

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BECCLES FENLAND CHARITY TRUST HELD ON TUESDAY 3RD OCTOBER 2023 IN COUNCIL CHAMBER AT TOWN HALL

Present

Councillors: Colin Hill (Chair), Richard Stubbings, Jeff Harris, Sam Hunt, Barry Darch, Daniel Smith, Stevie Bubb, Chris Greenhill, Simon Middleton, Peter Shannon and Philippa Drew.

In Attendance: Paul Cunningham (Secretary)
Giles Bloomfield (Water Management Alliance) (until end of Item 3)

Members of the Public: 1

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Christine Wheeler, Tarek Lahin, Nathalie Chidley, Stephen Sherwood and Gillian Birrell.

2. To receive declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in items on the agenda

There were none.

3. To receive a presentation from Giles Bloomfield from Water Management Alliance concerning the proposed replacement of the marsh pump

Giles explained that the proposed replacement of the Trust's marsh pump was part of a large project across the Waveney Valley to replace twelve pumps. The plan includes merging the pump with the Worlingham marsh pump, which is operated by Waveney, Lower Yare and Lothingland Internal Drainage Board (IDB). (WMA is a grouping of a number of local IDBs; it is the IDBs that are statutory bodies with accompanying powers).

Giles responded to the questions that we had sent in advance of the meeting: the Board's by-laws are unlikely to have much impact on the pump operation – the only applicable by-law would be that which prevents activity within nine metres of a water course;

the IDB will carry out visual condition surveys of the site;

the Trust would need to pay drainage rates to the IDB if the pump ownership was transferred, as the electricity costs of operating the pump would then fall to the IDB. Giles said that the costs to the Trust would be broadly in line with the gross amount that the Trust currently pays in electricity costs. Giles noted that our electricity costs are part-subsidised by Anglian Water (AW) and he agreed to engage with AW regarding a contribution to the Trust's drainage rates should the pump transfer be agreed.

He noted that the build pumps and related equipment using permitted

development rights, so there would not be any planning issues. Any issues with the Charity Commission concerning disposal of the land should be able to be overcome by legal rights that the IDB have.

Giles outlined that the WMA were aiming to submit a business case for the funding for the project to central government in December or January, so he would need a decision from the Trust on whether to include our Pump in November.

Giles addressed the issue of whether the Trust have to accept the transfer of the pump. He commented that the pump itself is new, but the pump house building is in a very poor state. In addition, it will be the Trust's obligation to replace the pump in the future and this will require a very expensive pump (to comply with environmental legislation) as well as a new pumping station, at a likely cost of c£3.5m.

Councillors considered Giles's presentation and they agreed that the issue should be discussed in more detail at the next meeting of the Assets & Estates Committee, who would then bring a recommendation to the next full Trust meeting.

4. To approve the minutes of the Beccles Fenland Charity Trust meeting held on Tuesday 5th September 2023

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Beccles Fenland Charity Trust meeting held on Tuesday 5th September 2023.

5. Matters arising from the minutes

Item 6: dog field planning application: Cllr Stubbings reported that a decision on the application has been held up due to the planning officer requiring an environmental impact report and also an issue with drainage.

6. To receive the draft minutes of the Development, Commerce & Strategic Planning Committee meetings held on Monday 11th September and Monday 18th September 2023

RESOLVED to receive the draft minutes of the above meetings.

Secretary reported that, regarding the Houseboat proposal, a meeting had been arranged with Hippersons, but that the site meeting with BA and EA had not yet been arranged.

7. To receive the draft minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on Thursday 14th September 2023

RESOLVED to receive the draft minutes of the above meeting.

8. To seek volunteers to serve on the Sports and Social Club Extension and Parking Working Party

Cllr Stubbings appealed for councillors to volunteer to serve on this Working Party, and Chair and Cllr Shannon both agreed to do so.

9. To receive the Responsible Financial Officer's Report and agree the payment schedules for September 2023

RESOLVED To receive the Responsible Financial Officer's Report and agree the payment schedules for September 2023.

10. Any Other Business

Secretary raised the request from Costain, the contractor for the gas works from Common Lane to St Anne's Road, to locate a welfare / storage compound in the Common car park. Cllr Stubbings proposed that this be agreed, subject to the contractors agreeing to keep the site clean and clear. This was seconded by Cllr Darch, a vote was taken which was in favour and it was therefore

RESOLVED To agree for Costain to locate a welfare / storage compound in the Common car park for the duration of the gas works, provided that they keep the site clean and clear.

Cllr Hunt reported that he, Cllr Wheeler and the Secretary had attended a meeting with Fen Lane residents and an officer from Environment Agency (EA) to discuss the flooding in December 2020 and the possibility of setting up a Community Flood Group. Cllr Hunt noted that he and Cllr Wheeler had walked round the site with residents after the meeting, which had generated several questions about the ownership and operation of assets at the Quay, which had been sent to the EA. Cllr Hunt reported that a further meeting was being planned and that a date was awaited from EA.

11. Date of next meeting Tuesday 7th November 2023 following the Town Council meeting

RESOLVED that the date of the next meeting is confirmed as Tuesday 7th November 2023 in Council Chamber at Town Hall.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

12. To receive the draft confidential minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on Thursday 14th September 2023

RESOLVED to receive the draft minutes of the above meeting.

Meeting closed at 8.45pm.

ACTION POINTS

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>What?</u>	<u>By Whom?</u>	<u>By When?</u>
10	To confirm that Costain may use the Common car park for their compound, subject to keeping the site tidy	Secretary	asap