

Doncaster East Internal Drainage Board

Minutes of a Meeting of the Board held at 2.00 p.m. on Monday, 10th February 2020, at Armthorpe Community Centre

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| * Mr M. Brooke | * Mrs R. Chapman |
| * Mr P.A.M. Cornish | * Mr C. Crowe |
| * Mr J.K. Durdy | Mr L. Garrett |
| * Mr R. Durdy | Mr P. Hagan |
| * Mr P. Horne (Vice-Chairman) | * Mr J. Hoare |
| * Mr G.C. Parker | * Mr C. McGuinness (Chairman) |
| * Mr W.G.S. Platt | * Mr M. Oldknow |
| * Mr N.V. Williams | Mr D. Ridge |
| | Mrs S. Wilkinson |
| * <i>Present</i> | |
| * Mr A. McGill (Chief Executive) | |
| * Mr N. Kemble (Engineer) | |
| * Mr A. Malin (Senior Operations Manager) | |
| * Mr R. Brown (Operations Manager) | |
| * Mrs N. Hind (Finance Manager) | |
| * <i>In attendance</i> | |

2020.1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs L. Garrett, D. Ridge and Mrs S. Wilkinson.

2020.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr W.G.S. Platt declared an interest in agenda item 12.6 (Park Drain Pumping Station) and agenda item 16 (Unity Connect - Commercial Development).

2020.3 NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

2020.4 BOARD MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 29th November 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.

2020.5 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Minute 2019.98 Operations Report - Heavy Rainfall Event

The Operations Manager confirmed that the South Engine Drain had been cleaned out from Bull Hassocks to the motorway and there were no obstructions in this watercourse; the recent flooding had been from the River Torne. Overtopping had occurred on the Medge Hall system due to the sheer volume of water which could not be evacuated quick enough. The Chief Executive stated that two mobile pumps had been deployed overnight.

RECEIVED

(b) Minute 2019.98 Operations Report - Bank Slips

In response to the Chairman, the Operations Manager confirmed that the slips were on Board maintained watercourses, those on riparian watercourses had not been reported. It was noted that there were several slips around Sandtoft and these had been reported to Highways.

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2020.6 HEALTH AND SAFETY

(a) Legislation and Health and Safety Executive Advice

There had been some updates to the Local Exhaust Ventilation Regulations (LEVs). These did not currently affect the Board as welding operations were not undertaken in-house, however, should this change, the Regulations would be taken into account.

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(b) Incidents

No incidents had been reported since the last Board meeting. Employees were being encouraged to report near misses and a new form was being developed to make recording easier. Regular Tool Box Talks continued to be held with operatives.

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(c) Risk Assessments and Safe Systems of Work

The Health and Safety Advisor had completed the review of all risk assessments and safe systems of work and the new and revised documents would be issued to all staff following approval by the Health and Safety Committee on the 3rd February 2020.

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2020.7 RISK REGISTER

The Chief Executive reported that the Risk Register was being reviewed and updated by Officers for consideration at the March Board meeting. He presented a document which had been prepared detailing the current status and risk at each of the Board's pumping stations and stated that this would be appended to the Risk Register and would be monitored and updated as circumstances changed.

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2020.8 DRAINAGE RATES AND SPECIAL LEVIES

The Finance Manager reported a balance of £1,084.16 outstanding at 24th January 2020 and an overall collection rate of 99.8%.

It was noted that some previously unknown owners/occupiers of land had now been traced and billed and this process would continue.

Eleven Liability Orders had been granted at Doncaster Magistrates' Court on 16th January 2020 and four bills had already been paid in full. The remaining seven outstanding accounts had been passed to the Board's Enforcement Agents.

RECEIVED

2020.9 FINANCE

(a) Management Accounts for the Period Ending 30th September 2019

The Finance Manager presented the attached Income and Expenditure Accounts, Balance Sheet and Project Report Summary for the period up to 31st December 2019 which showed a negative variance of £47,988.99. It was noted that an invoice would be sent to the Coal Authority within the next two weeks for rechargeable works. It was also noted that a proportion of the income received in respect of Huxterwell Pumping Station would need to be reimbursed to the Coal Authority.

Officers confirmed that the amount for Capital Scheme Expenses would in future be broken out to show the amounts for each scheme to give a clearer picture of the Board's position as the current figure included amounts brought forward.

The Finance Manager expected the Drain Maintenance costs to be on budget at the year end.

Regarding Pumping Station expenditure, Officers had submitted a claim under the Bellwin formula for additional pumping and labour costs in respect of the recent flooding.

