

TRENT VALLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Board held at Winthorpe Community Centre and via Microsoft Teams and Teleconference on Thursday, 16th June 2022 at 10.00am.

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
* Vacancy

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 J. Walker
* Mrs C. Thomas
* Mrs C. Jeffreys
G. Dickman
Gedling/Melton Borough Councils
Mr J. Evens
West Lindsey/North Kesteven District Councils
* Cllr P. Overton

* Present

Staff

* Mr A. McGill (Chief Executive)
* Dr D. Hickman (Executive Officer)
* Messrs M.S. Everett (Operations Manager)
A.J. Malin (Senior Operations Manager)
* C. Harris (Auditor to the Board)
J. Bowden (Engineer)
* Mesdames N. Hind (Finance Manager)
C.B. Davies (Corporate Services Manager)

* In attendance

The Chairman welcomed Mr C. Harris to the meeting.

The Chief Executive introduced Dr David Hickman to the Board giving an overview of his previous experience and an explanation of his Executive Officer role within the Consortium and that he would be initially tasked with supporting the Engineering Team.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Messrs T. Hawthorne, J. Evans and Cllr Mrs J. Walker.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman confirmed there were two items to be discussed.

4. BOARD MINUTES (Pages 501 to 509)

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 24th March 2022 be confirmed as a correct record

5. MATTERS ARISING

5:1 Minute 10, Page 506, Asset Renewal and Refurbishment Projects.

A question was raised at the last meeting regarding the Beckingham Pumping Station scheme (TV11018) in respect any outstanding works. Officers confirmed that the completion of the road was the only work still to be completed.

5:2 Minute 1, Page 501, Apologies

Cllr P. Overton commented that he had declined the meeting invitation and understood that this would be taken as his apology. His apologies had been omitted from the minutes and this was amended accordingly.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Chief Executive confirmed the Consortium continued to follow Government guidance in respect of Covid-19 and that any additional measures had been implemented. He confirmed that the numbers of office-based staff allowed in on a regular basis were increasing, however, the option to continue to work from home was still available where practical.

It was reported that there were no new changes to Health and Safety legislation since the last meeting.

In respect of incidents the Chief Executive confirmed that there had been two incidents across the Consortium, both minor.

He confirmed that the annual review of the Consortium's Health and Safety Policy, Safe Systems of Work and Model Task Risk Assessments was due to be undertaken in July. Issues identified during the review would be brought to the attention of the Senior Management Team and Health and Safety Committee Members for urgent resolution.

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7. OPERATIONS REPORT

The Operations Manager confirmed that 60% of the winter tree and bush works programme was complete. The remaining works would be deferred until the 2022/23 season. This year's programme was focused on the River Smite catchment around Hickling, Colston Basset and Tythby, in addition priority works had been completed in the Laneham, Fledborough, Marnham, Kirklington, Newark and Marton areas. Works had also been carried out on Kingston Brook in East Leake as part of an ongoing maintenance routine by the Boards contractors. Some rechargeable tree and bushing maintenance had been completed in Spalford. 30% of the 2022/23 reforming element of the winter works programme had also been completed and 20% of the planned access improvement and construction works were complete including the installation of new gates and culverts on the Skeby and Marnham Drain, Rolleston Sewer, Flagg Dyke, Catchwater Drain and Marsh Drain 2.

Flail mowing for mitigation purposes continued to be undertaken on watercourses which were due to be reformed ensuring the displacement of wildlife habitat in line with legal requirements and the Board's Environmental Policy. Japanese Knotweed had been sprayed on the Car Dyke, Caythorpe and Northern Drain, Kirklington in May.

The Operations Manager confirmed that the Board's plant and machinery was being serviced and made ready for the start of the main summer cutting season on the 15th July 2022. Strategic watercourses across the district were monitored on a regular basis to ensure

continued conveyance of water and where necessary early weed removal would take place in consultation with the Board's Environmental Officer. Early flail mowing of the watercourse channels and verge through Sutton on Trent had taken place in May.

