

# ISLE OF AXHOLME AND NORTH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE WATER LEVEL MANAGEMENT BOARD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Board held at Westwoodside Village Hall, on Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012 at 2.00 p.m.

<u>Elected Members</u>		<u>Nominated by North Lincolnshire Council</u>	
*	Messrs M.A. Harris (Chairman)	*	Messrs R. Allcock
*	R. Adam (Vice-Chairman)	*	N. Arrand
*	P. Bradwell	*	T. Barker
*	G.R.J. Bramhill	*	J. Briggs
*	R.H. Brown	*	N. Culpin
*	J. Coggon	*	W. Eckhardt
*	P. Cornish	*	D. Harrison
*	K. Durdy	*	J. Lee
*	R. Mason	*	D. Robinson
*	C.W. Moore		J. Smith
*	G.T. Wagstaff	Mrs	L. Redfern
*	S. White		
		<u>Nominated by Bassetlaw District Council</u>	
		*	Mrs H. Brand
		*	Mr G. Rickells

\* *Present*

\* Messrs A. McGill (Chief Executive)

\* D.J. Sisson (Engineer)

\* M. Mitchell (Director of Technical Services)

\* R.P. Mitchell (Director of Operations)

\* D. Fullwood (Engineering Manager)

\* M.D. Pilkington (Works Supervisor)

\* S. Thackray (Director of Finance)

\* *In attendance*

Two members of the public were also present: Messrs N. Garner of Low Burnham and Mr G. Wager of Epworth Turbary.

## 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Mr N. Culpin and Mrs L. Redfern.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr R. Allcock, Mr J. Briggs, Mr D. Robinson - agenda item 14 (Planning Applications).

Mr R. Mason - agenda item 9 (Payment Schedule).

Mr C.W. Moore - agenda item 8 (Compensation Rates).

## 3. NOTICE OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Four items to be discussed under Agenda Item 24.

4. BOARD MINUTES (Pages 40 to 47)

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2012 be confirmed as a correct record subject to 'jetting works' being replaced by 'cleaning out' in Minute 12, Page 42 - Operations Report.

5. MATTERS ARISING

Mr P. Bradwell enquired as to the position with the flushing of Adlingfleet outfall and the designated SSSI. The Engineer reported that the Environment Agency had been approached to set up a site meeting but no confirmed date had been set yet.

Mr G.R.J. Bramhill enquired as to whether East Riding of Yorkshire Council was still entitled to representation on the Board as it is not represented at the moment.

RESOLVED

That the Chief Executive enquire about representation from East Riding of Yorkshire Council.

6. FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Chief Executive presented the attached minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

Regarding Item 9 (Incident on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2012) the Chief Executive was pleased to report Mr I. Bywater was making progress and recovering well.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2012 and the resolutions made be approved.

7. PLANT AND COMPENSATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Chief Executive presented the attached minutes of the Plant and Compensation Committee meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Plant and Compensation Committee held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2012 and the resolutions made be approved.

8. COMPENSATION RATES

The Director of Operations outlined the details of the recommended compensation rates payable as per the attached paper. The recommended increase from £5,000 per acre to

£6,100 per acre for permanent loss of use of land would incur an extra cost to the Board of approximately £2,000 per annum based on the current works programme.

It was proposed by Mr J. Briggs and seconded by Mr S. White that the attached rates be approved.

RESOLVED

That the rates of compensation for 2012 be approved as detailed.

#### 9. PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The Director of Finance presented the attached schedule detailing payments made since the last Board meeting totalling £64,511.85.

Mr G. Rickells raised the issue of low-loader costs and the possibility of having the Board purchasing a trailer similar to that used by the Laneham IDB. The Director of Operations explained weight and tachograph issues but re-assured the Board members that all cost saving measures regarding vehicle transportation were constantly reviewed.

RESOLVED

That the payments detailed on the attached schedule be approved.

#### 10. DRAINAGE RATES AND SPECIAL LEVIES

##### 10:1 Rate Collection

The Chief Executive reported that the drainage rates and special levies outstanding at 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012 totalled £7,378.35; slightly more than the previous year.

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##### 10:2 Write-Offs

The Chief Executive also asked the Board to consider the write-off of uncollectable rates totalling £1,080.11 which has been identified during the amalgamation of all the Board's rating systems.

It was proposed by Mr R. Mason and seconded Mr P. Bradwell that these rates be written off.

RESOLVED

That uncollectable rates totalling £1,080.11 be written-off.

