

Minutes of a Meeting of the Board held at Beckingham Recreation Room on Tuesday, 22nd September 2015 at 10.00 a.m.

Elected Members

* Messrs M.A. Harris (Chairman)
* R. Adam (Vice-Chairman)
* A. Barker
* P. Bradwell
* G.R.J. Bramhill
* J. Coggon
* P. Cornish
* K. Durdy
* R. Mason
* M. Wagstaff
* S. White
* vacancy

Nominated by North Lincolnshire Council

* Cllr R. Allcock
* Mr N. Arrand
* Cllr J. Briggs
* Messrs R. Chapman
* Mr J. Lee
* Cllr D. Robinson
* Cllr D.J. Rose
* Mr J. Smith
* Cllr Mrs L. Redfern
* Cllr Mrs J. Reed
* vacancy

Nominated by Bassetlaw District Council

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

* *Present*

* Messrs A. McGill (Chief Executive)
* D.J. Sisson (Engineer)
* R.P. Mitchell (Director of Operations)
* S. Thackray (Director of Finance)
* R.A. Brown (Engineering Manager)

* *In attendance*

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs J. Coggon, R. Mason, Cllr D. Robinson and Cllr Mrs J. Reed.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs R. Allcock and D. Robinson declared an interest as members of North Lincolnshire Council and their local parish councils.

3. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

4. BOARD MINUTES (Pages 242 to 253)

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 16th June 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

5:1 Minute 10:7, Page 245 - Adlingfleet and Whitgift Outfalls

The Chief Executive reported that on 3rd September the tide was let in and kept in for 24 hours after which the water was let out at the next low tide to flush the Adlingfleet outfall. This had proved successful in clearing the outfall but officers would continue to monitor the situation.

He stated that regular inspections were also being carried out on the Whitgift outfall but no action was required at present. This would also continue to be reviewed.

REVIEWED

5:2 Minute 15:1, Page 250 - River Idle Management Partnership - De-silting

The Engineer reported that no-one had been appointed yet to undertake the modelling on the River Idle but information was available to pass on once the appointment had been made.

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5:3 Minute 20, Page 251 - Election

The Chief Executive reported that notice had been placed in the local newspapers for nominations to the Board. Members were reminded that nomination papers were due back at 12 noon on Thursday, 24th September 2015, and if a poll was necessary this would take place on 27th October 2015.

The number of members for the nine electoral districts was as follows:

<i>Electoral District</i>	<i>Number of Members to be Elected</i>
Adlingfleet and Whitgift	1
Althorpe	1
Crowle	1
Everton	2
Garthorpe	1
Rivers Idle and Ryton	3
South Axholme	1
West Axholme	1
West Butterwick	1

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5:4 Minute 22, Page 253 - Staffing

The Chief Executive reported that the incentive scheme had been introduced and was well received by the Direct Labour Organisation. Although in the early stages, this appeared to be working well. The Standard Hour Value for weedcutting over the first four week period was 1,503 and the work was undertaken in 1,070 hours, achieving the maximum bonus of 16.66% (a cost to the Board of £1,871). The second four week period had achieved a bonus of 8.33%. It was noted that there had been an increase in productivity but no reduction in the quality of the work and all policies and procedures continued to be adhered to. The Chief Executive stated that the introduction of the scheme had improved morale bringing the team together to achieve the maximum output.

The scheme would continue to be monitored and regular updates presented to the Board.

The new land drainage operative had commenced work on 17th August 2015 and was an experienced tractor and flail driver. He had settled in well.

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6. CONSORTIUM COMMITTEE MINUTES

The attached minutes were circulated and confirmed as a correct record by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The Chairman stated that these meetings helped to get the best from the Consortium arrangement for all parties and also gave an opportunity to compare ways of working between the Boards.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Consortium Committee held on 15th July 2015 and the recommendations made be approved by the Board.

7. DRAINAGE RATES AND SPECIAL LEVIES

The Director of Finance reported that drainage rates and special levies collected at 14th September 2015 totalled £415,561.85; 83.04% of the total amount due for the year and an increase on the amount collected at the same time last year.