In respect of the Board's plant, he confirmed that orders had been placed for the following:

- (a) JCB Hydradig wheeled excavator, estimated delivery October 2022
- (b) Bomford 81-81 flail, estimated delivery July/August,
- (c) Replacement flail head for the self-propelled flailmower, estimated delivery May/June 2022
- (d) New tractor front loader for the Orston tractor, estimated delivery July 2022

Officers were investigating the possibility of updating and improving the Boards current fuel tanks a recommendation would be brought to the Board later in the year for consideration and approval at a later date.

The Chairman reiterated the continued issues with access and the need for the landowner's co-operation.

In response to a question from Cllr P. Overton the Operations Manager confirmed that the Board continued to use red diesel as the Board's work was for mainly agricultural purposes. Cllr Overton questioned what measures were in place to reduce consumption. The Operations Manager commented that this was very difficult as all plant used diesel except for the handheld tools which used petrol. The use of more modern machinery would reduce emissions.

A discussion took place on the alternatives available including machines using hydrogen, electric vehicles, a CO₂ calculator was being introduced by ADA to assist Board's to introduce efficiencies in the way they operated with better access to cut down unnecessary tracking. The new Telemetry system was making the pumps more controllable.

Mrs J. Love thanked the Operations Manager for the work carried out in the Kingston Brook area by an appointed contractor. However, she felt that the quality of the site clearance had not been up to an acceptable standard. The Operations Manager confirmed that he would follow up this issue.

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8. COMPENSATION

It was noted that the Board had paid out £9,582.33 in compensation for the financial year 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. The figure did not include any claims yet to be returned.

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9. ASSET RENEWAL AND REFURBISHMENT PROJECTS.

Officers presented the following recommendations and updates:

9:1 Sturton Pumping Station – Pump Refurbishments (TV16019)

It was reported that as part of a multi-station contract in 2016 both pumps at Sturton Pumping Station were to be refurbished. This work had not been undertaken at the time due to the exceptionally high costs quoted for damming off. Stop logs and frames

had since been produced. However, it had been established that to allow installation of the stop log frames, additional modification works were required at a cost of approximately £6,100. To enable the work to take place, the station would need to be dammed off and the costs for this were estimated at £7,000. The scheme had a remaining budget of £21,493. It was reported that the pumps were currently operating satisfactorily, and that the station was due for a full refurbishment in 2026 which included new pumps. It was proposed that an option in the short term, rather than refurbish the pumps, would be to install vibration monitor sensors at an approximate cost of £4,000 which included purchase, cabling and labour. The proposed works would be delivered within the remaining budget, however, if the Board chose to undertake refurbishment of the pumps an additional £26,000 would be required.

A discussion took place on the proposed options, including the need for a refurbishment when a full refurbishment was due in 2026 including new pumps, the possibility of delaying the full refurbishment to cover the costs and the possibility of bringing forward the full refurbishment. Mr R. Warburton raised the question of whether the pumps needed to be dammed and whether the water could be diverted/pumped into other watercourses.

The Chairman proposed that all works including refurbishment be carried out, the scheme had a remaining budget of £21,493.00, which after the costs of the stop log installation and the damming off works would leave a remaining budget of approximately £8,400. He proposed that the Board provide a further £17,600.00 for the scheme which would include refurbishment.

RESOLVED

- (a) The proposed works and refurbishment to be carried out.
- (b) An additional £17,600.00 to be made available for the scheme.

9:2 Torksey Pumping Station Refurbishment (TV16002)

Officers presented an update on the Torksey refurbishment. The interior was being fitted out, painted and BT would be installing the internet. Northern Powergrid would be commencing preparation works for the energising of the new transformer on the 23rd June 2022. This would mean both pumps would be fully operational. Following the works by National Powergrid the remaining external works would be carried out including landscaping and a footpath. Committed costs to date were £1,355,488 against an approved budget of £1,431,000.

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9:3 Telemetry System Replacement (TV20303)

It was reported that all problem sites with communications issues were now working. There were a few minor snagging issues to be addressed but all stations had visibility, with 55% operating in Telemetry control.

