

ISLE OF AXHOLME AND NORTH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE WATER LEVEL MANAGEMENT BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the Board held at Beckingham Recreation Room on Tuesday 25th June 2019, at 10.00 a.m.

Elected Members

- * Messrs J. Coggon (Chairman)
- * P. Cornish (Vice-Chairman)
- * R. Adam
- H. Barton
- * P. Bradwell
- J.H.T. Bramhill
- K. Durdy
- J. Fretwell
- * M.A. Harris
- * R. Mason
- M.T. Smith
- * M. Wagstaff

Nominated by North Lincolnshire Council

- * Cllr R. Allcock
- * Mr N. Arrand
- Mr I. Bint
- Cllr J. Briggs
- Mr E. Dinsdale
- * Mr M.D. Pilkington
- * Cllr Mrs J. Reed
- Cllr D. Robinson
- * Cllr D.J. Rose
- Mr G. Wilson
- One vacancy

Nominated by Bassetlaw District Council

- * Cllr Mrs H. Brand
- * Cllr Mrs J.M. Sanger

* *Present*

- * Messrs A. McGill (Chief Executive)
- * N. Kemble (Engineer)
- * R.A. Brown (Operations Manager)
- * Mr C. Harris, Internal Auditor
- * Mesdames N. Hind (Finance Manager)
- S. Jacques (Nottinghamshire County Council)

* *In attendance*

Mr K. Durdy was unwell and the Chairman requested that a card be sent on behalf of the Board wishing him a quick recovery. An email had been received from Mr G. Wilson who was stepping down as a Board Member, a letter of thanks for his years of service was to be sent.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies of absence were received from Messrs H. Barton, I. Bint, J.T.H. Bramhill, K. Durdy, M.T. Smith and Cllrs D. Robinson and J. Briggs.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr R. Allcock - agenda item 16, planning applications PA/2019/250 and PA/2019/320.
Mr J. Coggon - agenda item 15 and 16.
Mr P. Cornish - agenda item 15.

3. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

4. BOARD MINUTES (Pages 427 to 435)

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 26th March 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

Minute 14, Page 431 - Byelaw Applications and Contraventions

The Operations Manager reported that the gabion baskets alongside Pycocks Drain had not been removed and that the Board would shortly commence work to remove them.

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Minute 20:2, Page 435 - Works at Eastoft

In response to Mr R. Mason the Operations Manager confirmed that work to relocate the water pipes underground would be undertaken as soon as possible following discussions with the parties affected.

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6. HEALTH AND SAFETY

There were no incidents to report.

7. STAFFING

The vacancy for the Senior Operations Manager had been filled by Mr A. Malin, who would commence work on 1st July 2019. The Chairmen of all three Boards had met with him and agreed that he was keen to start work and had a good grasp of knowledge in this given field.

There was currently one vacancy in the Direct Labour Organisation and another member of staff was due to retire at the end of the year. Officers reported that they would be looking to fill these roles as soon as possible.

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8. DRAINAGE RATES AND SPECIAL LEVIES

The Finance Manager reported that £3,075.18 remained outstanding in respect of drainage rates at the 31st March 2019; this had been carried forward. It was noted that the value of rates written off presented as £492.31 had increased by £63.56.

Drainage Rates and Special levies for 2019/20 had been issued and a total of £593,258.18 had been collected as at the 3rd June 2019 with £647,386.92 still outstanding.

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9. FINANCE

9:1 Management Accounts for the Year Ending 31st March 2019

The Finance Manager presented the attached management accounts for 2018/19. She highlighted a reduction in grants for 2019, as well as income from Public Sector Cooperation Agreements which had not been accounted for in 2018. There was a noted increase in Investment Interest for 2019. Previous to 2019, Own Use of Plant and Labour Recharged had not been recorded as a separate category, and so this was a new feature which would bring more clarity to costings.

