

Rea Internal Drainage Board

R L R Jones FRICS FAAV
SURVEYOR & CLERK

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29 January 2018

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT The Offices of Balfours, New Windsor House, Oxon Business Park, Shrewsbury on Thursday 25th January 2018 at 7:30pm

Present:

D Dale (Chairman)
D Roberts
Aubrey Jones
James Dale
C Sandells
John Morris
Councillor N Hignett
R L R Jones (Clerk & Surveyor)

1. Apologies for Absence

These were received from P Jetson, B Roberts, J Morris, Councillor R Evans.

2. Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 26th October 2017 previously circulated were approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

Byelaw Updates

The Clerk would seek to prepare the necessary paperwork for this during 2018.

4. Maintenance Report

Contractor Matthew Bishop had completed:-

48 Cruckton New Cut - 615 m
Cruckton School – 190m
27 Horsebridge - 450m
24/25 Noatmoor – 383m

- 23 Aston Hem 550m
- 18 Aston Brook bottom end – 225m
 - Paddock West – 1,070
 - Paddock East (pt) - 400
 - Old Rea Bed – 315

He has not yet done Park Farm - H A Davies and this will now be left until September 2018.

M Bishop's rate was £1.25 per metre for 2016/17. I have agreed an increase to £1.30 per metre for 2017/18; however he said his rate will have to go up to £1.50 per metre from 2019.

N Manning requested that the bottom end of the Minsterley Drain be cleaned out prior to re-seeding a pasture field. This is circa 600m of ditching and can now be done from the field as the hedge has been trimmed hard rather than having to be done from the adjoining tracks. Cost would be £1,200 + VAT to include cleaning out of three culverts and any work necessary on the Rea just downstream of the outfall.

J Dale raised the need for weed cutting at the top end of the Rea. Derwas Dale said the length upstream from Leigh Bridge really needed attention and it was decided to inspect this length with a view to getting it done in the autumn of 2018. We will urge the Environment Agency to spend some of their maintenance money on this length or it maybe we will have to do some work ourselves on this length.

5. Financial Report

Balances - £31,202.53
Payments since last meeting - £1,260.57 as per sheet attached
Receipts since last meeting - £1,483.24 as per sheet attached
Arrears - £615.31 as per sheet attached

Second reminders will be going out to those in arrears shortly and thereafter matters will be referred to a debt collector.

The Clerk explained that there was a new protocol in force for chasing of bad debts prior to issuing a small Claims Court summons. This would entail further administrative time.

The Board adopted the financial report.

6. Review of Clerk's Remuneration

The Clerk explained that the current payment for his services as Clerk and Surveyor was based on 15% of the rates income. The Board had not increased the rate for 4 years and thus his salary had remained unchanged during that period. He reported that for the time involved to run the Board to attend 4 Board Meetings, collect rates, maintain the schedule of ratepayers, prepare annual accounts, submit the two Annual Returns etc, etc and undertake all the functions that the Board as a Statutory Drainage Authority for the area, the current level of payment was insufficient for the hours involved and was unsustainable.

The Clerk felt that the payment required would have to be a minimum of £2,500 per annum but feared that if a new person with no past involvement of the Board administration would seek to charge a fee more in the region of £5,000 per annum for running the Board.

Derwas Dale felt that he knew that this day would arise eventually in that previous surveyor;

James Donald had run the Board on a very low cost as a job that he would enjoy in his retirement years. He felt the Board's options were:- (i) pay a significant increase in salary or (ii) consider amalgamation with another Board to significantly reduce administration costs.

Following considerable discussion among members, it was resolved to pay an additional £100 contribution to the Clerk as an interim measure and the Clerk was asked to prepare full details of hours spent and costs involved in running the Board, so that the Board Members could consider the matter further.

7. To approve Budget for 2018/19 and set rate in the £ and Special Levy on Shropshire Council

After much discussion, the Board on a majority decision adopted a 0.3p increase in the rate to 10.92p and approved the budget for 2018/19 on this basis and the Special Levy of £528.52

8. Correspondence

ADA Newstream December 2017

- a) ADA has produced an updated document entitled "Introduction to Internal Drainage Boards".
- b) Welsh Government had confirmed they would implement Schedule 3 to resolve the approval and adoption of SUDS and will introduce statutory standards.
- c) European countries give approval for the use of weed killer Glyphosate for a further 5 years.
- d) DEFRA produced a document to advise EA on the criteria for main river designation.
- e) DEFRA have produced new farming rules for water as from the 2nd April 2018.
- f) ADA has given details of the transparency fund for grant aid for smaller authorities to assist with the development and improvement of websites.
- g) EA proposal for licensing of water abstraction to include water transfers despite lobbying from NFU and ADA, this is going to happen.