11. FINANCE

The Director of Finance presented the attached report showing the accounts for the year to date, the full year forecast, cash balances and borrowings at 16<sup>th</sup> March 2012 and the revised Financial Regulations.

Item 3:1 Investment of Balances – The Director of Finance advised the Board that other banks were being sought for investment purposes to ensure that no more than £250,000 was held with any single financial institution. The Nat West Bank and Nationwide were being considered.

Item 3:2 External Borrowing – The Director of Finance advised the Board that the loan repayments on the Volvo Excavator would finish in June 2012.

Item 4 Financial Regulations – The Director of Finance outlined the proposed revised Financial Regulations as per the attached document.

Mr S. White enquired about the use of Board credit cards. The Director of Finance reported that the use of credit cards was very low level; they were only used if other methods of payment were impractical.

It was proposed by Mr R.H. Brown and seconded by Mr W. Eckhardt that the Financial Regulations be adopted.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Board's financial position be noted.
- (b) That the attached Financial Regulations be adopted by the Board.

12. OPERATIONS REPORT

The Works Supervisor presented the attached report, further commenting on item 2:2:2 (the replacement culvert on Parochial Drain, West Butterwick) would be partially re-charged to the land owner.

It was noted that work on Doncaster Dyke at Haxey had been completed with the installation of a new culvert.

The Works Supervisor reported that Tom Tom recording devices were being installed in excavators and tractors the following week. The tracker had been removed from the Toyota and re-fitted to the new Isuzu.

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13. REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR PLANNING/BYELAW AND ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

The Engineer presented the attached document for consideration and approval.

Mr D. Harrison pointed out that on the attached Advice Note AN05: Service Crossings, page 78 stated 8.0 m clearance and Appendix B showed 9.0 m clearance. The Engineer confirmed that the figure in the text would be amended to read 9.0 m as shown in the drawing.

It was proposed by Mr R. Allcock and seconded Mr G.R.J. Bramhill that the Planning and Byelaw Policy and associated documents be adopted subject to the above amendment.

RESOLVED

That the attached Planning and Byelaw Policy and the six Advice Notes be adopted by the Board.

14. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Seven planning applications had been received since the last meeting and appropriate observations had been made by officers under delegated authority. No objections had been made.

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15. SECTION 23 APPLICATIONS/CONSENTS

15:1 The Engineer reported there had been no applications since the last meeting.

15:2 Application to fill a private watercourse adjacent to The Pines, 40 Doncaster Road, Westwoodside – XXXX

The Engineer gave an up-date on the progress made with this situation. The Board's officers and North Lincolnshire Council had conducted site investigations which showed there was a continual steady flow in the watercourse even in the current dry conditions. The source of the water had not yet been identified but may be underlying seepage or spring fed.

Culverting of the watercourse would be possible but a further assessment would be required to determine the specification and size of pipe.

The Engineer confirmed that any works would be overseen by the Board's officers.

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16. BYELAW APPLICATIONS / CONTRAVENTIONS / ENFORCEMENT

The Board's Engineer reported there had been no applications since the last meeting.

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17. CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMME

The Engineer presented the attached report.

17:1 Telemetry System

The Director of Technical Services and the Works Supervisor had visited Witham Fourth District Internal Drainage Board to view the Controlstar Systems and were satisfied that the system was of high quality and would meet the Board's requirements.

The Engineer recommended that the Controlstar Telemetry System, at a cost of £139,160.00, be set up and commence as soon as possible. This was proposed by Mr C.W. Moore and seconded Mr J. Coggon.

RESOLVED

That the Board accept Alternative Tender 2 submitted by Controlstar Systems in the sum of £139,160.00 for the supply and installation of a telemetry system.

17:2 Eastoft Boundary Drain Improvements

The Engineer confirmed that spoil heaps would be spread after harvest later this year.

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17:3 Boltgate Highway Safety Scheme

The Engineer reported that this scheme was progressing. The Railway Drain had been widened and work to replace the brick arch culvert would continue after Easter once the pipes were delivered.

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17:4 Epworth Turbary Water Level Management Plan

The Director of Technical Services reported that a number of options were considered and a presentation was given to the meeting. The plan "Epworth Turbary - prepared February 2012" was considered. The Scheme philosophy dictated that works would deliver significant benefits to the Turbary without detriment to the surrounding land. The Chairman reminded the Board that the Scheme would receive 100% grant funding.

The Engineer reported that this option had not yet been discussed with any other relevant parties but he requested approval in principle to move this option forward.

Mr R. Adam asked if this item would come back to the Board for further discussion. The Engineer advised that members would be kept fully up-dated on progress with

development of the option and outcomes of consultation process. Approval of the Board would be required before the finalised scheme proceeded.

