

Minutes of a Meeting of the Board held via Microsoft Teams and Teleconference on Tuesday, 23rd March 2021, at 10.00 a.m.

<u>Elected Members</u>		<u>Nominated by North Lincolnshire Council</u>	
*	Messrs J. Coggon	*	Cllr R. Allcock
*	P. Cornish	*	Mr I. Bint
*	R. Adam	*	Cllr J. Briggs
	H. Barton		Mr A. Catherall
	P. Bradwell		Mr T. Mitchell
	J.H.T. Bramhill	*	Mr M.D. Pilkington
	Vacancy		Cllr Mrs J. Reed
	J. Fretwell	*	Cllr D. Robinson
*	M.A. Harris	*	Cllr D.J. Rose
	R. Mason		Two Vacancies
*	M. Wagstaff		
	M.T. Smith		
			<u>Nominated by Bassetlaw District Council</u>
		*	Cllr Mrs H. Brand
		*	Cllr Mrs J.M. Sanger
*	<i>Present</i>		
*	Messrs A. McGill (Chief Executive)		
*	N. Kemble (Engineer)		
*	A. Malin (Senior Operations Manager)		
*	D. Braddy (Operations Manager)		
*	Mesdames N. Hind (Finance Manager)		
*	C.B. Davies (Corporate Services Manager)		
*	<i>In attendance</i>		

#### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Messrs H. Barton, P. Bradwell, A. Catherall, J. Fretwell, R. Mason, M.T. Smith, Cllrs T. Mitchell, D. Rose and Mrs J. Reed.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman declared an interest in item number 18:1, on page 13.

#### 3. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr J. Briggs requested that the Board discuss Strategic Direction.

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#### 4. BOARD MINUTES (pages 530 to 543)

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 26th January 2021 be confirmed as a correct record subject to the amendment of "Mr Cornish" to "Mr Coggon" under item 2, Declarations of Interest.

#### 5. MATTERS ARISING

Mr R. Adam requested an update regarding the introduction of beavers by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT), close to Retford. He brought attention to an article in the Spring 2021 issue of the ADA Gazette concerning problems arising from a beaver population in Scotland,

encouraging all members to read it. Officers replied that contact had been made with NWT regarding this and that the Board's concerns had been raised. A significant amount of money still needed to be raised before the project could go ahead and consent was also required from Natural England. NWT had confirmed that fencing would be inspected daily and a trap would be kept on site should any escape. There was no requirement for public consultation, although adjacent landowners had indeed been contacted. Mr Adam wondered whether the Board would be allowed to capture any beavers that potentially made their way into Board watercourses.

Cllr Mrs H. Brand stated that more detail was needed regarding this issue and asked that Officers prepare a paper for Members consideration. Mr M. A. Harris agreed, asking that Officers send a feasibility report as well as the ADA article to all members. He also stated that he felt there were areas of the country where beaver introduction might work, but that Retford was not one of them. Mr R. Adam stated that the Board needed to be involved in the project at the beginning making it clear what was required in order prevent flooding and clarify what powers the Board had should they escape and cause damage to the Board's systems. Mr Harris supported this. Mr M. Pilkington added that local residents viewed beavers as a possible solution to flooding issues encountered in Retford, which he felt was a misconception.

Mr R. Adam asked whether the impellers at Gringley Carr Pumping Station would remain on site, following the pumping station's recent demolition. An update would be provided under Item 14 of the Agenda.

#### RESOLVED

- (a) That members send details of their concerns regarding the proposed Beaver project to the Chief Executive.
- (b) That a paper be brought back to the Board detailing those concerns and the Board's requirements to ensure its systems were protected.

### 6. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Senior Operations Manager presented the attached Health and Safety Annual Review. He highlighted the 39 action points which would be the focus for the coming year. It was noted that this year, Agriculture, Forestry and Construction, to which the Board was most closely connected, had been recognised as the sectors experiencing the most incidents across the UK. 2020 incident data was provided for information.