Regarding the Balance Sheet, the Finance Manager reported that the Creditor's Control Account included Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board recharge costs of £67k as well as amounts for purchases through Woldmarsh, and the Environment Agency precept.

RESOLVED

That the Income and Expenditure Report, Balance Sheet and Project Report Summary up to 31st December 2019 be noted.

(b) Cash Reserves and Investments at 31st October 2019

The Finance Manager reported on £1,188,004.93 which was currently invested in three instant access accounts at 0% interest. As requested at the last meeting, the Finance Manager confirmed that the Lloyds Rating account would be closed and future VAT refunds deposited in the Current Account.

Ten loans totalling £546,221.85 remained outstanding.

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(c) Payments Over £500

The attached schedule was circulated for approval.

RESOLVED

That the attached schedule of payments over £500 made since the last Board meeting be approved.

2020.10 ESTIMATES OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL 2020 TO 31ST MARCH 2021

The Finance Manager presented the attached Estimates of Income and Expenditure for the year 2020/21 for consideration together with the Five-Year Plan up to 2026/27. These had been based on an 8% increase.

The Vice-Chairman queried the certainty of the 2.75% increase for future years (as shown on the Five-Year Plan for 2021/22 to 2026/27). In response, the Finance Manager explained that there would be some additional borrowing for schemes (e.g. Park Drain, Heckdyke, Elmhurst, Blackston Quarry and Medge Hall) and any future increases would also depend on the receipt of grants. The Chairman stated that the Board would also need to consider inflationary increases.

The Chief Executive stated that it would be usual to look for a gradual increase in the rate but the 2% restriction on the rate over the last several years had meant that the Board was not now in a good place financially to undertake the necessary work. It was noted that the deficit for the current year was estimated at £92,602 which would severely reduce reserves.

It was noted that provision had been made in the estimates for the full cost of Park Drain and Idle Stop Pumping Station. Should grants for these works be received, only a 4% increase in rates would be required this year, however, if the grants were not forthcoming, the Board would be running a deficit budget up to the year 2025. The Finance Manager stated that if the Board approved less than 8%, the Auditor would state that the Board had a 'going concern issue'.

The Chairman stated that normally the Council would object to an 8% increase but was more understanding at the current time due to the amount of recent flooding in the area. He expressed concern about the impact of proposed grant in aid funding changes where the Environment Agency would reserve a greater percentage of the grant money for their own works. He emphasised that it was important to consider the impact on the whole system; lowland watercourses as well as main rivers. He suggested that the Board should seriously consider withholding the precept until it was clear what both the precept and the reserved grant-in-aid monies would be spent on.

The Chief Executive stated that Boards could not exist in terms of financial viability without grant in aid and any thoughts that additional funds could be raised locally to cover this gap were misguided.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the attached estimates of income and expenditure for the year commencing 1st April 2020 be approved in the net sum of £823,710.
- (b) That the amounts to be raised by means of drainage rates in respect of agricultural land and buildings, and special levies on the local charging authorities for the year commencing 1st April 2020 be as follows:
 - (i) by drainage rates levied in respect of agricultural land and buildings - £90,645,
 - (ii) by special levy on Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council - £763,804,
 - (iii) by special levy on North Lincolnshire Council - £14,723,

- (iv) by special levy on Bassetlaw District Council - £11,619,
- (c) That the drainage rate for the financial year commencing 1st April 2020 be made and sealed in the total sum of 5.551 pence in the pound.
- (d) That the attached Five-Year Plan be approved in principle.
- (e) That the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Chief Executive commence discussions with the Environment Agency regarding use of the precept.

2020.11 OPERATIONS REPORT

Details of pumping station status had already been presented under Minute 7 - Risk Register.

(a) Bank Slips

Following the wet weather, several slips had been recorded and some repairs attempted. As reported at the last meeting, a number of these required toe piling and prices were being obtained from the Board's contractors for the work to be undertaken when the land had dried out enough for access. The Operations Manager was still receiving reports of slips and continued to monitor these to ensure there was no impediment to the flow of water.

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(b) Summer Maintenance Works

Bichans and ATM Contracting had completed summer maintenance work on Board maintained watercourses except for a small amount where access was restricted due to root crops. Colwill Contracting had also nearly completed their works.

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(c) Environment Agency Works

Summer Maintenance works had been completed on the Environment Agency (EA) Diggin Dyke, Woodhouse Sewer, Candy Farm Drains, Torne Soak Drains and Tunnel Pitts watercourses. The EA had also asked the Board to arrange for work to be undertaken on the North Soak Drain and an order was expected for work on the River Torne. All work undertaken for the EA was recharged.