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9:4 Egmanton Village Flood Relief Scheme (TV11012)

Officers reported that to complete the scheme, flood maps needed to be provided to the Environment Agency. The cost would be approximately £2,000 and it was proposed that £2,000 be transferred from the Partnership Scheme Budget. Transfers detailed under Finance Report 10:2.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the sale of the land at Egmonton would be marketed.

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9:5 Sutton on Trent – Bulham Lane Flood Relief Cuckstool Pumping Station Refurishment (TV21310)

In preparation for progression of the scheme and further funding by the Board it was proposed that the residual funds from Lowfield Pumping Station scheme be transferred. Transfer was detailed under Finance Report 10:2.

The Chief Executive reported to the Board on his discussions with the Water Management Alliance and their approach of packaging their projects together and presenting to Defra and the Environment Agency under their Large Projects Review Groups with the result being that funding for applications and decisions were quicker. He confirmed that the new Executive Officer would be working with the Engineering Team to deliver these projects.

Mr W. Staunton, Mr T.H. Farr and Cllr Mrs S. Michael all commented and supported this new approach.

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10. FINANCE

10:1 Management Accounts and variance report for year ending 31st March 2022

The Finance Manager presented the management accounts up to the 31st March 2022 together with the Income and Expenditure accounts detailing the variance of actual income and costs to estimates. It was confirmed that any income/expenditure relating to Engineering schemes had been removed and would be reported separately.

The variance report showed that income was lower than anticipated for the twelve-month period to 31st March 2022 resulting in a negative income variance of £249,002.35. It was reported that PSCA income was lower than anticipated and that interest received on the Board's investment accounts was also lower due to interest rates. However, the Board was beginning to see income from the new consenting fees and surface water charges.

The Finance Manager reported a positive variance of £168,162.71 in respect of Maintenance and Development Expenditure. Commenting that drain maintenance expenditure external costs had exceeded the estimates by £24,000 due to the use of contractors but overall lower expenditure was due to internal costs, mainly use of own labour and plant. In respect of Pumping Stations external costs were higher together with insurance costs and electricity costs. It was confirmed that an unusually high bill for Church Laneham Pumping Station was being investigated.

The variance report showed that the Supportive Expenditure was higher than anticipated for the 12 month period to 31st March 2022 resulting in a negative variance of £319,550.21. There had been increased costs in fuel and vehicle and plant breakdowns. It was confirmed that an amount of £34,300.00 not expended on plant as at 31st March 2022 had been transferred to the Plant Reserve.

The outturn, not relating to schemes, was a negative variance of £53,832.81 to the budget estimates. Several factors contributed, however, the proposed sale of land at Egmonton had not taken place at an estimated value of £80,000.

A variance report was also presented for Engineering Schemes together with a detailed breakdown of individual projects.

It was confirmed that the Board's current Surplus Cash reserves were £353,424.00 as at 31st March 2022. The Board's reserve policy was to hold 30% of net operating expenditure and while the surplus cash position was currently only 18.03%, should the Board suffer a flooding event the funds held in Capital Receipts Reserve would need to be used, as this cash position was at a rate of 26.03%. Had the sale of the land at Egmonton taken place the surplus cash position would be 23%. Whilst the cash surplus reserves had been affected by negative variances for both net operating and scheme expenditure of £25,204.25, this had been partially offset by the closing of several schemes and transferring of balances to reserves of £21,098.50.

RESOLVED

That the Variance Report for the Year Ending 31st March 2022 be approved.

10:2 Transfer of Budgets for Approval

Approval for the was sought for attached budget transfers.

RESOLVED

That the attached budget transfers be approved.

10:3 Final Management Accounts for the Year Ending 31st March 2022

The final accounts for the year ending 31st March 2022 were presented to the Board for consideration and approval including the schedule of Income and Expenditure, Balance Sheet and Schedule of Reserves.