Mr M.A. Harris queried whether the situation along Snow Sewer involving the removal of horses had been reported to HSE. The Senior Operations Manager replied that since it had not involved a 7-day absence for staff involved, it had not been.

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### 7. DRAINAGE RATES AND SPECIAL LEVIES

#### 7:1 Rate Collection 2020/21

The Finance Manager reported that as of 15th March 2021, £478,855.95 (97.75%) of drainage rates had been collected, with special levies paid in full. £10,504.91 remained outstanding.

#### 7:2 Rate Write-Offs

A schedule of proposed write-offs totalling £210.78 was provided for Board approval. The schedule contained relatively small sums. Attempts had been made to contact those owing, but had been unsuccessful.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve the proposed schedule of write-offs.

8. FINANCE

8:1 Management Accounts for the period ending 31st January 2021

The Finance Manager presented the Income and Expenditure Accounts for the period ending 31st January 2021.

There were several variances between the income estimated for the period ending 31st January and the current actual income. PSCA works had not yet been undertaken this year as planned, but it was noted that any related costs such as DLO labour and Use of Own Plant had been put to use elsewhere. An insurance claim for Four Bridges Pumping Station had been received, leading to a gain of £1,300. Use of own Plant and Labour were much lower than predicted, by £109,396, but this did not bear any effect on cash reserves. Overall income was currently a negative variance of £121,465.76.

Expenditure in relation to Maintenance and Development (Engineering schemes would be reported elsewhere) was reported as a positive variance of £131,447.78. Although there had been higher than expected expenditure towards Emergency Drain repairs, this had been balanced by under absorbed plant costs and lower than expected electricity bills at Pumping Stations (£60,000 below estimated). It was expected that this would change, as a number of electricity bills had not yet been received. Running alongside the higher than expected Emergency Drain repairs, stock costs had risen from the budget estimate by roughly £19,184.

Supportive Expenditure was higher than predicted, resulting in a negative variance of £1,825.55. Consortium costs were also higher than predicted, due to increased staff costs and lower than anticipated recharge of engineers' time to projects. 2021/22 Consortium costs were likely to be more than anticipated once more, due to a project delay.

Estimated loan interest repayment was lower than expected, as an upcoming loan had not yet been drawn. Upcoming plant disposals as well as purchases would also lead to further changes to the Board's surplus cash.

The resulting expected outturn was a positive balance of £47,355.82.

Details of funds in relation to Engineering Projects were presented for information. A grant of £30,000 was to be received shortly, for the Heckdyke scheme. Current actual Engineering Scheme expenditure stood at £635,597.03, with the balance standing at £721,141.03. A full breakdown of Capital Projects which drew funds from the Engineering Project funding was presented for information.

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8:2 Cash Reserves and Investments as at 31st January 2021.

Investment of Balances and External Borrowings were presented for information. The Finance Manager emphasised that the Board was still below the 30% Reserve Policy

and Officers were working on efficiencies to increase this to ensure that the Board had sufficient funds available for any unforeseen event.

RESOLVED

That the Board's cash balances and borrowings be noted.

8:3 Payments over £500

A schedule of payments made over £500 made since the previous Board meeting were presented for approval.

RESOLVED

That the schedule of payments over £500 be approved.

9. OPERATIONS REPORT

9:1 Summer Maintenance

The Operations Manager shared maps highlighting the completion rates of flailing and weedcutting, which were respectively 99% and 97% complete.

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9:2 Derrythorpe Depot re-wiring

It was reported that the re-wiring at Derrythorpe Depot was now complete. Photos of the new unit and wiring were provided for information.

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9:3 Winter Works

Details of current schemes which were underway were presented, along with maps highlighting locations and before and after photographs.