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(d) Flooding Issues

The Operations Manager reported that flooding of land had occurred when the flood storage area which took overflows from the River Torne had breached due to someone taking away part of the bank. This was being repaired by the Environment Agency (EA).

Two collapsed bridges on Diggin Dyke in the Holmewood Lane area were reported and the Operations Manager agreed to report these to the EA as consent would be required for the repairs.

The Chief Executive stated that additional pumping costs in respect of pumping water from the EA main rivers was an issue for the Board and he was pleased to

report that this had now been recognised by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and had also been included in the Bellwin claim. He stated that it was essential that IDBs were included on the list of bodies that could claim under this formula.

Several other issues were raised; the drain to Dirtiness Pumping Station which was slowing water down, and a culvert collapse on Askern's Drain (this was a Coal Authority asset and was noted by their representative).

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2020.12 ASSET RENEWAL AND REFURBISHMENT PROJECTS

(a) Strategic Hydraulic Modelling Project and Watercourse Surveys

Latitude Surveys Ltd had completed all surveys and delivered the required data and drawings and Capita Systems Ltd had delivered the Modelling Reports for Sub-Catchments 1 and 5 and was currently modelling Sub-catchments 2 and 3.

The following amended sub-catchment completion dates and delivery of output were noted:

Sub-Catchment 1 - Completed and Delivered

Sub-Catchment 2 - 19th June 2020

Sub-Catchment 3 - 9th April 2020

Sub-Catchment 4 - 28th August 2020

Sub-Catchment 5 - Delivered being assessed

Officers reported that at a recent Joint Partners Project Management Board meeting, the outcomes of the Sub-Catchment 1 report were considered and, in general, the predicted areas subjected to flooding were accepted as representative save in one location to the south of the A18 which had a history of waterlogging. This issue had been communicated to the modellers with a request to carry out further investigations of the anomaly. At the same meeting, options for rationalisation of the various drainage networks and pumping stations were discussed and Capita had been requested to submit a quotation for the additional modelling required to evaluate the options, feasibility and economic efficiency.

As reported at the last meeting, Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board's in-house engineering team continued to support the modellers with provision of the essential data required to maintain project momentum. The Engineer reported that this was more onerous and time consuming than originally envisaged due to the lack of data held by the Board and the consequent need to derive or carry out investigations to obtain the information required by the modelling team. Due to this, the approved budget for project management and data provision and processing would be exceeded and the Engineer asked the Board for approval of an additional £3,000 to complete the project. Project partners, the Environment Agency and The Coal Authority, had confirmed their approval of this additional expenditure. On behalf of the Coal Authority, Mr C. Crowe asked Officers to send an invoice as soon as possible as this would need to be paid before the financial year-end.

The Engineer confirmed that, to date, there were no other additional costs and the overall project costs were expected to be within the approved expenditure of £199,900. Officers presented a table detailing expenditure to date of £97,606.

The Chief Executive confirmed that once all catchment studies had been completed and the results of the modelling had been assessed by the Board, a meeting would be held with the local landowners. He emphasised that local knowledge would be taken into account alongside the modelling.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve additional expenditure of £3,000 in respect of additional project management costs incurred by Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board in providing the additional data required by the modelling team; the cost to be met from within the overall budget.

(b) Balby Carr Pumping Station - Pump Refurbishment

The Engineer reported that pump number 2 at Balby Carr had been switched off because of an issue with the coupling that had unwound itself. Quotations were being sought from two contractors for the repairs. Officers would monitor the situation to ensure that flows could be dealt with.

RECEIVED

(c) Emergency Repairs

A date was awaited from Industrial Pumps Limited to remove debris from the sump at Cuckoo Lane Pumping Station.

One of the pumps at High Level South Pumping Station had been removed and was being repaired by Industrial Pumps Limited.

Costs for the repair work at both stations would be presented to a future Board meeting.

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(d) Inspection of Pumps and Automatic Weedscreen Cleaners

It was noted that the inspection of pumps and automatic weedscreen cleaners at all the Board's pumping stations had been delayed due to Industrial Pumps Limited's current workload and other commitments. A date and programme for completion would be presented to a future Board meeting.

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(e) Demolition of Parsons Carr Pumping Station

Following decommissioning of the above station (as part of the iPort development), an application for demolition was submitted to Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council and a notice placed at the station and the local supermarket as the station was situated on private land. Officers reported that confirmation had been received from the Council that planning consent was not required and tenders were, therefore, being sought for demolition of the station as part of a package of two other pumping stations in the Isle of Axholme and North Nottinghamshire Water Level Management Board's area.

