

ISLE OF AXHOLME AND NORTH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE WATER LEVEL MANAGEMENT BOARD

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Board held at Haxey Memorial Hall, and via Microsoft Teams, on Tuesday, 22nd March 2022, at 10.00 a.m.

<u>Elected Members</u>		<u>Nominated by North Lincolnshire Council</u>	
*	Messrs J. Coggon (Chairman)	*	Cllr R. Allcock V
*	P. Cornish (Vice-Chairman)		Mr I. Bint
*	R. Adam		Cllr J. Briggs
	Vacancy	*	Cllr T. Mitchell V
	Vacancy	*	Mr M.D. Pilkington V
	J.H.T. Bramhill		Cllr Mrs J. Reed
	T. Dickinson		Cllr D. Robinson
	J. Fretwell	*	Cllr D.J. Rose
*	M.A. Harris		Three vacancies
	R. Mason		
*	M. Wagstaff		<u>Nominated by Bassetlaw District Council</u>
	M.T. Smith	*	Cllr Mrs H. Brand
			Cllr Mrs J.M. Sanger

\* *Present*

*	Messrs	A. McGill (Chief Executive)
*		N. Kemble (Engineer)
*		R. Brown (Technical Engineering Manager)
*		A. Malin (Senior Operations Manager) V
*		D. Braddy (Operations Manager)
*	Mesdames	N. Hind (Finance Manager)
*		C.B. Davies (Corporate Services Manager) V

\* *In attendance*

V = MS Teams attendance

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Messrs J.H.T. Bramhill, T. Dickinson, J. Fretwell, M.T. Smith, Cllrs J. Briggs, D. Robinson, and Mrs J.M. Sanger. Mrs J. Reed may be late.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman declared an interest in Agenda Item 15, planning application PA/2021/2086.

Cllr R. Allcock declared an interest in Agenda Item 15, planning applications PA/2021/2086, PA/2021/1596, PA/2021/2284.

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3. NOTIFICATIONS OF ITEMS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

4. BOARD MINUTES

Cllr Mrs H. Brand noted that she had sent her apologies for the previous meeting, but that these had not been recorded. Cllr T. Mitchell asked that his title be amended from "Mr" to "Cllr." Officers took note.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held 25th January 2022 held via Microsoft Teams (Pages 591-605) be confirmed as a correct record subject to it being noted that Cllr Mrs J. Sanger and Cllr Mrs H. Brand had switched places on the Plant/Finance Committees.

## 5. MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman apologised that the date for the meeting to discuss the Strategic Direction of the Board had been moved from March to May.

In response to the Chairman, Officers confirmed that the final Precept payment had been sent to the Environment Agency (EA).

Members asked whether a claim had been submitted for the pump at Southfield Pumping Station which had been removed by the manufacturer to investigate the issue, at their expense. The pump was expected back on 31st March and Officers would await its re-installation and keep a close eye on its condition; all costs were being met by the manufacturer so no claim would be made.

The Vice-Chairman noted that the scheduled meeting of the River Idle Management Partnership which had been set to take place today had been postponed but the Board's Environmental Officer would be attending a smaller group meeting. The results of John Hillam's report were being awaited.

The current position on beavers was that if any were to escape from the habitat created by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT), the Board would require a license to remove them from Board maintained drains. NWT would be responsible for capturing any escaped beavers and the Board would have ability to remove any structures they had built within its maintained drains.

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## 6. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE

From the 24th February, legal restrictions imposed by the Government in relation to Covid, would be removed. The Covid-19 risk assessment was being reviewed, with the aim of bringing more staff back into the Offices. Face to face contact within departmental teams would still be limited to avoid potential illness affecting entire teams. Social distancing and hygiene regimes remained in use by all staff.

New regulations surrounding employees who were employed on a casual and/or contracted basis (Limb workers) and provision of PPE had been issued. It was now an employer's responsibility to provide PPE (at no cost) to Limb staff; this would come into effect from 6th April 2022. Limb workers currently employed by the Consortium were already in receipt of appropriate PPE.