(a) Lound Hall AXD640200

Access improvements had taken place, the next stage would be installation of an access culvert although there was still some minor work to be undertaken by hand. Mr R. Adam complimented Officers on the work that had been undertaken.

(b) Medley Drain AXD390500

Asbestos had been found on site, which had been professionally removed before any reforming works could proceed.

(c) Belshaw Lane Drain AXD390600

Reforming, Access Improvements and Tree and Bushing works had taken place.

(d) North Ferry Lane Drain

In 2017/18 the Board had approved the adoption of North Ferry Lane Drain. Reforming and Tree and Bushing works had taken place within the last two days. Installation of an access culvert still remained.

(e) Woodhouse Branch

The Board approved adoption of this drain in 2017/18 and it would become part of AX16025 Steelgoose/Folly Drain Scheme. Tree and Bushing works were complete and Reforming works had begun.

A chart detailing further planned Winter Works was provided for information. Currently, Winter Works were 40% complete.

Mr R. Adam queried what action was being taken to address issues with the culvert under Goosemoor Lane. The Operations Manager reported that a partnership meeting was being held with representation from all authorities and the culvert was due to be surveyed. He would keep members up to date. The Operations Manager further reported that a partnership approach was also being undertaken to address flooding issues alongside the railway line and through Kings Park at Retford (see below).

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9:4 PCSA Works

The Operations Manager was to attend a meeting on 16th November 2021 to plan the following year's works. There had been a lack of contact with the Environment Agency due to illness and being busy during heavy weather incidents. Details of the following 2021/22 and 2022/23 PCSA planned works were presented for information.

<b>2021/22 PCSA works</b>	<b>2022/23 PCSA works</b>
South Level Engine Drain	South Level Engine Drain
River Idle - Gringley Bailey Bridge heading East	River Idle - Misson to Gringley PS

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9:5 Emergency Drain Repairs

There had been a culvert collapse at North Moor Drain AXD431200, which was added to the Emergency Drain Repairs Scheme. Photographs of the collapse and a map were provided.

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9:6 Plant

Photographs of the two new Toyota Hilux pick-ups were presented. Proposed plant replacements were shared for information, along with the proposal that the Board approve purchase of a new mobile pump up the cost of £35,000.

Mr M.A. Harris asked about the Spearhead mower head, details of which had been provided under 9:6. He queried whether a conveyor was necessary, particularly as this

seemed to increase the number of instances of windscreen damage by stones being ejected from the unit.

#### RESOLVED

- (a) That the Board approve purchase of a new mobile pump up to the cost of £35,000.
- (b) That Officers review the requirement for a conveyor on the Spearhead, reviewing the pros and cons and any other options available, a report to be brought back to the Board for consideration when the existing machine was due for replacement.

#### 9:7 Toft Dyke, Clayworth

Officers had been approached by Clayworth Parish Council (CPC), requesting assistance with proposed works along Toft Dyke, a watercourse running through the center of the village. Although the channel had managed well in achieving the 1 in 75 year event standard, general improvements were needed along with issues surrounding the buildup of debris consistently getting caught on the County Council structure. It was thought that the formation of a cutwater on the pier could prevent this. Officers sought the Board's approval for taking part in what would be a Partnership Scheme between the Board, Bassetlaw District Council (BDC), CPC and likely Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC). Contributions of £10,000 from BDC and £500 from CPC had already been offered.

#### RECEIVED

That the Board take part in a Partnership Scheme to alleviate issues with debris buildup and general improvements along Toft Dyke, Clayworth.

### 10. COMPENSATION RATES 2021/22

The Senior Operations Manager presented proposed Rates of Compensation for 2021/22 as detailed below together with a copy of the Compensation Policy.