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8. FINANCE

The Director of Finance presented the attached report for consideration.

Regarding 1:2 it was noted that the variance on workmen's costs had been incorrectly calculated and should read -£2,000. The Ford Ranger had been advertised for sale with tenders due back on 2nd October; this was expected to reduce the variance on plant costs to -£5,000.

Officers highlighted the major expenditure shown on the attached payment schedule which included purchase of the new Volvo excavator and the installation of a new weedscreen at Paupers Pumping Station. Mr G.R.J. Bramhill queried the cost of crushing and spreading the mudstone spoil on the Paupers Drain which had cost in the region of £47,000. Officers reported that the cost had been higher than expected as the necessary equipment (dozer and crusher) had been hired in and charged for on a weekly rate and the job had been delayed due to the weather as the ground was too wet to work. Mr Bramhill suggested that it may have been cheaper to get a price for the whole job. In response to the Vice-Chairman, the Engineer reported that the land purchase cost was in respect of land at Belton to secure access to Godnow Pumping Station; this matter had been ongoing since 2009.

- (a) That the Board's financial position be noted.
- (b) That the attached schedule of payments over £500 be approved.
- (c) That the Finance Committee be given delegated authority to annually review and amend the Financial Regulations, reporting any changes to the Board.

9. OPERATIONS REPORT

The Chief Executive presented the attached report for information.

The Vice-Chairman expressed concern that no work had yet been undertaken in the Idle and Ryton and Everton areas and that the Board did not seem to be working with the landowners to enable work to be undertaken around crops. Mr R. Mason reported a similar problem in the Crowle area when the Board had entered land after drilling. It was agreed that liaison between the Board and the landowners was essential to minimise disturbance.

The Chairman queried the positioning of spoil removed from the drain during maintenance works, stating that when continually deposited on the top of the bank it built up over time and he queried whether the spoil could be spread. The Engineer stated that the Board had to remove the spoil and deposit it in one operation to cause as little damage as possible. He did, however, state that landowners could request spreading of the spoil if they so wished.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the attached report be noted.
- (b) That the Chief Executive ensure improved communication with landowners, particularly in respect of maintenance works and spreading of spoil.
- (c) That the Chief Executive review the programme for the summer maintenance works to see how this could be improved taking into account that work had not yet commenced in some areas.

10. ASSET RENEWAL AND REFURBISHMENT PROJECTS

10:1 *Crowle Pumped Area*

10:1:1 Paupers Drain Channel Refurbishment

The Engineer reported that the new weedscreen cleaner had been installed and was operating well and the old Smalley excavator screen cleaner had been sold by tender for £625.00.

The outfall flap from the surge chamber and the last of the three pumps had been refurbished and reinstalled. Damage to the guide vanes had necessitated specialist cast iron repairs at an additional cost of £5,922.00. Work on the power supply including new switch gear was also underway.

The current predicted outturn of expenditure on the scheme was £237,325.00; well within the budget of £394,144.00.

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10:1:2 North Soke Dyke Bank Raising and Godnow Pumping Station

Six contractors had been invited to tender for this work. The Engineer reported on the three tenders that had been received and adjudicated on a point basis with 60% of points available attributed to cost and 40% to health and safety and quality. He stated that the contract had been awarded to J.E. Spence and Son Limited and work commenced on 14th September 2015.

It was noted that at the Board meeting on 16th June 2015 it was reported that the approved budget for the works was £29,230, this was incorrect with the actual approved budget available for these works being £53,826.00 (£29,735.00 for the North Soke Dyke Bank Raising and £24,091.00 for Godnow Pumping Station).

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10:1:3 Paupers Drain Channel Improvements

As reported earlier the spoil containing mudstone downstream of the A161 had been crushed and spread using specialist hired in equipment. Unfortunately this took longer than estimated due to the high volumes of clay in the spoil and the inclement weather. Some of the remaining spoil at the outfall end would be used in the North Soke Dyke bank raising works and the remainder would be spread.