Mr M.A. Harris questioned whether there should be a visible increase in the special levy above the 1.9% increase approved by the Board as land had changed from agricultural use to residential use. The Finance Manager stated that this increase would be apparent in next year's set of Accounts as the Special Levy was set at the time the estimates were approved. The Chief Executive explained that this was why it was essential to ensure that any change of land use was adjusted on the rating programme prior to commencement of the estimates process.

The decrease in Direct Labour Organisation costs shown under Supportive Expenditure was due to expenses in this field being re-categorized.

Officers were reviewing the historical engineering project reserve and this would be adjusted accordingly once completed.

As agreed by the Board previously, schemes for the period 2003 to 2007 had been removed from Fixed Assets on the Balance Sheet as they had not been offset to the project during this time.

It was noted that the Current Liabilities figure shown on the Balance Sheet appeared low compared to the previous year. These were being dealt with differently now, also the date for payment of salaries had fallen on 1st April so would show up in the 2019/20 accounts.

The Finance Manager referred to Support and Establishment Costs and explained that the increase in IT costs was due to the purchase of Sage software and recharges due to the approved appointment of additional staff. It was also noted that fuel had been overstated at the year end.

RESOLVED

That the attached Management Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2019 be approved.

9:2 Audit of Accounts for the Year Ending 31st March 2019

The Internal Auditor presented the attached report of his findings, drawing members attention to the Management Action Plan.

RESOLVED

That the Internal Auditor's report be noted and the recommended action taken.

9:3 Annual Governance Statement and Review of Internal Control

The Finance Manager presented the Annual Governance Statement for consideration by members who agreed that the Board had a sound system of internal control.

RESOLVED

That the attached Annual Governance Statement for 2018/19 be approved and signed by the Chairman and Chief Executive.

9:4 Accounting Statements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return

The Finance Manager presented the accounting statements for 2018/19 for consideration by the Board.

RESOLVED

That the attached Accounting Statement for 2018/19 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

9:5 Cash Reserves and Investments at 31st March 2019

The Finance Manager reported that the Board had £1,150,914 invested across four accounts. She assured members that despite the negative balance shown the HSBC account was not overdrawn, money was transferred to the account to cover spending.

The Board had a total of £328,401.51 owing on seven public works loans.

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9:6 Payments over £500

Mr M.A. Harris queried the expense for Flood lighting, the Operations Manager stated that following annual inspections emergency lighting was installed to improve security and that a small number of pumping stations had cameras. All stations were fitted with door sensors and PIR linked to the telemetry system. The Chief Executive stated that this would be considered as part of the telemetry review.

RESOLVED

That the attached schedule of payments over £500 be approved.

10. COMPENSATION CLAIMS

No Compensation Claims had been made since the last meeting.

11. OPERATIONS REPORT

11:1 Pumping Stations

There were no issues with Pumping Stations to be reported.

11:2 Capital Works for Nottinghamshire County Council Byways and Footways

The Operations Manager reported that Nottinghamshire County Council had asked the Board to quote for the replacement of culverts within the Idle and Ryton area, some of which were Board maintained. He stated that the work would be beneficial to the Board's systems and, if the quotation was accepted, could be incorporated into the winter works programme.

RESOLVED

That the Board submit a quotation to Nottinghamshire County Council to undertake replacement of culverts within the Idle and Ryton area.

11:3 Winter Works

The Operations Manager gave a report that bank reprofiling had been completed at Gunns Beck. Work to remove tree stumps and installation of a culvert was still to be completed.

Culverting work at Welham Hall Drain was progressing well with work on two culverts remaining.

Work to install culverts and headwalls at Lound Hall Drain was nearly complete and work would resume in November 2019.

Materials had been delivered for the two replacement culverts at Toft Dyke, work would be completed in late June 2019.

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11:4 Summer Maintenance Works

No summer works had been undertaken, though monitoring for early cuts had taken place.

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11:5 Plant

Annual Plant Insurance Inspections had taken place, with a cable fault being identified and then rectified on the Board's JCB JS 130.