There had been a total of three incidents across the Consortium, two of which had taken place in the Board's area. The operatives involved were not injured, though there had been damage to the plant involved.

The Annual Accident and Incident Summary for 2021/22 was provided for information. Officers also presented national figures from the Health and Safety Executive, regarding injury and illness within the workplace. It was noted that the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing and Construction sectors, to which the Board's work belonged, remained the at the highest risk for injury.

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## 7. RISK REGISTER

The Corporate Services Manager provided the attached Business Risk Register for information. The areas to focus on for the coming year were:

- (a) Budget constraints
- (b) Fraud and corruption (bank signatures)
- (c) Data protection breach/failure (an audit would be undertaken)
- (d) Asset failure
- (e) Handover and takeover procedures
- (f) Emergency procedures (including training for volunteers)
- (g) Business Continuity Plan
- (h) Lack of resources (Succession, Business and Departmental plans)
- (i) Clear focus and direction
- (j) Staff Development and Training
- (k) Maintaining a positive Health and Safety culture (improved near-miss reports)
- (l) Plant replacement
- (m) Members training and induction
- (n) Environmental breach

Cllr Mrs H. Brand asked whether rising energy costs and the war in Ukraine had been considered as risks/impacts. The Chief Executive stated that these would be added to the dynamic risk register.

RESOLVED

That the Risk Register be noted and approved.

## 8. OPERATIONS REPORT

### 8:1 Winter Maintenance Works

Reforming works had been completed at Westmere Drain Branch, Woodhouse Branch, and Smeath Lane Drain. Littlecarr Drain and Stealgoose/Folly Drain culvert installations were nearly completed. Desilting at Adlingfleet Outfall Drain was also complete.

Works were ongoing at Snow Sewer/Warping Drain, with tree and bushing and spoil levelling completed. And bank levelling would be taking place to provide safer conditions when undertaking maintenance. Mr M.A. Harris asked whether a long reach excavator had been used for weed removal. This was confirmed and it was added that the long reach excavator could not reach across the full width of the drain. Works had started at Park Drain in Doncaster East's Board area and progressed towards

Langholme Lane. Mr M.A. Harris and Cllr R. Allcock shared their approval for works at Snow Sewer.

Completion of the winter programme currently stood at 40%, against an expected target of 50%. Works were 3-4 weeks late, due to machinery repairs and unforeseen issues which had emerged as projects were being completed. It was thought that Soil Bank Drain and Wiseton Bridge Drain would have to be moved forward to the 2022/23 programme.

The 2022/23 winter maintenance programme was provided for information. It was added that there was still room for change within this schedule, based on the urgency of work required.

#### 8:2 Summer Maintenance Works

Machinery and plant were being assessed and made ready for the summer programme. Mr R. Adam asked about the siphon at Ordsall Drain; it was stated that additional quotes would be sought for desilting.

#### 8:3 Construction Works

Additional works to be completed by the Board's workforce included boundary fence installation at Kelfield and South Street Pumping Stations, dam installation and desilting at Southfield pumping station, cutting a new drain and widening the current drain at Wrays Drain, Crowle and the remainder of the refurbishment at Common Carrs Pumping Station. The Chairman noted that this was a large amount of work and asked whether a third-party contractor could be hired to complete the fencing works at Kelfield and South Street.

Mr M. A. Harris mentioned that the open invert syphon of the Kelfield system was extremely dangerous, when running. Officers updated that they were aware of this and that a site visit had taken place with the aim of including the open invert syphon within the grid.

Cllr Mrs H. Brand asked for an update on the CCTV survey for the drain at Misterton passing under the A161. The contractor had attended site but struggled to undertake the survey due to high silt levels. It was suggested that a company with specialist drone equipment could be the next direction and it was agreed that a solution for resolving issues surrounding this drain would be prioritised and discussed with Cllr Mrs H. Brand.

