due to the Maintenance Works coming in under budget by £33,158 and income received from PSCA works. This net under spend was anticipated to continue following the 3-year maintenance contact being awarded in 2022, which had given sufficient headroom to carryout additional works on EA main-river systems. RESOLVED that this be noted.

24/23/03 Balance Sheet

The Principal Accountant reported a healthy General Reserve Balance which exceeded ADAs recommended 1 x Annual Drainage Rate and Special Levy income.

24/23/04 The Chairman noted that the Board's annual increase in drainage rates and special levies for 2023/24 was amongst the lowest in the country, according to figures published by ADA. RESOLVED that this be noted.

25/23 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2023

25/23/01 Following the approval of the financial reports and reconciliation to the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ending 31 March 2023, the AGAR was considered in detail and approved. Arising therefrom:

25/23/02 The Annual Governance Statement shown in Section 1 of the Board's Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2023 was considered in detail and approved.

25/23/03 The Accounting Statements shown in Section 2 of the Board's Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2023 were considered in detail and approved.

ID	Alconbury & Ellington IDB, Minute	Action
26/23	DATE OF COMMENCEMENT PERIOD FOR THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS TO INSPECT THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2023	AS / NS
26/23/01	It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to publish the notice on the Board's website and also display the notice in the office reception, that the Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2023 would be available for inspection for the 30-working day period commencing 05 June 2023 and ending on 14 July 2023. RESOLVED that this be noted.	
27/23	MATERIAL CHANGES TO THE CORPORATE RISK REGISTER	
27/23/01	Members considered and approved the risk register for those risks with a risk assessment matrix score of ≥ 6 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). There were no material changes or matters arising.	
28/23	REGISTER OF ELECTORS	
28/23/01	The Register of Electors as at 01 April 2023 was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book), in accordance with Rule 3(11) of the Land Drainage (Election of Drainage Boards) Regulations 1938 (as amended).	
28/23/02	The Chief Executive confirmed that the opportunity for Electors to Inspect the Electoral Register had been advertised on the Board's website from 12 May 2023 and that no objections to any entries or omissions in the proposed Register had been received. RESOLVED that this be noted.	
29/23	CORRESPONDENCE	
29/23/01	Water Resources East: (WRE) contribution for 2023/24	
	The Chairman informed members that the annual invoice of £150 from WRE for 2023/24 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved for payment.	
29/23/02	It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to continue to review the Board's membership of WRE annually.	
29/23/03	The Chief Executive informed members that the WMA's Project Development Manager, Giles Bloomfield was likely to be appointed as ADA's representative on the WRE Board. It was hoped as part of the appointment, the subscription fees of the Bedford Group and WMA would be waived. Further updates to be provided at the next meeting. RESOLVED that this be noted.	PJC
30/23	DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING	
30/23/01	It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED for the next Board meeting to take place on Monday, 22 November 2022 at 9 am, which would be held at Brookfield Farm, Ermine Street, Great Stukeley, Huntingdon, PE28 4AB and virtually via Microsoft Teams.	

31/23 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**31/23/01 Nun's Bridge and Alconbury Brook, Alconbury**

Bob Lumbers questioned if the Board were in contact with the Stop the Floods Action Group regarding Nun's Bridge, Alconbury following their attendance at a recent Alconbury Parish Council meeting. The Chairman confirmed both himself and the Board's Operations Manager along with John Sewell were in regular contact with the group. John Sewell read a response received by the Parish Council from the Environment Agency regarding the recently recorded water levels and results of their inspections.

31/23/02 Members were disappointed with the generic response received from the Environment Agency about this issue. The Operations Manager advised members that the retention management would require monitoring to be undertaken to establish the actual requirements. Bob Lumbers questioned if this was likely to take place and if not, would the Board be able to advise accordingly.

31/23/03 The Operations Manager advised members that if the Board were to undertake the work it would involve costly engineering work, although the PSCA could be looked into to cover these costs. Members agreed to let the Parish Council respond to the letter and the Operations Manager would then liaise with the Alconbury Flood Group to discuss any possible next steps. RESOLVED that this be noted.

31/23/04 JMC paperwork

It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to include all future JMC paperwork in future agendas as a hyperlink, as opposed to the individual documents being inserted within the main body of the meeting paperwork.

