

Doncaster East Internal Drainage Board

Minutes of a Meeting of the Board held via Microsoft Teams on Friday, 29th January 2021 at 2.00 p.m.

- * Mr M. Brooke
- * Mr P.A.M. Cornish
- * Mr R. Durdy
- * Mr P. Horne (Vice-Chairman)
- * Mr G.C. Parker
- * Mr W.G.S. Platt
- * Mr N.V. Williams
- * *Present*
- * Mr A. McGill (Chief Executive)
- * Mr N. Kemble (Engineer)
- * Mr A. Malin (Senior Operations Manager)
- * Mr R. Brown (Operations Manager)
- * Mrs N. Hind (Finance Manager)
- * Mrs C. Davies (Corporate Services Manager)
- * *In attendance*
- * Mr C. Crowe
- Mr L. Garrett
- * Mr P. Hagan
- * Mr J. Hoare
- * Mr C. McGuinness (Chairman)
- Mr M. Oldknow
- Mr D. Ridge
- * Mrs S. Wilkinson

A minute's silence was held to remember Mr K. Durdy and Mrs R. Chapman who had both been very supportive of the Board.

2021.1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs L. Garrett, M. Oldknow and D. Ridge.

2021.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

2021.3 NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

2021.4 BOARD MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 27th November 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

2021.5 MATTERS ARISING

None.

2021.6 HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE

The Senior Operations Manager reported that office-based staff remained home working and in line with the latest advice from the Government, office visits remained restricted. These measures had been kept in place to comply with lockdown rules and ensure the physical and mental wellbeing of staff. In addition to this, regular contact was also being maintained with all staff.

The Health and Safety Executive had issued new guidance on the purchase of machinery, which gave both the purchaser and the manufacturer a duty of care to

ensure that equipment was fit for purpose. In response to Mr C. Crowe, the Senior Operations Manager confirmed that the new guidance had been put in place surrounding the kitemark, rather than as a result of Covid-19.

Officers reported on four incidents across the Consortium since the last Board meeting. These included minor damage to a property, minor vehicle damage, sinking of a vehicle into a grass verge and one lifting injury. The employee who suffered the lifting incident was now back at work and had been reminded of the importance of using manual aids for lifting. No incidents were reported in the Doncaster East Internal Drainage Board area.

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2021.7 RISK REGISTER

The Dynamic Risk Register was presented for information and Officers updated on higher risk areas. This included the monitoring of health, safety and welfare, in which the Chief Executive confirmed that the health and safety policy was being reviewed thoroughly. The current banking arrangements were also highlighted and Officers were considering how best to streamline this across the Consortium and further minimise any risks. GDPR compliance continued to be monitored.

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2021.8 DRAINAGE RATES AND SPECIAL LEVIES

The amount outstanding at 12th January 2021 totalled £2,232.10; an overall rate collection to date of 97.50%.

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2021.9 FINANCE

(a) Management Accounts for the Period ending 30th November 2020

The Finance Manager presented the attached Income and Expenditure Accounts, Balance Sheet and Project Report Summary for the period up to the 30th November 2020. The variance report showed that the income was lower than anticipated resulting in a negative variance of £8,918.44. It was noted that contributions to pumping stations and other costs were lower than expected because they were yet to be billed. The report also showed that the Maintenance and Development Expenditure was lower than anticipated resulting in a positive variance of £4,796.24. It was noted that the Board was awaiting invoices from contractors in respect of drain maintenance works.

Regarding the Project Report Summary, the Finance Manager reported that the remaining budgets for Engineering Projects were lower than anticipated as the Board was awaiting Grant in Aid Funding.

RESOLVED

That the attached Management Accounts for the period ending 30th November 2020 be approved.

(b) Cash Reserves and Investments as at 30th November 2020

The Finance Manager reported that £1,408,558.08 was currently invested in three instant access accounts at an interest rate of 0%.

Ten loans totalling £485,720.10 remained outstanding.

RESOLVED

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

(c) Payments over £500

The attached schedule of payments was circulated for approval.

RESOLVED

That the attached schedule of payments over £500 made since the last Board Meeting be approved.

2021.10 ESTIMATES OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL 2021 TO 31ST MARCH 2022

The Finance Manager presented the attached Estimates of Income and Expenditure for the year 2021/2022 for consideration together with the Five-Year Plan up to 2026/2027.

Since the November Board meeting, the proposed increase in the rate had been adjusted from 5.79% which was previously presented to the Board, to 4%. This recommended increase resulted in a drainage rate of 5.773 pence in the pound for the financial year 2021/2022. The proposed estimate of income and expenditure for 2021/2022 presented a net expenditure of £940,242 to be funded by drainage rates and special levies. The increase of 4% in the drainage rates and special levies resulted in an expected net deficit of -£15,781 for the year.

Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council was in the process of setting the budgets but had indicated that it would support a 4.1% increase.