RESOLVED

10:1:4 Bewcarrs Pumping Station

The Engineer reported on the two tenders received for the mechanical and electrical works at Bewcarrs Pumping Station. A detailed adjudication of the tenders had been carried out on the basis of 60% of point scores available to whole life cost and 40% to health and safety and quality factors. Both suppliers had offered various additional options which were taken into account within the adjudication. Officers reported that Bedford Pumps Limited had offered the best overall value and detailed discussions and a pre-contract meeting had therefore been held.

The Engineer reported that Bedford Pumps Ltd had also been asked to submit an alternative price excluding the weedscreen cleaner (for reasons given in 10:3 below). The revised price from Bedford Pumps Limited was £240,876 and included a control panel supplied by Inter-Lec Limited. The estimated cost allowed for in the budget was £237,000 for this element within the overall budget £646,403. The estimated cost allowed in the budget for the weedscreen cleaner was £79,000.

Northern Power had also submitted an up to date quotation of £90,370 for the provision of an electricity supply to the station; £92,000 had been allowed in the budget for this work of which £1,189 had already been paid to prepare the wayleave consents.

The Engineer reported that should the tenders be accepted work would commence as soon as possible. There was a 20 to 24 week pump build time and the small amount of civils works would be undertaken during this period.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the contract for mechanical and electrical works (excluding the weedscreen cleaner) be awarded to Bedford Pumps Ltd in the sum of £240,876.
- (b) That the quotation of £90,370 submitted by Northern Power be accepted for the provision of an electricity supply to the station.

10:2 Greenholme Pumping Station

The electrical and mechanical plant at Greenholme Pumping Station was planned for replacement or full refurbishment in 2020/2021 under a grant aided scheme as the individual elements were approaching the end of their useful life.

Officers reported that the Smalley exactor had recently been stolen from Greenholme Pumping Station. Unfortunately this only had a value of £500 and no insurance claim had been made as the excess payable on the policy was £500.

Hand raking of the site was currently being undertaken and it was agreed that the installation of an automatic weedscreen cleaner would be a great advantage as the station stood on its own at the western side of the Board's district and received high loads of weed at the screen.

The Engineer reported that investigations carried out for the provision of an automatic weedscreen cleaner at the station had identified that the existing electrical control panel would be at risk of non-compliance and failure should changes be made to accommodate the weedrake. Officers therefore suggested that the provision of the automatic weedscreen cleaner and the replacement of the electrical control panel should be carried out at the same time.

Members therefore considered the following options:

Option 1 - Replacement of the control panel and a provision of an automatic weedscreen cleaner to commence during the current financial year and conclude in 2016/2017; the work to be funded by the Board at an estimated cost of £125,000.

Option 2 - To bring forward the refurbishment/replacement from 2020/2021 to commence during the current year at an estimated cost of £387,000 (this had a provisional grant-aid allocation of £100,000).

The Director of Finance reported that the Board could afford to stand the cost of the works should the scheme be brought forward but this would reduce the balances by between 4% to 6%.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Board proceed with the whole scheme at a cost of £387,000 in 2015/16 if grant aid was available.
- (b) If grant aid was not available the Board undertake the replacement of the control panel and installation of an automatic weedscreen cleaner at an estimated cost of £124,000.

10:3 Automatic Weedscreen Cleaners - Bewcarrs and Greenholme Pumping Stations

The Engineer reported that tenders had been requested for the supply of automatic weedscreen cleaners for the Consortium for the purchase of one, two and three cleaners to see whether discounts were available.

A full adjudication of the tenders had still to be undertaken but the Engineer reported that the maximum cost of the two weedscreen cleaners would be

between £131,000 and £169,000; a discount of between 1.53% and 10%. Should Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board agree to accept the tender the discount would be between 1.75% and 15%. The adjudication would include the capital cost and the whole life cost.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be granted delegated authority to accept the most suitable tenders for the supply of the two weedcreens at a maximum cost of £169,000.