ADA Newstream November 2017

- (i) The Environment Secretary Michael Gove announces plans to consult on a new independent body on environmental standards.
- (ii) EA produced document – entitled "Natural Flood Management – part of the Nation's Flood Resilience". The concept of this is to work with natural processes to reduce flood risk.
- (iii) The construction industry has produced a guide to sharing expertise on creating successful sustainable urban drainage schemes.

9. EA Liaison Meeting

The Clerk reported that he and Derwas Dale, Chairman had attended the meeting in Stourport on 14th December. This meeting was attended by Chief Executive and Technical Manager of ADA and Catherine Wright who is an EA Board Member. Natural Resources Wales were not present at this meeting but proposed to attend in 2018.

Innes Thompson, Chief Executive of ADA felt that 2017 had been a very positive year with drainage and water and flood risk management moving up the importance scale with DEFRA. Working in collaboration with the various agencies was most important.

The recent ADA Conference he felt had highlighted the collaboration work rather than the divisions between the various agencies.

Ian Moodie reported that public sector corporation agreements were strongly encouraged for partnership working and reported that there were five remaining pilot projects under way; the River Lugg would be one of these in 2018.

There would be consultation on charging for Flood Defence Consents in readiness for a new scale of charges from 1st April 2018.

For small Boards with turn over under £25k – there is some potential for grant aid support under the transparency code fund.

ADA was encouraging the concept of sustainable drainage rather than strictly sustainable urban drainage schemes as rural areas were just as much impacted by such drainage measures.

EA reported that they had undertaken a successful major incident training response recently. Mark Bowers reported that the EA as a national body was now much better prepared for responding to major flood incidents as all regions could call on the national resource, pulling in other regions as needed.

Paul Flynn (EA operations) confirmed that the EA had an improved maintenance budget and the new funding arrangements allowed them to plan ahead much better knowing what their budget would be 2 years ahead.

James Bevan EA Chair supported desilting/dredging work where there is a benefit from this which is a great help as there was concern that environmental matters were suppressing the need for routine maintenance and desilting work on main rivers.

Anne Wheeler, Chair of the meeting and Chair of the Severn and Wye Regional Flood Defence Committee is retiring in June 2018 and we await the appointment of the new Severn and Wye RFCC Chairman, who is appointed by DEFRA.

10. ADA Marches Branch Report

Members of each of the Board's from Molverley, Rea, Strine and Lugg make up the Marches Branch with Lower Severn members also attending but having no voting rights. Charles Pudge of River Lugg was confirmed as Chairman and James Ireland of River Lugg Board is confirmed as the ADA Director for our branch. These roles will be for two years and then other board members and staff can put themselves forward for election to these roles. It is confirmed that it is intended to hold only one ADA Marches branch meeting in conjunction with the annual EA/IDB Liaison meeting, so as to minimize costs. It is intended at this stage that there will be no subscription for membership to ADA Branch.

11. Website Application for grant aid from Government transparency fund

The Board approved the Clerk making an application to the Transparency Fund for Small Authorities to assist with the cost of running the website and training for the Clerk and his

assistant to more easily upload material to the site and ensure the website is regularly refreshed and updated.

The Clerk would submit an application for £424.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday April 11th 2018.

13. Any Other Business

PSCA

The Clerk was continuing to work on this with the EA in the hope of reaching agreement for the Board to undertake work on the Rea Brook main river. ADA is assisting in providing help to satisfy the EA's requirements to health and safety and environmental policies.

Rea Valley Catchment Project

The Clerk reported he had been approached by Dr Stuart Burgess from the University Centre, Shrewsbury, who is seeking to obtain significant research funding for a project to assess water quality in the Rea Valley catchment. The Rea is a major tributary of the Severn and water quality has been monitored over a good number of years but does suffer a number of poor water quality issues, for e.g. heavy metal pollution from Snailbeach area, high N & P levels at Marton Pool from agricultural runoff; major dairy complex at Minsterley.

He has been talking with many stakeholders such as the EA and NFU, Natural England, Food Companies etc., to see if a project can be worked up which would give clearly measurable results, so that the effects of specific works or specific land management changes can be assessed. This project is not yet at a stage for him to sensibly talk with the Board. Members felt that really this was more for the riparian owners of the land in the whole catchment and the Board could not specifically be involved in this.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:45pm

..... **Dated**