RESOLVED

That this option be further developed and then taken forward for consultation.

17:5 Crowle Catchment Scheme and Paupers Pumping Station

The Engineer presented the attached report for consideration and approval. A number of options had been discussed and the Engineer recommended Option B to up-rate Paupers Pumping Station to a capacity of 6000 l/s at a cost of £1,069,875.

The Engineer also reminded members that grant aid was potentially available and would be applied for within the next two months. The outcome would not, however, be known until February 2013.

Mr J. Briggs thanked officers for the comprehensive report and proposed approval of Option B. This was seconded by Mr R. Allcock.

RESOLVED

That the Board proceed with Option B at a cost of £1,069,875

18. REQUEST FOR THE BOARD TO ADOPT PRIVATE WATERCOURSE

The Engineer reported that a request had been received for the Board to adopt the section of private watercourse shown in green on the attached plan in the parishes of Claborough and Welham.

It was noted that the applicant did not have control of the watercourse to its outfall and was therefore unable to improve the flow.

The following options were available.

Option 1 - Under Section 25, the Board could enforce reinstatement of the watercourse by the relevant land owners.

Option 2 - The Board could adopt this section of watercourse and take over future maintenance.

The Engineer pointed out that the watercourse did not fully meet the criteria for adoption and there would be significant cost implications to reinstating it. Alternatively, the section of watercourse could be adopted once it had been brought up to a satisfactory standard.

Option 3 - This case could be taken to the Land Tribunal by the applicant for a decision.

Mr G.R.J. Bramhill proposed that the Board should not adopt this section of watercourse and that the applicant be advised of the courses of action available including a local partnership approach to improvements and failing this, to take this case to the Land Tribunal. This was seconded by Mr R. Allcock.

RESOLVED

That this section of watercourse should not be adopted by the Board and the landowner be advised of the courses of action available to him.

19. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

19:1 Pollution Incident West Butterwick

A pollution incident affecting a Board maintained watercourse at West Butterwick was reported to the Environment Agency (EA) on Sunday, 29th January 2012 by a member of the public. The EA visited the site and determined that no response from the Board was necessary. It was likely that pollution had been in the system for some time before the report was received.

The Board's officers were not alerted to the incident until late in the investigations and were therefore unable to offer advice on how it could be contained. During discussions it became apparent that the EA staff did not have up to date contact information for the Board's staff. This was addressed and the EA local staff were provided with plans showing all of the Lower Trent IDBs' areas and contact details which would be included in the EA "standby pack".

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19:2 Nature Improvement Areas - Humberhead Levels Partnership

The Humberhead Levels Partnership had been selected as one of only 12 Nature Improvement Areas. DEFRA would provide funding of £587,295 over three years to support the partnership's work to deliver environmental improvements.

19:3 Catchment Restoration Fund - Idle and Ryton Restoration Project

The Engineer reported that the Catchment Restoration Fund was a DEFRA initiative only available to charities, which made £28 million available over the next three years for projects that:

- (a) restore more natural features in and around waters;
- (b) reduce the impact of man-made structures on wildlife in waters; or
- (c) reduce the impact of small, spread-out (diffuse) sources of pollution that arise from rural and urban land use.

The Board was advised that Nottingham Wildlife Trust submitted an expression of interest for a possible project along the Rivers Idle and Ryton. The project would

attempt to address water quality problems, conservation of species and habitats, floodplain reconnection and sustainable floodwater storage; issues that had been identified in the Isle of Axholme Flood Risk Management Strategy. As an operating authority active in the Rivers Idle and Ryton catchment area, the Board was identified as a key stakeholder.

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19:4 Strategy for Compliance with "The Eels (England and Wales) Regulations 2009"

The Engineer reported that the Eels (England and Wales) Regulations 2009 had come into force on 15th January 2010 and included two measures that would directly affect the Board's operational activities.

Firstly, in relation to the passage for Eels, it was a requirement of the Act that suitable passes for Eels be installed during the construction or alteration of an obstruction such as a sluice or pumping station. Support for financing these types of measures had, to date, been provided by Flood Defence Grant in Aid.

Secondly, screening to prevent Eel mortality would be required after 1st January 2015 for all abstractions that exceeded 20m<sup>3</sup> per day; this would include all the Board's Pumping Stations. The Engineer stated that physical screens with openings small enough to exclude Eels were incompatible with the conveyance of water and behavioural screens with strobe lights and/or acoustic measures were a possible alternative.