Officers referred to the five-year plan and stated that they would be reviewing efficiencies and cost savings that could be made over the next few years in order to build balances and keep future rate increases to a minimum.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the attached estimates of income and expenditure for the year commencing 1st April 2021 be approved.
- (b) That the amounts to be raised by means of drainage rates in respect of agricultural land and buildings, and special levies on the local charging authorities for the year commencing 1st April 2021 be as follows:
 - (i) by drainage rates levied in respect of agricultural land and buildings - £94,323,
 - (ii) by special levy on Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council - £802,635,
 - (iii) by special levy on North Lincolnshire Council - £15,312,
 - (iv) by special levy on Bassetlaw District Council - £12,191,
- (c) That the drainage rate for the financial year commencing 1st April 2021 be made and sealed in the sum total of 5.773 pence in the pound.

- (d) That the attached Five-Year Plan be approved in principle.

2021.11 OPERATIONS REPORT

It was noted that any issues at pumping stations had been included on the Dynamic Risk Register and details would be presented under the Asset Renewals and Refurbishment Capital Projects report.

(a) Reforming Works and Emergency Drain Repairs

The Senior Operations Manager reported that we were aware of two slips on the newly cut drain forming part of the Hatfield Link Road project. The Operations Manager and the Planning and Development Control Officer would be taking it up with the Local Authority and Contractor.

Mr G. Parker reported a slip a on Cuckoo Lane and trees at Pissy Beds East which were slowing the flow of water. Mr M. Brooke reported a slip on Crowtree Bank. These would be addressed.

Mr Parker also expressed concern about the lack of fencing around the station and it was agreed that the Senior Operations Manager would investigate and ensure that the area was secure. The Operations Manager stated that Heras fencing had been erected but there was continued issue with it being removed within days.

Regarding the slips on Sandtoft Road, the Technical Engineering Manager reported that this section of watercourse may need piling as the road could not cope with the extra weight of traffic. The Board's contractors were undertaking emergency repairs.

The Chairman asked members to let Officers know of any potential issues prior to the meeting in future.

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(b) Summer Works Programme

The Senior Operations Manager reported that the summer works programme was 100% complete. Job cards were being reviewed for Environmental sightings and comments for potential future works.

The new NEC Short Form Contract had been drafted and was currently being reviewed by the Chief Executive and the Engineer. The Senior Operations Manager reported that there were approximately six potential contractors to approach for tenders. It was anticipated that tender results would be presented at the March Board meeting.

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(c) Winter Works Programme

The Senior Operations Manager reported that the following three schemes from the winter works programme had been completed:

- (i) DED300100 – Stainforth Drain – Hatfield Tip – Tree and bushing and desilting.
- (ii) DED300400 – Thorne Lock Drain – Access Improvements.
- (iii) DED260200 – Thorne Waste Drain – Desilting.

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(d) Environment Agency Matters

Works had been delayed on the South Soak Drain so high levels could be maintained in Keadby Drain for pump testing at Keadby Pumping Station as directed by the Environment Agency. In response to Mr M. Brooke, the Technical Engineering Manager confirmed that Keadby Pumping Station was operating on automatic winter levels.

The Environment Agency was still finalising paperwork for the multi-year maintenance proposal for Diggin Dyke, Woodhouse Sewer, Torne Soak Drains, Candy Farm Drains and Tunnel Pits. There were no further updates on the additional works on the River Torne that were previously muted.

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(e) Plant and Fleet Procurement

Since the last Board meeting, the electric chainsaw, two strimmers and two polesaws had been purchased as agreed.

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2021.12 ASSET RENEWALS AND REFURBISHMENT CAPITAL PROJECTS

(a) Telemetry System Replacement (DE20303)

The new telemetry system was proceeding in accordance with the programme. The Engineer reported that the first installation had been made at one of Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board's pumping stations. Other trial sites included Balby Carr and Huxterwell Pumping Stations, where telemetry would be installed in due course. The requested outstation units with 4G mobile communications would not be available until March due to the impact of Covid-19, meaning the first batch of units would operate on the 3G network. This would affect 24 out of 92 units across the consortium. The Functional Design Specification had been approved, logic sequences confirmed, telemetry pages were being programmed, and cloud hosting had been established. The Outline Business Case was with the National Team in the Environment Agency for final sign off and Local Levy funding was expected in February.

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(b) Balby Carr Pumping Station – Pump Refurbishment

Pump two had now been reinstalled by Industrial Pumps Limited and was back in service. Budget provision had been made in the estimates for financial year 2021/2022 to lift and inspect pumps three and four.

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(c) Demolition of Parsons Carr Pumping Station

Officers would be obtaining quotations from potential contractors for the removal of the weedrake, gantry and pumps to the Isle of Axholme and North Nottinghamshire Water Level Management Board's Wiseton Pumping Station for secure storage. Quotations would also be sought for the removal of the outfall flaps and capping off of pipes. Demolition would commence once this work had been completed and was expected to take one or two days.