10:4 Strategy 2025 - Pumping Station Refurbishments

Site inspections carried out at Gringley Pumping Station prior to refurbishment of the submersible pump sets had highlighted potential structural issues with the station super structure. A full inspection was therefore undertaken by J. Robertus Design and the newer part of the building housing the submersible pumps had been given a clean bill of health. The older part of the building was however in an advanced state of decay. The detailed report was awaited and would be presented to the Board for consideration in November 2015.

The Vice-Chairman reported that the older part of the building still housed the redundant engines and enquired what would be done with these. The Engineer replied that this would be considered once the full report had been received.

Once any structural issues had been addressed the contract would be awarded for the works within the approved budget of £22,500.00.

In response to a query from Mr S. White, the Engineer reported that it usually took between six to eight weeks for a refurbishment but as there was only one pump to be refurbished this should be completed sooner. He further reported that there was reserve pumping capacity at the station and also mobile pumps available.

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11. BYELAW APPLICATIONS

11:1 Carr Dyke - Land off Heathfield Gardens, Retford

The Engineer reported application had been made to erect fencing one metre from the bank top of the Board maintained Carr Dyke and to install an access culvert in the same watercourse at land off Heathfield Gardens in the parish of Retford. This was in respect of a proposed development consisting of ten residential properties which would be erected four metres from the drain bank top, six with boundary fences which would be located one metre from the top of the Board's watercourse. Byelaw consent was granted in 2011 but this had now lapsed.

The Engineer reported that the developer had the agreement and support of the landowner on the opposite bank for a nine metre access strip which would provide the Board with access in perpetuity to undertake any future maintenance and reforming works. Officers reported that the watercourse was in a poor condition and the developers had agreed to reform the section of watercourse adjacent to the site at their expense and to the specification and satisfaction of the Board.

As part of the works the developer also proposed to install a ten metre long culvert using 1,050 mm diameter pipes to provide access for the Board and the adjacent landowner.

Concern was expressed regarding the close proximity of the fence to the Board maintained watercourses, particularly with regard to any necessary reforming works and the stability of the fence in the future and it was suggested that the fence would be better situated two metres away from the watercourse or that the watercourse should be culverted. Concern was also expressed about garden rubbish being deposited in the watercourse and the Engineering Manager reported that regular inspections could be undertaken to ensure that this did not occur and that the purchasers of the properties could be notified that this was in breach of the Board's byelaws.

RESOLVED

- (a) That consent to erect fencing one metre from the drain bank top of the Board maintained Carr Dyke be refused.
- (b) That the Board's officers negotiate with the developer to see if it would be possible to erect the fence at least two metres from the watercourse or to culvert the section adjacent to the proposed development; the outcome to be reported to the November Board meeting.

12. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

12:1 The Eels (England and Wales) Regulations 2009

The Engineer reported that the first meeting of the National Eel Group had been held and ADA was represented at the meeting. A full report was awaited but early indications were that a more pragmatic approach was being adopted following the further directions of DEFRA:

- (a) Within the legislation there is no time limit on implementation of the Eel Regulations. It appears that the Environment Agency had unilaterally implemented dates to correspond with the Water Frame Work Directive epochs for convenience and logical progression.
- (b) The Environment Agency are not spending any money on capital works for eel passage alone and will only undertake capital works in conjunction with required Flood Risk Management programs. This appears to be just like the Dutch approach.
- (c) Where Flood Risk Management works do go ahead and are at priority sites the Environment Agency are not able to spend anything more than an additional 5% on eel related works (unless third party funding is obtained for this purpose).

The Engineer reported that although it had not yet been confirmed, this policy was being adopted when preparing the Board's future capital program.

12:2 Water Voles - Class Licensing

Officers reported that details of the Class Licence for IDB undertaking water vole displacement were now available. The Class Licence was necessary as Natural England considered displacement as undertaken by watercourse managers was potentially a breach of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Displacement (the activity of closely and repeatedly mowing a watercourse bank to encourage water voles to relocate to the opposite uncut bank) was undertaken by IDBs prior to reforming a watercourse.