#### 8:4 Plant and Equipment

The full plant review was underway, considering plant, machinery, operating procedures and maximising productivity. This would be shared with the Board once complete and no additional plant or machinery would be purchased until the review was completed.

#### 8:5 Pump Run Hours

Pump run hours were shared for information. South Street and Althorpe Pumping Stations readings were not representative due to pump replacement and installation of a new panel, respectively.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the above report be noted.

- (b) That contractors be engaged to complete the fencing works at Kelfield Pumping Station.
- (c) That work be undertaken to improve health and safety around the invert syphon at Kelfield.
- (d) That a date for the Misterton CCTV survey be brought back to the next Board meeting once other outstanding projects had been prioritised.

## 9. COMPENSATION

### 9:1 Compensation Claims

Officers presented a schedule of payments totalling £3,647.55 which had been paid in accordance with the Board's approved rates.

### 9:2 Compensation Rates

The Operations Manager presented the proposed rates of compensation for 2022/23 (attached) for consideration.

The Senior Operations Manager highlighted the significant rise in cost of oilseed rape, which had been attributed to the current crisis in Ukraine.

Mr M.A. Harris queried whether, because of the volatility of prices, the Board could review this during the year, however, it was agreed to continue with the current arrangement and set the rates as set out in the Board's Compensation Policy.

### RESOLVED

That the attached rates of compensation for 2022/23 be approved.

## 10. ASSET RENEWAL AND REFURBISHMENT PROJECTS

### 10:1 Common Carrs Pumping Station - Emergency Works (AX20307)

Work to remodel the station had commenced, in preparation for installation of the new pump. Issues had arisen with running sand and silt. The standard use of soil and stone dams in the watercourse had been successful. Officers had next installed a cofferdam, but water was still bubbling up from beneath the piping. This water ingress had been solved by applying a dewatering pump and wellheads driven into the ground where work was to take place. The ground was now solid and workable and a suitable formation had been installed as the basis of the sump floor and retaining wall. The floor and wall had been cast, as well as a mass concrete filling of a void below the brick kiosk.

A new control panel would replace the current, which was situated within the kiosk. A pump cover and steps were currently being manufactured.

The electrical feed cable needed to be rerouted as it was obstructing the opening for the new pump. This required Northern Powergrid to de-energise and reconnect the supply. Turnaround time was delayed by Northern Powergrid due to the recent storm damage, who previously gave an expected date of the end of April for the pump and panel to be fully operational. Installation dates could not now be arranged until Northern Powergrid provided an exact date for the changes.

Costs to date were £80,437 (including the unforeseen de-watering costs) against the Board approved budget of £68,269. It was expected that the project would be

completed in excess of £90,000. The proposed budget transfer to cover these extra costs would be detailed in the Finance Report.

Additional pumps were ready for use, but the standby pump was not. Mobile pumping was taking place to maintain water levels within the catchment. It was expected that this project would be completed by mid-May.

RESOLVED

That the predicted overspend be noted but final outturn costs be reported to a future Board meeting.

10:2 South Street Pumping Station (AX16014)

Additional Flood Defence Grant in Aid of £398,000 had been received from the Environment Agency.

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10:3 Southfield Pumping Station Refurbishment (AX18001)

A return date for the pump, which had been sent back to KSB for inspection, was being arranged. The running issue was witnessed by the provider while the pump was installed at the station, but no issues had been found following removal and inspection. It was agreed that when re-installed, KSB would witness the re-installation and running of the pump in case the issue returned. Should that be the case, the pumps would be switched and all electrical components would be re-checked. Should issues remain, the pump would be removed and rebuilt, with costs covered by KSB.

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10:4 Telemetry System Replacement (AX18001)

Communication issues were being gradually resolved.

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10:5 Emergency Pump Repairs (AX21302)

(a) Derrythorpe Pumping Station

Pump One was removed due to water seepage through the top bearing, repaired and re-installed.

(b) Gringley Pumping Station

Pump One which caused the capacitor to melt was removed, repaired and re-installed by North Lincs Engineering.