#### 1. Crop Loss

- (a) Where notice of entry had been served before a field had been drilled or planted, compensation would be calculated at the rate of £371.88 per acre for cereals and £274.75 per acre for oilseed rape.
- (b) Where notice of entry had **not** been served and entry onto the land was between September and February and a field had been cultivated, drilled and sprayed, compensation would be paid at a rate of £557.81 per acre for cereals and £412.13 per acre for oilseed rape.
- (c) Where notice of entry had not been served and entry onto the land was between March and harvest, compensation would be paid at the rate of £743.75 per acre for cereals and £549.50 per acre for oilseed rape.
- (d) Grazing Land
  - (i) Grazing land £150 per acre
  - (ii) Grazing land, reinstatement work £200 per acre

2 Permanent Loss of Use of Land

Any width in excess of that which had been reprofiled to the measured width shown on the drain records of the Board, would be paid at the rate of £6,912 per acre for loss of productive land.

3. Summer Drain Maintenance (Weedcutting)

Where the Board travelled through standing crops to undertake weedcutting operations, compensation would be paid for crop loss at the rate of 37p per linear meter for all cereal crops and 54p per linear meter for oil seed rape. Root crops will be subject to private negotiation. Compensation would not be paid for access through grassland.

The Board endorsed the policy to go through standing crops where necessary in the interest of efficiency and to minimise soil structure damage.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve the above rates of compensation for 2021/22.

11. BYELAW APPLICATION - WRAYS DRAIN

Wrays Drain Culvert - Crowle

The Engineer presented details of discussions with North Lincolnshire Council (NLC) Highways and Drainage Team, their consultants Mason Clark and Severn Trent Water, to improve Highway Drainage along Godnow Road as well as the Severn Trent sewerage network and upgrade to Crowle Treatment Works. If these improvements were to go ahead, there would likely be an increase of highway water entering the Board maintained culverted Wray's Drain.

A combined model was currently being prepared by Mason Clark and Severn Trent. Severn Trent's model showed a reduction of flooding to two areas of Crowle, however it presented possible negative implications for Axholme Avenue and Lindum Grove. It was hoped that the combined model would present further information in the search to provide the most benefit to Crowle and Ealand residents.

Severn Trent would be taking this scheme to their June Board meeting, to determine whether funding would be allocated. Ordinarily, a degree of surety was required from scheme partners, for funding to be granted. If this were not available, it was likely that improvements to the Crowle area would be delayed by at least six years.

RESOLVED

That the Board grant delegated authority to the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Engineer to consent works around the Board' maintained Wrays Drain Culvert, providing that:

- (a) The proposal did not move the flood risk to others, and
- (b) The proposal did not commit the Board to replacing in part or in full Wrays Drain Culvert unless the Board's costs were met in full.

12. REGISTER OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

Members had been requested at the end of February 2021 to review and update Declarations of Interest forms. This was an essential task, completed for review by the Internal Auditor. It was noted that Mr H. Barton, Mr I. Bint, Mr P. Bradwell, Mr A. Catherall, Mr R. Mason, Cllr T. Mitchell, Cllr Mrs J. Reed, Cllr D. Robinson and Mr M. Wagstaff had not yet reviewed and updated their forms.

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### 13. CORPORATE SERVICES UPDATE

The Corporate Services Manager presented an update on projects being undertaken by the Department and in particular the following:

(a) Electronic working and Asset Management System (AMS)

Electronic working was to commence shortly. Examples of electronic log sheets, along with Point of Work Risk Assessments, were provided for information.

Details of a proposed Asset Management System (AMS), which would complement electronic working, were also presented; discussions were underway with three companies to find the most suitable system. The AMS would give improved access and visibility and would also allow staff out on the ground to input information directly onto the system. The Board's approval was requested to proceed with the development of the proposed AMS within the approved budget.

RESOLVED

That Officers proceed with the development of an electronic Asset Management System.

(b) Staffing

The Corporate Services Manager gave an overview of staffing changes and circulated a staff structure with photos for information. An update on home working was provided, this was working well and may be considered as an option at least some of the time, in the future.