The Class Licence required the initial cutting of vegetation to bare earth to be undertaken during the periods 15th February to 14th April or 15th September to 31st October (inclusive). This was now factored into all the Board's reforming work programmes and, if not completed in this timeframe, the works would be delayed until the next cutting period if water voles were present.

Where both banks were cut, i.e. for the installation of a culvert the maximum length was 150 metres, the aforementioned conditions also applied. It was noted that this also applied to all culverting proposals, if water voles were present. Displacement for culverts over 150 metres would require a special Licence.

The Engineer reported that recording and reporting arrangements were being reviewed, however, it was expected that the Board's existing recording scheme would fulfil most of the Licence requirements for monitoring.

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12:3 Isle of Axholme and Hatfield Chase Landscape Partnership/Keadby Warping Drain

The project development stage was expected to be concluded by the end of the year with the five year delivery phase to commence in 2016.

In September 2013 the Board agreed that to deter badger damage to Keadby Warping Drain (a high level carrier taking flows from Bewcarrs Pumping Station to the River Trent and discharging via an Environment Agency maintained Gravity Sluice) by regularly flailing the banks. This work would consist of five cuts per year at an estimated cost of £1,980.

Keadby Warping Drain had subsequently been included in the bid within the Isle of Axholme and Hatfield Chase Landscape Partnership scheme to develop the land for grazing by sheep or goats to deter badgers by removing the cover. A recent quotation for fencing the perimeter of Keadby Warping Drain (some 20 acres) had been received in the sum of £20,600 with a possible grant of £8,000 from the Isle of Axholme and Hatfield Chase Landscape Partnership. The Engineer reported that a provision had been made in the Crowle scheme budget for £10,000 towards the badger works, the remaining £2,600 for the fencing proposal could be financed from efficiencies within the Crowle scheme overall budget and/or the contingency.

Officers reported that if the land was fenced and grazed the flailing cost would reduce by 60%. A grazing income of between £472 and £885 (£40 - £75 an acre) would also be received by the Board.

In response to Mr P. Cornish, the Engineer stated that the fencing would not restrict the Board's access, it would be possible to work over the top of the fencing. Concern was expressed as to whether there would be any takers to rent the land and whether there were any rights of way over the land. Officers confirmed that the fencing would be erected at the bottom of the bank and access to walkers along the bank top would not be restricted. The Engineer stated that the proposal would improve biodiversity and be a more model way of managing the land.

In response to Mr R. Mason the Engineer reported that at the moment the badgers were at a high enough level to cause minimal disruption but if action was not taken it may be necessary to undertake piling of a section of the watercourse to stabilise the bank.

Members suggested that a decision should be deferred until the next Board meeting to enable Officers to undertake further investigations into whether there was a market for additional grazing land in this area, whether there were any rights of way that would be affected and to obtain additional quotations for the fencing. Cllr Mrs J. Reed stated that the deadline for the grant funding was fast approaching and offered to make enquiries to see whether this could be extended so these investigations could be carried out. She suggested that if this was not possible the decision could be delegated to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

RESOLVED

That Officers undertake further investigations into grazing the 20 acres of land alongside Keadby Warping Drain and if a decision was required before the next Board meeting, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be granted delegated authority to make that decision (see 13 below).

12:4 Barn Owl Nest Boxes

Officers reported that three barn owl chicks had been ringed when the nest boxes were inspected in August; this was less than the twenty two in 2014 possibly due to a poor year for their principal quarry, the field vole, whose numbers were known to fluctuate. A second brood of three chicks at Greenholme Pumping Station had been ringed on a second visit in September.

Kestrels and Stock Doves had also bred in the nest boxes this year.

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12:5 Humber Nature Partnership

The Humber Nature Partnership ran an award scheme recognising and celebrating activities that helped to improve the Humber's Environment. The Water Management Consortium had submitted an entry "Water Vole Conservation at a Landscape Scale" detailing the Boards' work with water voles across both operational and consenting activities.