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10:6 Heckdyke, Four Bridges Pumping Stations (and DEIDB Langholme Lane Pumping Station) Rationalisation/Refurbishment (AX20305)

The Outline Business Case had been submitted; questions which were posed had been answered and notification of approval was expected.

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10:7 Wiseton Pumping Station Refurbishment (AX19305)

The concrete access bridge used by the Board and landowner for entry to the field and western side of the pumping station was in poor condition. Agents commissioned by the Charity who owned the adjacent land presented a report detailing a significant amount of disrepair to the structure. The report proposed that the Board and the Charity provide equal funding to replace the bridge. Due to the narrow width of the bridge, Officers recommended that the replacement bridge be widened by including a four pipe culvert. The works would be undertaken as part of the refurbishment scheme, with funds for materials and labour being split 50:50 between the Board and landowner.

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10:8 Wrays Drain, Crowle (AX21505)

Officers were in discussion with North Lincolnshire Council (NLC) and their consultants regarding phasing and tendering for the works along with options for the delivery and scheduling of the schemes. NLC had not accepted the opportunity to submit a joint tender for the piped sections of the works, which would have eased integration of arable culverts to road crossing sections.

Quotations had been requested for the design of the culverted section of the watercourse and integration with the road culvert.

The Chairman stated that having two different contractors to carry out the piping work was not ideal and voiced his concern. The Chief Executive agreed and suggested that NLC should be asked to review its position. Officers agreed, adding that having one contractor would save money, as well as avoid the difficulty of negotiating separate work schedules and pipe connections.

Cllr R. Allcock had discussed this scheme with NLC. The main concern was the number of people involved with the Scheme and that some costs were still being awaited. The road crossing under Godnow Road and Windsor Lane were to be funded by NLC. Godnow Road connected into a culverted watercourse on agricultural land and to which the Board planned to install additional culverted sections. As the Board did not hold land drainage powers in that area, Officers would require landowner agreement for the works to proceed.

Cllr R. Allcock stated that he would be in touch with NLC to discuss the scheme further and arrange a meeting with the Board's Engineer.

RESOLVED

That Cllr R. Allcock pass on the Board's concerns to NLC and ask for a further meeting to discuss the issues raised above.

## 11. FINANCE

11:1 Management Accounts for the Period ending 31st January 2022

The Finance Manager presented the attached Management Accounts for the period ending 31st January 2022. The Board's Income of £1,639,609.67 was slightly higher than anticipated.

Mr R. Adam queried £24,000 towards tractor and pump repairs. Officers stated that plant was being taken in for repairs before the start of the summer maintenance

programme; £9,500 had been quoted to service the Herder Kannonier Flail, £5,000 to 6,000 for the Massey Ferguson tractor, £6,000 for the New Holland tractor and £3,000 for repairs to the Betsy mobile pump.

The predicted outturn for the end of the 2021/22 financial year was £95,959.93.

Mr R. Adam queried the £296,447.99 allocated to Wiseton Pumping Station refurbishment. It was clarified that this was the amount currently held for the project and that the demolition was included as part of the scheme. Local levy and flood defence grant in aid funding was still to be received. The Engineer also added that the associated timber building would be demolished and the workshop and brick building would be retained. Mr R. Adam said that the brick building should be retained as it was the original pump house.

The Finance Manager stated that the surplus cash position was improving and after the deduction of earmarked reserves, stood at 16.95% (£230,621.15), although she emphasised that this was still below the recommended 30%.

The Chairman expressed concern about the wording in item 1:8, stating that any issues needed to be highlighted to the Chief Executive before coming to the Board. He stated that it was essential that the Chief Executive was aware of any potential issues. The Vice-Chairman seconded this and it was agreed to reword this section of the report for future.

**RESOLVED**

That the Management Accounts for the period ending 31st January 2022 be approved.

**11:2 Transfer of Budgets for Approval**

It was noted that details surrounding the procedure for discussing shortfalls and monitoring of schemes by Board Officers and transfers and rollovers of budgets, would be discussed and reviewed to provide flexibility.

Members expressed concern about the wording in item 2 of the Finance report and it was agreed this would be reviewed and reworded.

The Finance Manager proposed that unspent budgets of £17,153.53 and £6,271.19 be transferred from Asset Renewal and Repairs and Emergency Pump Repairs, to fund the shortfall for Common Carrs Pumping Station Emergency Works.

**RESOLVED**

That unspent budgets from Asset Renewal and Repairs (£17,153.53) and Emergency Pump Repairs (£6,271.19) be transferred to provide additional funding to Common Carrs Pumping Station Emergency Works.

**11:3 Cash Reserves and Investments as at 31st January 2022**

The Finance Manager reported on investments totalling £1,353,239.09 across five accounts and one loan outstanding with the Public Works Loan Board.

DEFRA had requested further information for the Southfield, Kelfield and South Street loans and this had been provided. The Board would be updated with progress of these loans at the next meeting.

**RESOLVED**



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

11:4 Payments Over £500

The Finance Manager referred to the schedule of payments made since the last meeting at item 4 in the attached report.

RESOLVED

That the schedule of payments over £500 be approved.

12. DRAINAGE RATES AND SPECIAL LEVIES

12:1 2021/22

The Finance Manager reported that as at 10th March 2022 a total of £461,144.26 (96.94%) of drainage rates had been collected which included £1,120 of arrears brought forward from 2020/21. Special levies had been collected in full.

12:2 Rate Write Offs

A schedule of proposed drainage rates totalling £1,429.41 was presented to be written-off. Members were requested to contact the Rating Officer if they knew details of occupants/occupiers for the land in question.

RESOLVED

That the write-offs totalling £1,429.41 be approved.

13. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY AND PARTNERSHIP MATTERS

13:1 Environment Agency (EA) Works

A DRAFT programme of Public Sector Cooperation Agreement works had been received. Officers would shortly be meeting with the EA at the River Idle to discuss the works, along with Schedule 3 requirements.

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13:2 All-Party Parliamentary Group for Sustainable Flood and Drought Management (APPG)

The inaugural meeting of the APPG entitled 'Are Our Flood Risk Priorities Right?' was held on 28th February 2022 via MS Teams, attended by members from the House of Lords and Houses of Parliament, and chaired by Mr A. Percy MP.

The Chief Executive gave a presentation to the meeting entitled 'Why Not Sustainable Flood and Drought Management? Areas of Special Drainage Need'.

A further presentation entitled 'The Role of Landowners in Sustainable Flood Management' had been given by Ms A. Green, Policy Advisor on Climate Change and Water at the Country Landowners' Association.

The Chief Executive had explained the work of the IDBs and the areas they protected; highlighting that this included critical infrastructure, industry and tourism, as well as high-grade agricultural land and local communities. Examples of poorly maintained main rivers were presented together with examples of what could be achieved, e.g. the work on the Steeping River. He had also stressed the following points:

- (a) Current policy sees the main rivers/highland water carriers not being maintained to the correct standard in IDB areas.

- (b) Current policy funding is geared to protect people and property does not in its current format work in areas of special drainage need.
- (c) The Current Policy needs adjusting to recognise the importance and need for ongoing investment in the systems that exist.
- (d) We need recognition that the capital system is catchment wide not just the bricks and mortar of the pumping station at the end.
- (e) If we are serious about carbon reduction, we need to invest capital funds across the whole system to improve channel maintenance

Further meetings of the APPG were planned, and the Chief Executive had offered his services to the Group and ADA to inform their discussions on the way ahead.

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#### 13:3 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) meeting

The Chief Executive reported that similar points to those above had been made at the meeting he attended with Senior Officers of DEFRA and the EA on 23rd February 2022. This was a positive meeting and those present seemed receptive and were keen to hold meet again once they had had time to consider the points raised.

Mr R. Adam was pleased to hear that the DEFRA policy could be interpreted differently but also noted that there seemed to be regional difficulties and differences in receiving necessary support to create change.

Cllr R. Allcock stated that NLC had submitted a letter supporting IDBs.

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### 14. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

#### 14:1 National Internal Drainage Board Annual Biometrics Survey

A report on the ADA Biometrics for the year ending 31st March 2021 gave the following results across the Water Management Consortium:

- (a) Water voles, eels and invasive species such as Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed were recorded.
- (b) 52 Barn Owl boxes were monitored
- (c) 42 hectares of grazing marsh and low input grassland
- (d) Installation of three fish friendly pumps
- (e) Improvements toward the control of Floating Pennywort, Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed.
- (f) Provision of Biodiversity training to 43 Staff and 9 Contractors.

#### 14:2 River Idle Management Partnership

The report by Soil and Water Catchment Management was now available and a presentation with Natural England and the EA alongside RIMP was planned.

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**15. DELEGATED MATTERS - PLANNING, BYELAWS AND SUPERVISORY ROLE**

**15:1 Byelaw Applications**

There had been no Byelaw consents granted under delegated authority since the last meeting.

**15:2 Section 23 Applications**

There had been no Section 23 consents granted since the last meeting.

**15:3 Planning Applications**

Officers reported on 14 planning applications which had been dealt with since the last meeting. Appropriate comments relating to surface water drainage had been made.

Members queried planning application PA/2021/2250, for installation of two fertilizer tanks, asking whether or not they would be bunded and how far away they were from the watercourse. Officers would make enquiries and report back.

Cllr Mrs H. Brand noted that there was no mention of the planning application submitted for a development of 48 houses at Misterton, but added that this application had been commented on by Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board. There was a further development next to this one, and concern was shown for the effect they would have on the system. The Planning and Enforcement Officer would be in touch to discuss this further.

Mr R. Adam raised concern about the scale of water received from a large development at Blyth and what effect it could have on the Board in the future. It was clarified that the Board had received surface water discharge contributions from the developer and since the land had moved from rated to special levy land, the amount paid to the Board annually by the associated council would be greater than the original agricultural rate, providing a higher degree of funds to deal with any increased water levels.

Mr M. Pilkington asked if anything had developed from a planning application for Akeferry Road, which had applied for consent to build within nine metres of a Board maintained watercourse. It was updated that the CCTV survey had taken place, with periodic re-inspections being discussed with residents.

Haxey Tennis Club had submitted a proposal for a new pavilion and Mr M. A. Harris noted that there was a Board maintained pipe running close to the site.

Cllr Mrs H. Brand asked if it was possible to have applications which had an effect on the Board's area, but were not within area, to be added to the provided planning list. Members shared their support for this idea and Officers would investigate further.

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**16. MEMBERSHIP**

The Corporate Services Manager had not heard back from anyone who wanted to stand on Committees. She highlighted that there were now three North Lincolnshire Council vacancies following the recent resignation of Mr A. Catherall, and two for elected members vacancies.

The auditor had mentioned that attendance at Board meetings and had been close to the minimum numbers at times. Reducing the size of the Board was discussed and deferred for discussion at a future meeting.

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17. REGISTER OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

Members were reminded to return their forms if they had not already done so. The Corporate Services Manager emphasised that it was essential for the members to review and update their Declarations of Interest annually to ensure good governance and stated that this was reviewed as part of the audit process.

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18. STAFFING UPDATE

The Chairman reported that the Engineer would be leaving the Board at the end of March and that the Technical Engineering Manager would be promoted to Senior Engineer taking on responsibility for leading the engineering team. Members and Officers gave their thanks for the time the Engineer had given to the Board. Officers had spoken to the Environment Agency about training staff jointly and sharing them across both organisations. It was noted that the difficulty in recruiting specialist staff likely meant that the Board would have to reach out to consultants. The Chief Executive shared the intention of appointing an individual to oversee the project management; this would enable the Senior Engineer to complete his training and to focus his experience and engineering capabilities.

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19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

CHAIRMAN