Rainfall and Pump Run Hours were circulated for information.

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11:6 River Maun

In response to Mr R. Adam, the Operations Manager reported that a meeting was due to be held at the end of June to discuss weedgrowth and clearance of the channel; and an update would be given at the next meeting.

Mr J. Coggon and Mr P. Cornish confirmed that at a meeting yesterday, the Environment Agency was asked to check all assets in the Board's area to confirm they were operating satisfactorily.

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12. ADOPTION OF WATERCOURSES

The Engineer reported that investigations were underway regarding the adoption of the four private watercourses reported at the last meeting. Findings would be presented at the September Board meeting.

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13. ASSET RENEWAL AND REFURBISHMENT PROJECTS

13:1 South Street Pumping Station, Heckdyke Pumping Station and Snow Sewer

The Engineer presented the attached report and it was noted that the transfer of Snow Sewer would, most likely, be settled within the next few weeks.

Mr M.A Harris understood the need to rationalise assets but emphasised that future needs such as climate change, dewatering, irrigation, let back, etc. must be taken into account.

After discussion it was agreed that Officers would meet with local Board members to discuss this in detail as they held valuable expertise and knowledge of their respective regions.

In response to Mr M.D. Pilkington the Engineer confirmed that results from the modelling should be available in around three months and would include modelling already being undertaken by Doncaster East Internal Drainage Board.

RESOLVED

That Officers proceed with the study of the three catchments with a view to the rationalisation of assets across the catchments, that the study include a review of the drainage system in the village of East Lound, and that the work on the diesel pump at South Street Pumping Station be put on hold until the study was completed.

13:2 Wiseton Pumping Station - Refurbishment of existing weedscreen and automatic cleaner (under emergency repairs)

An update on Wiseton Pumping Station was given by the Engineer (as detailed on the attached report). The Engineer further reported that the planned refurbishment would also include any necessary civils works to the building.

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13:3 Local Levy Prospects

The Engineer requested that the Board consider making a small contribution towards the schemes detailed in the attached report, which he believed met the criteria for Local Levy funding.

Cllr Mrs J. Reed voiced concern over a development of 54 houses at Ealand which had recently been approved; Officers would monitor this.

The Operations Manager confirmed that work to replace the road culvert on the Carr Dyke would be undertaken by the Direct Labour Organisation and in the meantime this was being monitored.

RESOLVED

That investigations be undertaken and local levy funding sought for schemes at Misterton, Luddington, Ealand, Carr Dyke, and Belton, the Board to contribute 20% towards the cost.

13:4 Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) Medium Term Plan Refresh

Officers had updated the attached investment plan in consultation with the Environment Agency and included all stations in the Board's forward plan. Members stated that it was essential to ensure that any future works were included or they would not be considered for grant-aid.

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13:5 Mother Drain Culvert (SSSI), Misterton

Site visits and assessments were still ongoing and would be completed by the end of July 2019.

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13:6 Old River Drain, Newbigg, Crowle

Officers had investigated the alleged loss of ground from gardens backing onto Old River Drain in Newbigg, Crowle and it was found that no extensive change had taken place.

Mr R. Mason supported the findings that no significant changes had taken place. Mr N. Arrand argued against this, stating that one landowner had lost six feet of his back garden. The Operations Manager stated that there was no evidence of this. Mr Arrand stated that as the watercourse had been continually cleaned out from one side, the excavator bucket had undermined the bank. The Operations Manager reported that the work undertaken in 2014 to stabilise the bank by installing toe boards and lump stone meant that no material was removed from this side.

The Chief Executive expressed sympathy towards the residents and it was suggested that reinforcement of the bank could be undertaken with geotextile fabrics to provide protection.

RESOLVED

That Officers be given delegated authority to investigate this further, liaise with the landowners and, if necessary, install geotextile protection along the bank.

14. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY (EA) AND PARTNERSHIP MATTERS

The Chief Executive expected the transfer of Snow Sewer to be completed very shortly.