It was noted that the existing automatic weedscreen cleaner would be dismantled, modified, re-wired and reinstalled at Huxterwell Pumping Station. Some minor civils works would also be undertaken.

The Coal Authority would be funding the work and had already confirmed agreement to the proposals.

In response to Mr M. Brooke, the Operations Manager confirmed that repairs had been undertaken to the control structure and it was operating satisfactorily.

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(f) Park Drain Pumping Station

Mr W.G.S. Platt declared an interest.

In December 2019, notification had been received from the Environment Agency that an additional £100M was available for flood risk projects across the U.K. and that they were seeking candidate projects with a five-day turnaround period. On behalf of the Board, Officers had put forward a rationalisation project for Park Drain Pumping Station including Idle Stop Pumping Station as a combined station. The Engineer explained that the proposed scheme would divert the water from Idle Stop Pumping Station to Park Drain Pumping Station and then to Snow Sewer, reducing flows into the River Idle. Refurbishment of Park Drain Pumping Station would be required and would include new weedrakes, upgrading of the watercourse and the installation of new fish-friendly pumps. The cost of the work was estimated at £1.45million less grant-in-aid of £1.275million, leaving £175,000 to be funded by the Board.

Officers further reported that an application for funding had also been submitted on behalf of the Isle of Axholme and North Nottinghamshire WLMB for rationalisation at the eastern end - Snow Sewer. This would involve the replacement or refurbishment of the pumps at Drain Head Pumping Station and also at Heckdyke Pumping Station which would be combined with the Isle of Axholme's Three Bridges and Four Bridges Pumping Stations and Doncaster East's Langholme Pumping Station which would flow by gravity to Heckdyke. The removal of Langholme Pumping Station (which was due for refurbishment in two to three years) would also reduce flows into the River Idle. Officers asked the Board to consider contributing the estimated cost of the Langholme refurbishment (£150,000) towards the cost of the additional work required to improve the watercourses in the Isle of Axholme area in order for them to be able to cope with the additional flows. The Operations Manager explained that the Langholme catchment had previously drained to the Heckdyke catchment so the connection was still available but required regrading. He stated that the whole area was currently water scarce and this proposal would improve water level management across a wide area.

Confirmation of funding towards these schemes was awaited.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Board agree in principle to proceed with the refurbishment of Park Drain Pumping Station subject to the receipt of grant-in-aid.
- (b) That the Board contribute up to £150,000 towards a scheme to combine Heckdyke, Three Bridges, Four Bridges and Langholme Pumping Stations.

(g) Flooding Issue - Bonnyhale Road, Ealand

During the November 2019 flood event, tankers had been deployed by North Lincolnshire Council (NLC) and Severn Trent Water (STW) to prevent the foul water pumping station discharging through the combined sewer overflow into the riparian drain which ultimately entered the Board's Wood and Ealand Common Drain. The highway had suffered flooding, however, due to the efforts of NLC and STW, the flooding of properties was prevented.

Investigations showed that blockages and debris in the Board maintained Wood and Ealand Common Drain culvert adjacent to Bonnyhale Road at Ealand were restricting flows and causing water to back up downstream. The Board's contractors would be undertaking inspection and clearance work shortly to ensure the Board's systems were fully operational.

Officers were also liaising with the Environment Agency (EA), NLC and STW regarding a partnership approach to understand what the issues were with the system and to find a solution. The proposed upgrading of the sewage works at Crowle may help to alleviate the problem as would the clearing out of riparian watercourses in this area. The Board's Officers continued to liaise with NLC and STW were also investigating whether Local Levy funding would be available to fund the study and the work. A provision of £2,500 had been made in the Board's 2020/2021 estimates to contribute towards a partnership scheme.

RESOLVED

That the Board continue to liaise with NLC, STW and the EA regarding a partnership scheme to alleviate flooding in Ealand and that the Board contribute up to £2,500 towards the scheme.

(h) Hatfield Link Road (DN7) - Park Drain Diversion

A CCTV inspection of the existing culvert showed that it was completely full of tree roots which meant clearance was not possible and it would either need to be removed or replaced; both of which were expensive options. The Engineer reported that the preferred option was, therefore, to cut a new drain to the south of the existing culvert with a six-metre wide berm on the southern side to allow access for maintenance. He confirmed that due to the poor ground conditions in the area, the bank would be graded sufficient to prevent bank slippage. The work would be undertaken by the Council's DN7 road contractor, Balfour Beatty, and would be funded by the Coal Authority. Tree clearance was already underway and excavation work would follow shortly.

