

PRESENT:

Mr. P. Towler (Chairman)

Messrs. S. Bearshaw, D. Caley, J. Caley, T. Coates, C. Crofts, A. Dickinson, D. Harrison, A. Holmes, M. Little, B. Long, S. Nichols, R. Rockcliffe and C. Rose

Mr. A. Newton (General Manager)

Mr. M. Bussens (Operations Manager)

Mrs. J. Heading (Clerk)

Ms. L. Morgan (Administrative Assistant)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

OPERATIONS MANAGER'S REPORT – The Operations Manager presented his Report, which was adopted.

Matters arising thereon: - Mr. M. Little queried the number of issues that the Shelbourne had encountered over recent months, including the electrical issues. Was this due to this being a high hours machine? The Operations Manager stated that it was not as high as other machines, and the electrical issue was investigated, but the cause was not found.

Cllr. S. Bearshaw wanted to know if there were any preventative measures the Board could put in place regarding the power outage at the pumping station. The Operations Manager stated that this was an issue with external power supply, with an electrical fault on a power pole.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT – The General Manager presented his Report, which was adopted.

Matters arising thereon: - The General Manager stated that he would like to introduce a Surface Water Discharge Policy, as per the report, which would involve charges for consents. This cost would then be ringfenced for improvements to the Boards infrastructure. The General Manager stated that when this had been taken to other Boards there had been a recommendation that the fees be increased, from those as stated in the attached policy, to £100 for developments with 0 - 9 houses, £300 for 10 – 50, with larger developments being assessed individually.

This had already been trialled within a couple of the Ely Boards, which had been successful and had resulted in upfront payments from developers. If passed this would be adopted and published on the Board's website. Cllr S. Bearshaw proposed, Cllr. C. Rose seconded, and unanimously agreed by Members that the policy be adopted

The meeting with King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council had been successful and should lead to improved communication with the planners. It was noted that the Planning Control Managers name had been incorrectly stated in the report, and this should read Hannah Wood-Handy.

Regarding Amalgamations, the General Manager wanted to emphasise that this was regarding the Ely Group of Drainage Boards and did not include the Downham Group. Cllr. C. Crofts stated that he is aware of the Middle Level Commissioners also investigating this with some of their IDBs currently. Cllr. B. Long stated that he was concerned that this may lead to a loss of local knowledge from the Boards, but that the Board may see increased pressure for amalgamations due to the proposed devolution of local councils.

WAGES - The Operations Manager was asked to leave the room whilst this matter was discussed (3.20pm)

[REDACTED]

3.28 pm The Operations Manager returned to the room.

ACCOUNTS 2024/2025 – The Clerk presented the accounts for the year ended 31st March, 2025.

The Clerk outlined the differences between the budget and the final figures and also presented the Summary of Rechargeable Work for the year. The Clerk outlined the differences between budget and final figures for the year which, on the income side were due to greater Highland Water Contributions being received than conservatively budgeted for, as well as receiving Tranche 1 monies from the EA, and an increase in rechargeable works. Regarding expenditure, the majority of items were on or below budget apart from Rates and Insurance which the Board budgeted for before receiving details of insurance premiums for the year, and Fuel and Power which had seen high standing charges. Health & Safety and training costs were slightly higher than budgeted for due to additional training and PPE.

The Clerk explained that the figures from the accounts had been transferred to the Annual Return for the year 2024/25 for submission to the external auditors in due course, following the approval of the internal auditors. Members considered and expressed satisfaction with the current system of internal controls and approved the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the Return) (and page 5 of the accounts) and upon the proposition of Mr. J. Caley, seconded by Mr. D. Caley, it was resolved that the Statement be signed by the Chairman and Clerk accordingly.

Members approved the Accounting Statement (Section 2 of the Return) and on the proposition from Cllr. S. Bearshaw, seconded by Cllr. B. Long, the Chairman and Clerk were authorised to sign the Accounts and Annual Return.

DELEGATES TO ADA CONFERENCE – Members wishing to attend the Conference on the 25th November, 2025 in London, were asked to inform the Clerk of their interest so that she could ensure that they were sent the appropriate information in due course.

CORRESPONDENCE – There was no direct correspondence to make the Board aware of.

However, the General Manager wanted to make members aware of the issue regarding the access track to the Puny pumping station in West Winch. Cadent had been in contact regarding the Board's permission to use this track for access. Messers Brown & Co. have been engaged regarding this matter, and it has been discovered that the Board do not have ownership of this track. This was only a recent issue, and the Board were currently investigating if purchasing this track was an option, and the Board's ongoing access rights to the Puny pumping station. Due to the amount of time the Board has had access to this track, right of way should not be an issue. If purchase is available, this will be brought back to the Board.

PLANNING – The Report on Planning Comments submitted on behalf of the Board, was adopted.

The General Manager wanted to bring to the Board's attention that he was in contact with the council regarding West Winch surface water discharge.

SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS – Resolved that the Schedule of Payments, supported by the list of Clerk's payments, totalling £268,756.14 be confirmed.

BOARD MEETINGS – Resolved that the next Board Meeting was to be held at Runcton Holme Social Club, at 2.30 p.m., on Tuesday, 7th October 2025.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 3.55 p.m.

Chairman:

Date: