

TRENT VALLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Board held via Microsoft Teams and Teleconference on Wednesday, 8th September 2021.

Elected Members

* Messrs J. Miller (Chairman)
* T.H Farr (Vice-Chairman)
* R. Warburton
A. Arden
W.J. Staunton
* N.J. Greenhalgh
T. Hawthorne
* R.J. Jackson
D. Loates
D. Gash
Mrs J. Love

Nominated Members

Bassetlaw District Council
Cllrs J. Ogle
Mrs S. Fielding
J. Naish
Newark and Sherwood District Council
Cllrs Mrs S. Michael
I. Walker
K. Walker
* Mrs L. Dales
Rushcliffe Borough Council
* Cllrs Mrs M. Stockwood
* K. Shaw
* Mrs C. Jeffreys
Mrs P. Gaunt
Gedling/Melton Borough Councils
* Mr J. Evens
West Lindsey/North Kesteven District Councils
* Cllr P. Overton

* Present

Staff

Messrs A. McGill (Chief Executive)
* N. Kemble (Engineer)
* M.S. Everett (Operations Manager)
* A.J. Malin (Senior Operations Manager)
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* Mesdames N. Hind (Finance Manager)
* C.B. Davies (Corporate Services Manager)

* In attendance

Invited Representatives of Partner Organisations

Miss S. Jaques (Nottinghamshire County Council)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Messrs D. Loates and W. Staunton, Mrs J. Love, Cllrs S. Fielding, I. Walker, J. Naish, S Michael.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NONE

3. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

NONE

4. RESOURCES

The Chairman explained that the Extraordinary Meeting was called to consider the resources required to deliver the six-year asset renewal and refurbishment programme across the Consortium. He reported that the Consortium Committee had met on the 12th August 2021 and considered the resources required to deliver the Boards' £38m planned six year asset refurbishment programme which included two new builds and 12 schemes in excess of £1m each. After consideration, the committee agreed to recommend that the Boards appoint additional staff to deliver the asset renewal programme.

The Engineer reported that many assets were now at the end of their life with maintenance costs increasing considerably and there had been numerous asset failures following six months of excessive rainfall last year. Additional grant-in-aid and local levy funding

applications had been made to fund this essential work and to capitalise on the funds available. It was expected that grant-in-aid funding could reduce significantly after the current six-year period and that there could be increased pressure on the special levy funding in the future. As reported previously, additional defence grant-in-aid had been received across the Consortium

Delivery of the planned asset renewal programme within the timeframe would necessitate the use of consultants as there were insufficient staff in-house to complete the projects. The cost would be in region of £370,000 per annum and would still require considerable engagement and support from the Boards' Officers. A thorough review of the planned works had been undertaken and a comparison prepared of delivering the projects in-house against using consultants. Delivery of the projects in-house would require the appointment of six new members of staff at a cost of £230,000 per annum which would be significantly cheaper than using consultants. If the new appointments were made the cost of the Engineering Team would be £980,000.

The Engineer confirmed that it was anticipated that the new staff members would allocate 90% of their time (engineering staff) and 50% (administration staff) to projects. Salary costs were included in the budgets for those projects and were previously rated for by the Boards., Therefore the additional amount to be funded was £42,000; £21,186 (Lindsey Marsh), £7,062 (Isle of Axholme), £9,416 (Trent Valley) and £5,136 (Doncaster East) based on the Consortium recharge ratios.

He explained that should the appointments be made; the Engineering Team would be split into two groups - one focussing on design and one on response and delivery on-site. The aim was to improve focus and output and ensure that the design team costs were recovered from the project costs. The new arrangement would also reduce the Engineering Team Consortium recharges. He expected the recruitment process to take up to six months and staff would need time to develop in their roles, so it was anticipated that some support from consultants would still be required at peak times during 2023.

The Engineer commented on the success of the appointment of the in-house Modelling Team, the Planning and Byelaw Team would become self funding with the introduction of a new charging structure and the appointment of the Field Engineer who was involved in the Telemetry installation process, was making savings to the project.

In conclusion he highlighted the risks to the Boards should the proposed asset renewal and refurbishment programme not go ahead such as, increased asset failure, increased repair/maintenance costs, additional manpower costs, resources not being available during emergency events while attending asset failures, loss of grant-in-aid/local levy funding if projects were not delivered within the six-year plan.

Benefits of completing the planned asset renewal and refurbishment programme would include, ensuring that the Board's systems and assets were operating effectively, able to cope with climate change for the life of the pumping station and the requirements of the Eel Regulations. They would also be more efficient/carbon friendly and gravity outfalls would be reinstated and lower maintenance costs realised. Opportunities to co-ordinate drain and pumping station concurrently within the remit of a single project were also being explored.

The Chairman commented that a strong proposal had been presented. Cllr P. Overton, Messrs R. Warburton and T. Farr all made comments supporting the proposal.

RESOLVED

That the appointment of the 6 new staff members to the Engineering Team be approved at ensure delivery of the six year asset renewal and refurbishment programme an additional cost to the board of £9,416.

6. SUTTON-ON-TRENT - CUCKSTOOL PUMPING STATION

The Engineer reported that modelling had confirmed that a series of interventions were needed to protect the village of Sutton-on-Trent against flooding - larger pumps, a flood retention embankment to Bulham Lane Drain and further watercourse works as reported to the Board in June 2021. Formal quotes for the supply and installation of two new pumps at Cuckstool Pumping Station were sought from three suppliers at an estimated budget of £80,000. The most competitive quote received was for the amount of £70,074.00. The supplier notified all clients of an intended 5% increase in costs from 1st August 2021.

The Environment Agency agreed in principle to non-fish friendly pumps at the station subject to alternative measures being implemented for the protection of eels. The new pumps would increase the capacity of the station from 100 litres per second to 1400 litres per second. The actual output would be dependent on the head that the new pumps pump against i.e. the level in the River Trent. Modelling has shown that with the new pumps, out of bank flows would still be expected in the 1 in 75 year event with one property remaining at risk of internal flooding. The power supply and existing control system were both adequate. The pumps were identical externally to the existing pumps and would be a direct bolt on replacement with no modifications required to the sump.

The Engineer confirmed that the outline business case to support funding had not yet been completed and in the short term, initial payments would need to be made from reserves. It was expected that funding for the overall scheme would be from FDGIA and through partnership funding from Nottinghamshire County council.

Prior to the suppliers quotation expiring on the 13th August and to avoid a 5% increase, Officers sought and obtained approval from the Chairman to place the order. The order had been placed on the 5th August 2021 and the manufacturing period was 26 weeks.

RESOLVED

To support the decision of the Chairman and Officers on the procurement of two new pumps at Cuckstool Pumping Station.

6. CHAIRMAN'S ALLOWANCE

The Chairman left the meeting the Chief Executive invited Mr T. Farr to Chair.

IDBs can pay any reasonable expenses incurred by members and officers in attending meetings etc. These were currently paid mainly to reimburse travelling costs. Mileage, if claimed, was paid at the Inland Revenue rate (currently 45p per mile). The Land Drainage Act 1991, also allows for the payment of an allowance to the Chairman in respect of duties undertaken. The role of the Chairman has increased considerably and he takes a very active role in the running of the Boards. There does not seem to be consistent approach to the payment of an allowance in the industry although similar amounts are paid across the Consortium. The Board were asked to review the allowance paid to the Chairman of £2,000.

Cllrs P. Overton and R. Jackson commented that a comparison of the allowances paid by other Board's would be a good idea going forward so that there was a bench mark for such payments. They both supported an increase in the existing payment.

A discussion took place on the amounts paid within the Consortium and the Corporate Services Manager confirmed that Lindsey Marsh had just increased the allowance to £3,000.

It was felt that Lindsey Marsh was a larger area and taking that into account a proposal was made to increase the allowance to £2,500.00 It was proposed that the allowance is reviewed on a regular basis in line with Board elections

The Board were unanimous in their support for the excellent work of the Chairman.

RESOLVED

To increase the Chairman's allowance to £2,500.00 per annum.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

NONE

CHAIRMAN