A Health and Wellbeing service had recently been launched for all staff, providing 24/7 access to a GP, confidential financial and legal advice, as well as general advice.

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(c) Board Updates

Land Registry relating to Pumping Stations and any parcels of land owned by the Board was nearing completion.

Project Summaries were being prepared for circulation Cllr Mrs H. Brand stated that these would be very useful to show colleagues at Bassetlaw and offered her support in distributing these.

It was noted that there had been an increase in the number of queries received over the last 12 months (476 recorded). This was apparent across other boards and the EA too and likely due to the fact that people had been at home more and also out walking during lockdown.

No responses had been received in relation to the recently advertised Board vacancy. An Election would be held this year.

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#### 14. VIRTUAL TOUR

The Engineer presented a virtual tour of ongoing and planned asset renewal and refurbishment projects - an investment of £6,794,000, including FDGiA.

(a) Carr Dyke Retford, Flooding Issues/Planned Alleviation Scheme

Following several instances of flooding along Darrel Road in Retford last year, Officers had been working with the Environment Agency other authorities to find a solution. The flooding was caused by water overtopping from the Environment Agency's River Idle into two parcels of undeveloped land south of the Board maintained Carr Dyke, flowing under the railway line and overwhelming the lowland drainage system causing the Carr Dyke to flood into the allotments, gardens and last year, into two properties. As a temporary measure, the Board would be installing a restriction in the Carr Dyke about 10m to the north of the railway culvert within the Board's watercourse at the southern end of Darrel Road. Surveys undertaken by the Board indicated that this should reduce the frequency of flooding although it would not be effective if King's Park was inundated from the main river. The Board's Officers would continue to work with the EA to find a more permanent solution.

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(b) Gringley Pumping Station Demolition/Discharge Pipe Failure

The station had been demolished and pipework, described as large "snails" due to their appearance had been left on site. This was necessary due to the fact that these structures were connected to the penstocks, controlling water flow on the site. They would remain in place for the next 3-4 years, until the next refurbishment.

During the demolition of the station, the pipework to the sump had been damaged due to it being inflexible. Upon inspection, it became evident that three prior repairs had been undertaken. New pipework was therefore being manufactured to overcome this problem permanently.

Mr M. Wagstaff asked the Engineer about the current status of Wiseton Pumping Station, as he had been contacted by nearby landowners concerned that it was not running well. The Engineer stated that it was a reliable station with the three pumps in the building all in good condition and fully operational. Currently, the station had a combined capacity of 60% of what was theoretically required in that catchment; the only time the other 40% may be required was roughly four days in a year although this would not cause serious flooding, it would just result in the catchment taking longer to drain.

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#### 15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr J. Briggs brought attention to the need for a Direction Strategy, stating that with rising rainfall and water levels, discussion would be beneficial. If there would be an opportunity for

members to meet on a less formal level, get to know one another and discuss Board direction, this would be helpful. The Chairman offered his support, with the Chief Executive stating that Officers would gladly arrange this. Cllr R. Allcock mentioned that the Humber Strategy, of which he was a member, discussed strategic direction for that region for the next 100 years taking into account climate change and the frequency of heavy rainfall events, and he welcomed more discussion on this topic.

Cllr Mrs H. Brand built upon this concern for the future, asking if the Board had a plan to replace its vehicles with electric ones, with the impending 2030 deadline to replace all diesel/petrol vehicles.

Mr I. Bint felt that a strong data pack would need to be provided at the meeting suggested by Cllr J. Briggs, to have a basis to work from. Cllr R. Robinson agreed and offered his support.

The Chief Executive referred to the Catchment Flood Management Plan and the Isle of Axholme Strategy. He stated that more funding would be required in the future and any evidence to support this would be beneficial. He added that contacting Central Government to make them aware of concerns would be essential. The Chairman asked Board members to record any points to address and to send them to the Chief Executive. A meeting would be arranged to discuss this later in the year.

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CHAIRMAN