The Engineer estimated that the cost implication would initially be £1.5 million across the Board's area and this would not be achievable by 2015. To demonstrate compliance with the statute, the Engineer recommended that an extended time be sought so that this statute could be incorporated into planned future pumping station refurbishments therefore delaying expenditure beyond 2015. It was further recommended that a formal strategy be produced to take this exemption request forward. This was proposed by Mr R. H. Brown and seconded by Mr J. Briggs.

RESOLVED

That Officers prepare a DRAFT Strategy for Compliance with the Eel Regulations. That an extended period be sought to enable the requirements of this statute to be incorporated into planned future pumping station refurbishments.

20. HEALTH AND SAFETY

There were no matters to report.

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

21:1 Review Group

The Chairman discussed his attendance at the recent meeting of Environment Agency/DEFRA Large Projects Review Group where the 1 in 75 year strategy had been discussed. North Lincolnshire Council had offered to put in extra money to bring it up to a 1 in 100 year strategy. The Chairman discussed the Board's liaison with the Environment Agency and the Local Authority in the area and requested that the Board provide a formal statement of support for the Strategy. Mr J. Briggs suggested that a copy of this letter should also be sent to the local MP to also follow up on the Board's behalf.

Mr J. Coggon thanked the Chairman for putting the Board's views across at the meeting, stating that local knowledge was invaluable. Mr R. Allcock added that North Lincolnshire Council had sent a letter of support for the 1 in 100 year Strategy based on the commitment of the Environment Agency to maintain tidal defences etc.

RESOLVED

That a letter of support for the 1 in 100 year Strategy be sent to the Environment Agency from the Board, a copy to be forwarded to the local M.P.

21:2 Future Maintenance of Warping Drain, Owston Ferry

The Chief Executive reported that a DRAFT agreement had recently been received from the Environment Agency (EA) Midlands Region for the Board to carry out maintenance on the Warping Drain at Owston Ferry during the financial year 2012/13. The Agreement was such that the Board would be reimbursed for the cost of the works which would be undertaken to the EA's specification.

The Chief Executive stated that an expression of interest had also been submitted to undertake more extensive maintenance work on behalf of the EA. The outcome was not likely to be known until later in the year.

RESOLVED

That the Board pursue the Partnership Working arrangement.

22. DROUGHT

The Engineer reported that successive months of low rainfall over the last 18 months had led to a situation where drought conditions had been declared by the Environment Agency. The Board's Officers and Operational Staff had met to discuss the implications of the drought on water level management within the Board's area. The Chief Executive explained that the Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board was conducting a 12 month study looking at the reduction of energy consumption and monitoring water levels. The Chairman pointed out that the Board must now consider water level management as well as pumping and land drainage and the new telemetry system would provide better indications of the water levels. Board members discussed the need to have more water storage facilities.

The Works Supervisor stated that the widened Eastoft Boundary Drain would provide additional storage and that all the pumps were set at Summer levels or as high as safe operations would permit.

RESOLVED

That a meeting on drought conditions be arranged.

*Mr G.R.J. Bramhill left the meeting*

23. RISK REGISTER

The Chief Executive reported that this would be considered by the Finance Committee and the Plant and Compensation Committee and recommendations would be brought back for approval at the next Board meeting.

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24. ADA Trent Branch Conference

The Chairman announced the date of the Association of Drainage Authorities Trent Branch Annual Conference in Peterborough as 15<sup>th</sup> June 2012 and would include a trip to St. Germans Pumping Station. The cost would be £40 per delegate.

The following members expressed their interest in attending: Messrs M. Harris (Chairman), R. Adam (Vice-Chairman), K. Durdy, R. Allcock and J. Coggon.

RESOLVED

That the above members attend the Conference on 15th June.

25. EXTENDED AREA

The Engineer reported that the Board had been approached by North Lincolnshire Council for support with the newly introduced land drainage powers given to Lead Local Flood Authorities from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2012. North Lincolnshire Council requested that the Board provide technical support to deliver Section 23 consents. Mr D. Harrison pointed out that this may be no more than perhaps six cases per year and all costs would be reimbursed by North Lincolnshire Council. Mr R. Adam enquired whether Nottinghamshire Council had made a similar request and the Engineer advised that Nottinghamshire Council had not yet made a decision on how this would be implemented.

RESOLVED

That the Board provide technical support to North Lincolnshire Council for Section 23 consents, the cost of which would be reimbursed by the Council.

26. COMPLAINT

*Members of the public left the meeting.*

The Chief Executive reported that a complaint had been received details of which were considered by members and have been recorded on Pink Paper.

CHAIRMAN