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(i) Telemetry System Replacement

The Engineer reported that a contract had been entered into with Ancholme Internal Drainage Board to continue supporting the existing telemetry system for a further seven months up to the end of June with an option to extend.

Tenders for the provision of a system across the Water Management Consortium and Doncaster East Internal Drainage Board were being sought and would be submitted for consideration and approval at the March Board meeting.

An application for Local Levy funding had been submitted to the Trent Regional Flood and Coastal Committee on behalf of the Boards with a view to part funding this critical infrastructure replacement.

The Engineer reported that the new telemetry system would be installed in the Doncaster East area first. Each board would enter into a separate contract but it would be much easier to manage and monitor one system across all four areas. The Coal Authority was in support of the installation of a new system.

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2020.13 ENVIRONMENT AGENCY AND PARTNERSHIP MATTERS

This item had already been covered under the Operations Report.

2020.14 ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

Maintenance Contractors - Environmental Compliance

Officers reported that the specification issued to the Board's contractors for annual maintenance cutting included an Environmental Compliance assessment requiring "Recording of notable species and protected species, recording of invasive non-native species". More specifically for badgers, this required:

- (a) "If a sett is discovered then it will be reported to the Board".
- (b) "No works are to be undertaken within 20m of a badger sett unless a DEFRA licence to interfere with a badger sett has been granted. Works undertaken without a DEFRA licence risks prosecution".

The contractors had been briefed on these requirements and appropriately licensed for the last two cutting seasons.

Officers highlighted that all individual badger licenses held for Doncaster East and the Consortium boards were administered by the Consortium's Environmental Officer and non-compliance with the licence therefore posed a threat to all the boards. The Environmental Officer was, therefore, investigating ways to improve the current reporting procedure to ensure that all data continued to be collected and recorded as required.

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2020.15 CONSENTING ACTIVITIES - RECHARGE PRINCIPLE

Officers stated that, for advice on straight forward applications no charge was made. However, recent trends showed that an increasing number of developers were seeking in depth advice regarding possible consenting scenarios very early in the planning process. This was understandable because options to reconfigure land drainage apparatus could lead to significant development potential being unlocked, to the commercial advantage of the developer. There were also environmental advantages in incorporating watercourses with green spaces and sustainable urban drainage.

Officers stated that there was now a need to agree how reimbursement was managed and proposed that all costs would be reimbursed by developers in respect of more complex detailed information provided by the Board.

This would enable key development proposals to be reviewed early in the process to ensure that the interests of the Board were not compromised and that the interests of

developers were considered in a balance between supporting investment, environmental enhancement and preserving the functionality of the water level management system.

The Chief Executive stated that the Association of Drainage Authorities was still investigating a formula for recharging developers and he would keep the Board updated with progress. In the interim, it was agreed to proceed as above.

RESOLVED

That Officers' time in respect of detailed advice provided to developers be recharged to them as detailed above.

2020.16 UNITY CONNECT - COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr W.G.S. Platt declared an interest.

The Operations Manager reported on a proposed commercial and industrial development to the north of Hatfield and east of Stainforth. Although still in the early stages, the developer was looking at altering the drainage through the site and may require the relinquishment of several Board watercourses, the realignment of the arterial watercourse and the retirement of the Board maintained Pissy Beds Pumping Station. Attenuation would be provided on site with flows restricted to a peak discharge of 1.4 litres per second and the water would require pumping. The initial proposal showed flows to the Pissy Beds station being managed as part of the development with a proportion of the catchment being diverted to Cuckoo Lane Pumping Station and the remainder to Kirton Lane Pumping Station. The Operations Manager confirmed that a commuted sum would be required to cover pumping costs and future maintenance.

The Board's Officers were liaising with the developers, and would review the impact of the proposals to ensure that there was no adverse impact on the drainage of the surrounding area and that the Board had permanent access for maintenance of any Board maintained watercourses on the site.

A detailed proposal was expected in June and this would be presented to the Board for consideration.

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2020.17 DELEGATED MATTERS

No consents had been issued since the last Board meeting.

2020.18 RECONSTITUTION

It was noted that the DRAFT Order had been prepared and was awaiting approval and sealing by the Environment Agency's Legal Services Director.

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2020.19 THORNE AND CROWLE MOORS SSSI - RESTORING THE HUMBERHEAD
PEATLANDS LIFE PROJECT

The Chairman referred to the minute from the last Board meeting and confirmed that the report was expected to be received shortly.

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2020.20 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

CHAIRMAN