RESOLVED

That the Management Accounts for the Year Ending 31st March 2022 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

10:4 Audit of Accounts for the Year Ending 31st March 2022

The Internal Auditor presented his report confirming a Substantial Assurance. On this occasion he had no recommendations to make but he assured the Board that he would continue to observe previous recommendations. He commented that the Board would see financial pressures relating to fuel costs and inflation in the coming year and this would necessitate the need to maintain strong reserves. He also commented on the importance of attendance by members at Board Meetings to maintain good governance.

RESOLVED

That the attached report of the Internal Auditor be noted, and the recommendations adopted.

10:5 Annual Governance Statement and Review of Internal Control

The Annual Governance Statement Part 3, page 4, was presented to the Board for a review of Internal controls.

RESOLVED

The Annual Governance Statement be approved and signed by the Chairman and Chief Executive.

10:6 Accounting Statements of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return

The Account Statements of Part 3 of the Return, page 5, were presented to the Board for consideration and approval.

RESOLVED

That the attached Accounting Statement for 2022/23 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

10:7 Bank Account Amendments

The Board were asked to approve the removal of the signature of Mr Neil Kemble from the Board's banking mandates and the addition of the signatures of Dr David Hickman and Mr Robert Brown to the mandates.

RESOLVED

The Board approved the proposed amendments.

10:8 Public Works Loan Drawdown

The Board were asked to approve the application and drawn down of a loan from the Public Works Loan Board of £262,000 towards the funding of Torksey Pumping Station Refurbishment. The Finance Manager confirmed that this amount had been accounted for in the estimates and Five Year Plan.

RESOLVED

The Board approved the draw down of a loan from the Public Works Loan Board for £262,000.

10:9 Cash Balances and Borrowings

It was reported that the Board currently had five bank accounts with a total balance of £1,158,505.35.

The Board had one loan outstanding for the value of £591,199.15.

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10:10 Payments over £500

The attached schedule of payments over £500 made since the last meeting was presented for consideration.

RESOLVED

The attached schedule of payments over £500 be approved.

Cllr Mrs C. Jefferies thanked the Finance Manager for an excellent presentation of the annual accounts.

11. DRAINAGE RATES AND SPECIAL LEIVES

The Finance Manager reported that drainage rates and special levies collected to the 31st March 2022 totalled 99.41%. She confirmed that the total amount outstanding at that date was £11,435.08 and since that date a further £4,628.83 had been collected.

In respect of the current financial year, she confirmed that as at 31st May 2022, 16.40% had been collected. She commented that since the preparation of the report the percentage collected had increased to 39%.

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12. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY AND PARTNERSHIP MATTERS

The Chief Executive updated the Board on the progress made with the Environment Agency (EA) in respect of future works on the River Devon. He confirmed that he had been in discussions with Paul Lockhart from the EA.

In respect of the Public Sector Co-operation Agreement, he confirmed that the EA did not appear to be spending as much as in previous years. They appeared to have taken works back in house using their own contractors.

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13. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

Officers reported on the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill confirming that it would replace the Environmental Impact Assessment (Land Drainage Improvement Works) Regulations 1999 and would require the production of Environmental Outcomes Reports for the Board's improvements works and capital programme. The format of the reports would not be known for some time but via ADA, it was hoped that the expensive requirement to advertise work in the local newspapers would be removed.

In respect of 'The Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020' the Board were advised of the requirement to register all sites where pesticides are stored. It was confirmed that registration had been completed, however, the duration of the registration and how frequently this would need to be updated was not known

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14. DELEGATED MATTERS - PLANNING, BYELAWS AND SUPERVISORY ROLE

14:1 Byelaw Applications

The following consents had been granted under delegated authority since the last Board meeting:

TVIDB/LDC/2021/038 Replacement of existing Severn Trent 280mm rising sewer over the Board maintained New Lane Feeder culverted watercourse at national grid reference 473525-340230 in the parish of Aslockton.