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13. RIVER TRENT CATCHMENT FLOOD MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ISLE OF AXHOLME STRATEGY

The Chief Executive and Engineer had met with Mr M. Goodhall (Environment Agency) and Mr L. Rawlinson (M.P.) in July to discuss the way forward for the Strategy.

The Engineer presented the Delivery of Recommendation which he had prepared along with representatives from North Lincolnshire Council, Doncaster East Internal Drainage Board and Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council.

Cllr R. Allcock stated that the proposed Governance Structure and Membership was far too complicated. He suggested that the Isle of Axholme Strategy Group, chaired by Mr A. Percy, M.P. included members from all authorities and could be used rather than setting up an additional strategy group. He agreed that an Asset Management and Delivery Group and the Funding Group would be useful but did not see the need for any additional groups. He suggested that one group could review all the assets and see how these could be used more effectively. Cllr R. Allcock stated that there had already been too many meetings and still nothing had been achieved. He suggested that the Board should meet to discuss this matter in detail.

The Chief Executive reported that once the Strategy was agreed there was no reason this approach could not be applied throughout the rest of the Boards' areas. Mr A. Percy was supportive as was the MP for Newark and they were keen to see this taken forward as were other Boards and MPs.

The Vice-Chairman emphasised that the issue of funding from the whole catchment not just within the Boards area also needed to be addressed.

Cllr J. Briggs stated that it was important to get the correct structure in place to take this forward and that time must be taken to ensure that this was given adequate consideration.

Mr P. Cornish emphasised the importance of getting adequate main river maintenance undertaken on a regular basis before going any further. The Chief Executive assured him that this would form part of the review and a plan for delivery would be included. The Chief Executive stated that all the information was available, it just required reviewing and a plan preparing to pull all the work together, e.g. what needs doing, how could it be done better, who will deliver it and how it would be funded.

In response to the Vice-Chairman, the Engineer reported that the River Idle was not included as it was not covered by the Isle of Axholme Strategy.

RESOLVED

- (a) That an extraordinary Board meeting be held in late October to discuss the way forward for the Isle of Axholme Strategy in detail and to approve the Governance/Delivery Structure.
- (b) That the River Idle and the proposed grazing of land alongside Keadby Warping Drain also be discussed at the meeting in October.

14. HEALTH AND SAFETY

14:2 Legislation

There was no new legislation that would affect the Board.

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14:2 Incidents

The Chief Executive reported on minor health and safety incidents across the Consortium since the last Board meeting. No major injuries were reported.

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14:3 Training

The Chief Executive reported that each of the three Boards had a safety representative nominated by the workforce who served on the Health and Safety Committee together with the Supervisors. Training had been arranged for all members of the Committee to ensure that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities with regard to health and safety.

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14:3 Appointment of Health and Safety Officer

The Chief Executive reported that Health and Safety was an important part of the Board's operations and due to the absence of the Director of Operations a part-time Health and Safety Officer would be appointed to ensure that the Boards remained up to date and compliant and to continue with the implementation of the new Health and Safety Policy and Procedures across the Consortium.

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15. DELEGATED MATTERS

15:1 Byelaw Applications

Officers reported on the following applications for byelaw consent that had been granted under delegated authority since the last meeting:

IOA 420200 Construction of a flow controlled drainage system and the permitted discharge of 3l/s for the 1 in 100 year event with a 30% allowance for climate change into the riparian drain increasing discharge into the Board maintained Bagsby Road Drain at national grid reference SE81057 00547 in the parish of Owston Ferry

IOA244800 Installation of a water pipe crossing the Board maintained IOA 244800 Drain at national grid reference SE 77347 14542 in the parish of Crowle.

All work would be carried out to the specification and satisfaction of the Board's officers.

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15:2 Section 23 Applications

No Section 23 applications had been processed since the last Board meeting.

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15:3 Planning Applications

Officers had commented on one application for planning permission since the last meeting. No objections had been raised.

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16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

CHAIRMAN