AS**32/23 OPEN FORUM: TO HEAR FROM ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC, WITH LEAVE OF THE CHAIRMAN**

32/23/01 There were no members of the public present at today's meeting.

33/23 CONSORTIUM MATTERS**33/23/01 Unconfirmed minutes of the last Joint Management Committee (JMC) meeting held on 02 May 2023**

The unconfirmed minutes of the last Joint Management Committee meeting held on 02 May 2023 were considered in detail, noted and adopted. There were no matters arising.

33/23/02 JMC's Operations Report

The JMC's Operations Report (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

33/23/03 JMC's Schedule of Paid Accounts

The JMC's Schedule of Paid Accounts for the period 1 December 2022 to 31 March 2023 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

33/23/04 JMC's Financial Report

The JMC's Financial Report for the period 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

33/23/05 Group's Performance Report for 2022/23

The Group's performance report for 2022/23 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

33/23/06 Objectives for 2023/24, as recommended by the JMC

The draft objectives for 2023/24 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) were considered in detail and approved. It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED that the following objectives be adopted for 2023/24:

- (i) To ensure that total expenditure does not exceed the approved expenditure budgets for 2023/24 and plan for subsequent years' rate increases to deliver balanced and affordable budgets before 2026/27.
- (ii) To ensure that the total maintenance works budget does not exceed £1.5m, unless there is an extraordinary event. Any costs that are incurred over and above the budget of £1.5m are to be itemised, identified, and costed separately.
- (iii) To ensure that the EA's annual precept charges on the Boards are fair and that it is spent on work that benefits the Drainage Districts.
- (iv) To continue improving the main-river network that the Boards watercourses discharge into at key known trouble spots by working with the Environment Agency using the Public Sector Co-operation Agreement.
- (v) To identify suitable locations to create additional off-line storage areas, which will reduce reliance on the main river network, reduce flood risk downstream and increase access to fresh water for the purposes of irrigation, potable water supply, recreation and biodiversity.
- (vi) To set up Public Sector Co-operation Agreements with other Risk Management Authorities, which will enable the Boards to provide services to them outside the Drainage Districts, particularly during high rainfall events.
- (vii) To devise an alternative approach of ensuring that the drainage infrastructure which serves new developments is appropriately maintained in perpetuity, without attempting to enter into complex/costly legal agreements and seeking up-front (and largely inadequate) commuted sums from developers.

- (viii) To develop a plan (with targets) to reduce carbon usage, which includes consideration of procuring the most carbon efficient technologies when replacing/refurbishing fixed and mobile plant and sourcing green energy and introducing an annual reporting system for the Group to monitor its carbon reduction.
- (ix) To support constituent Councils through ADA by actively lobbying DEFRA and DLUHC to disaggregate IDB Special Levies from the Councils' Revenue and Expenditure profiles.
- (x) To improve the collection of drainage rates and reduce arrears during 2023/24.
- (xi) To increase the number of followers and posts on the Group's social media platforms.
- (xii) To develop and monitor KPIs that help each Board measure and monitor the delivery of its Biodiversity Action Plan.

33/23/07 Group's 1st Annual Carbon Report

The Group's 1st Annual Carbon Report (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

33/23/08 Schedule of Charge Out Rates

The Schedule of Charge Out Rates for 2023/24 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

33/23/09 Capital Financing and Reserves Policy

The Capital Financing and Reserves Policy (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and adopted. There were no matters arising.

33/23/10 Chairman's Allowance and Members Expenses Policy

- (i) The Chairman's Allowance and Members Expenses Policy (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. Arising therefrom:
- (ii) It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to ask Defra to approve a Chairman's Allowance of up to £3,500 pa, in accordance with Schedule 2, section 1(1) of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

33/23/11 Items for discussion at the next JMC meeting

There were no issues raised by members for discussion at the next Joint Management Committee (JMC) meeting on 26 September 2023. Should members wish to raise any item for discussion at the next meeting, they should contact the Board's representative, Harry Raby or the Chief Executive directly.

34/23 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

34/23/01 It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to exclude the public from the next part of the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, in accordance with Section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Board's Standing Orders.