TVIDB/LDC/2022/001 Installation of 18 linear metres of 900mm diameter pvc twinwall culvert in the Board maintained Scaffold Drain for use as a temporary access point for development site adjacent to Cross Lane at national grid reference 483911-361845 in the parish of Collingham.

TVIDB/LDC/2022/05 Installation of 18 linear metres of 450mm diameter pvc culvert pipe into the Board maintained Newton Sewer Feeder adjacent to os filed number 7354 at national grid reference 482776-374221 in the parish of Newton on Trent.

14:2 Section 23 Applications

There had been no consents granted under delegated authority since the last Board Meeting:

No applications had been dealt with on behalf of the Lead Local Flood Authority

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14:3 Planning Applications.

The Engineer reported that 8 planning applications had been reviewed by Officers since the last Board meeting and appropriate comments made.

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Mr R. Warburton asked a question in respect of the decommissioning of Cotham Power Station, and it was confirmed that whilst the site remains a brownfield site the land stays within Special Levy and there is no loss of income to the Board. He also had concerns regarding a grill at the site and the Operations Manager confirmed that the best action would be to remove the grill.

15. ELECTION OF MEMBERS

Officers confirmed that in accordance with the Land Drainage Act 1991, the Land Drainage (Election of Drainage Boards) Regulations 1938 and the Land Drainage (Election of Internal Drainage Boards) (Amendments) Regulations 1977, a Register of Electors had been prepared for the five electoral districts. A notice had been published on the Board's website on the 27th May 2022. The period of objection expired on the 13th June 2022 and an update of claims or objections would be presented at the next meeting. Subject to no claims or objections being received the Board were asked to approve the Registers.

RESOLVED

That the Register of Electors be approved.

16. STAFFING

16:1 Recruitment

The Chief Executive presented an update on recruitment. The new post of Executive Officer had been filled and five of the six new engineering roles had been filled along with the Flood Risk and Modelling Advisor position. The vacant posts of Flood Risk and Modelling Analyst and Senior Civils Engineer had not been filled. The Executive Officer would be reviewing the needs of the engineering department before any further appointments were made. The position of Admin Assistant for the planning and

enforcement team had been filled internally, creating a vacancy in the Corporate Services department.

In respect of the Operations team, he confirmed that one new Land Drainage Operative had been appointed and that there were currently three further vacancies.

16:2 Salary Review

In accordance with Section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960, it was agreed to exclude the public from this part of the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business being discussed. The minutes of which are recorded on pink paper.

16:2 WMC Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC)

The first meeting of the Committee would be held on 10th August 2022. The Committee would be made up of the four Chairmen, the Chief Executive and Corporate Services Manager, together with representatives from each workforce and a representative from the office staff. A representative from Unison would also be invited to attend.

The Chief Executive and Corporate Services Manager had met informally with Unison who were keen to be involved in any discussions relating to pay and terms and conditions. They were also keen for formal recognition. Officers were concerned that all employees should be represented on the Committee and have the right to a vote, not just Unison members, therefore this would be considered and discussed at the first meeting of the JNC when the Committee Terms of Reference would be agreed. A new handbook setting out employee terms and conditions was being prepared

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17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr Mrs C. Jefferies raised an issue on behalf of Colston Bassett Parish Council who were not entirely happy with some recent works which had been carried out by the Board. She requested that Officers make a visit. They did not understand the need for the works carried out and the bonfires etc. They had suggested that a leaflet could have been produced for residents explaining the nature of the works. The Operations Manager confirmed that he had liaised with the Parish Council, however, this was always going to be a difficult area with the nature of the works needed. He confirmed that the landowner would have liked more works to be carried out.

Cllr P. Overton presented a letter from North Scarle Parish Council in respect of problems with the Mill Dam Dyke which is a main river maintained by the Environment Agency. Following a discussion on the issues the Operations Manager commented that previously the possibility of connecting through to the Torksey catchment as an overflow had been discussed, this would involve a route being constructed. The Chief Executive commented that this would be investigated, and a report presented to the Board at the next Board meeting, with the possibility of the Environment Agency being approached as a joint venture.

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CHAIRMAN