A meeting with the Environment to discuss future works was scheduled to take place and an update would be presented to the September Board meeting. Regarding work on the River Idle, Mr M.A. Harris stated that the Board must keep up the momentum to ensure work continues this year. The Operations Manager replied that the Environment Agency had allocated funds for the work, it was only a matter of Fisheries and other groups approving the plan and works schedule.

The Chairman and Operations Manager had recently given a presentation to East Riding of Yorkshire Council on works undertaken by the Board in the East Riding area. This had been very well received.

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15. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

Officers referred to the attached report.

Regarding abstraction points, Mr M.A. Harris reported the flap valve, penstock and pipework were already installed at Heckdyke and could be used to let back water if required. He queried whether something could be installed to make this easier to operate as it would benefit the system. The Engineer agreed to investigate incorporating this into the planned works for the station.

Mr M.A. Harris stated that it was scandalous that the Environment Agency was charging these fees and suggested that the Association of Drainage Authorities should be challenging this.

The Chief Executive reported that other Boards was investigating the feasibility of building reservoirs as the demand for water was increasing.

Mr P. Cornish stated that he was on a Committee working with the Environment Agency, to develop creative responses to water conservation, many of which were quite forward thinking.

RESOLVED

That the Board apply for three water abstraction licenses - Southfield, Gringley and Heckdyke Pumping Stations.

That the 3% increase in fees with effect from next year for the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership be noted.

16. DELEGATED MATTERS - PLANNING, BYELAWS AND SUPERVISORY ROLE

16:1 Byelaw Applications

Consent had been granted under delegated authority to replace palisade fencing within nine metres of the Board maintained Carr Dyke North at Hallcroft Industrial Estate, Retford, between national grid references 470043 382582 and 469988 382674.

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16:2 Section 23 Applications

Consent had been granted under delegated authority for the infilling of a section of the former Board maintained Power Station Drain culvert between national grid references 482607 411822 and 482547 411630 in the parish of Keadby with Althorpe.

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16:3 Planning Applications

The Operations Manager presented a list of seven planning applications which had been reviewed and commented on since the last Board meeting.

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17. CONTRACTS

17:1 Industry Standard Contracts

Following a review of the Board's contracting procedures, the Engineer recommended that the Board adopt the NEC4 suite of contracts which were Industry standard, tried and tested, balanced and widely understood. These could be used for both small and large contracts, frameworks and fixed-term contracts and were fair and reasonable for both parties.

RESOLVED

That the Board adopt the NEC4 suite of contracts.

17:2 Telemetry

Officers presented a detailed report on the telemetry system which was installed at the Board's pumping stations. A service charge of £880 was paid annually to Controlstar Systems Ltd in respect of hosting and administration of the system with any additional repairs and maintenance invoiced separately. Annual call-out costs for 2017/18 totalled £3,200 and for 2018/19 £4,079.

The Engineer stated that much of the related telemetry hardware was now outdated and a quotation had been received from Controlstar to update to a fully maintained and current system at a cost of £13,400 for the first year and £10,000 thereafter.

The Engineer proposed that the Board continue with the current arrangement at the moment but seek quotations from alternative suppliers for the provision of telemetry across the Consortium. These would include options for a five year lease/purchase agreement and maintenance and the use of open source software and off the shelf components rather than the current bespoke system.

RESOLVED

That Officers seek the support of the other Boards and, if in agreement, seek quotations for the provision of a telemetry system across the Consortium.

17:3 Electrical

Officers recommended that the Board tighten up procurement and transparency by providing a framework and schedule for the pumping station electrical support. A short-term contract would be entered into with Inter-Lec up to 31st March 2020 and tenders sought for a fixed-term to commence 1st April 2020.

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17:4 Transformers

It was noted that with the appointment of the Mechanical and Electrical Engineer there would no longer be external inspection costs towards annual transformer inspections. However, testing of oils would still need to be undertaken by a specialist laboratory.

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18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

CHAIRMAN