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(d) Strategic Hydraulic Modelling Project and Watercourse Surveys

The Engineer confirmed that the modelling contract and extensions were now substantially complete. In response to Mr N.V. Williams, the Engineer confirmed that the project was jointly funded with the Environment Agency, who received copies of all reports. The approved contract value including compensation events was £144,211.91 and contract payments to date were £143,471.20.

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(e) Emergency Pump Repairs

(i) Elmhirst Pumping Station (40% IDB; 60% Coal Authority)

Maintenance work scheduled for 23rd December 2020 was cancelled and was due to take place in February 2021.

(ii) South Thorne Bank Pumping Station (100% IDB)

Industrial Pumps would require the station to be dammed off twice, once to inspect and size up for the replacement valve required and a second time to install it. This work was likely to be undertaken in Spring/Summer 2021 when water levels were lower.

It was noted that there were irrigation requirements and the Engineer stated that these would be taken into account.

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(f) Park Drain Pumping Station Refurbishment (AX20307)

An external contractor, David Hoskins, had supported the Engineering team to develop the Outline Business Case, which would be submitted to the Environment Agency by the end of February 2021.

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2021.13 ENVIRONMENT AGENCY AND PARTNERSHIP MATTERS

The Chief Executive asked members to let him have details and, if available, photographs, of main river flooding within the Board's area as Officers were working with the National Farmers' Union to put together a case to go to the Environment Agency in order to address this problem on behalf of the Consortium Boards.

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2021.14 ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

(a) IDB Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)

The Engineer reported that in developing BAPS, there was a potential for IDBs to join together to create coherent ecological or hydrological units. As the Board's district was predominantly in the Humberhead Levels National Character Area, Officers recommended that Doncaster East Internal Drainage Board and Isle of Axholme and North Nottinghamshire Water Level Management Board develop a joint BAP. If agreed, a joint DRAFT BAP would be prepared by the Environmental Officer and brought back to both Boards for consideration and approval.

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That a joint BAP be prepared with the Isle of Axholme and North Nottinghamshire Water Level Management Board.

2021.15 QUERIES AND COMPLAINTS

The Corporate Services Manager reported that five queries, issues and complaints had been logged since the last Board meeting. These included queries relating to planning and byelaws, drain maintenance, and an illegal tyre site. No formal complaints had been received.

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2021.16 PLANNING AND BYELAW POLICY UPDATE – INCLUDING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL AND FEES

The Technical Engineering Manager presented the attached Planning and Byelaw Policy for the Board to consider. Development Control within Board areas along with the Application and Environmental Compensation fees had been under review by ADA but no guidance documents had yet been released. As a result, officers had

undertaken critical policy reviews and had prepared the attached draft Planning and Byelaw Policy for consideration by the Board.

The charges set out in the draft policy took into consideration the significant resource requirement and administration costs for planning, consenting and development control. Previously the maximum fee for an application was £50, and most applications were exempt from fees.

A summary of the proposed charges:

- (a) Application Fees - All Byelaw, Section 23 and Development Control applications to the Board would now be subject to a minimum fee of £100, with £200 charged for surface and treated foul water discharges.
- (b) Inspection Fees - Where an inspection was required to ensure works are undertaken in accordance with the conditions, a fee would be charged.
- (c) Consultation Fees - Application advice, Flood Risk Assessments and significant development would now be subject to basic fees or would be recharged on an actual cost basis.
- (d) Surface Water Development Charges - Where there is an increase in drained impermeable area, a fee would be charged.
- (e) Commuted Maintenance Fees (Culverts) - This is a one-off charge for new culverts in the Board's network to support future maintenance.
- (f) Biodiversity and Habitat Mitigation - Should a Developer be unable to provide mitigation on site a contribution for biodiversity improvements would be required.

In response to Mr G.C. Parker who raised concern over ensuring fees were paid, the Technical Engineering Manager confirmed that consent would not be given until payment of any relevant fees had been made. It was also confirmed that section 7 of the policy detailed the Board's Officer's role in respect of enforcement of the policy which would be followed.

Fees for inspection, consultation, surface water development and commuted maintenance would be index linked and would increase at the start of each financial year commencing April 2021. A detailed review of all fees and charges would be undertaken in March 2023 and then subsequently on a five-year basis. Should ADA release guidance on fees before the March 2023 review, the Board's policy would be reviewed. Fees set out under terms (a) to (d) above would apply where the Board administered applications in an extended area on behalf of a Lead Local Flood Authority.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve and adopt the attached updated Planning and Byelaw Policy including development and control fees.

2021.17 DELEGATED MATTERS

(a) Byelaw Applications

Officers reported that the following byelaw application had been dealt with under delegated authority since the last Board meeting:

DEIDB/LDC/2020/012 Installation of temporary dams within the Board maintained White Rose Way Drain at National Grid Reference 459825 – 400917 in fields off Short Lane, Haslam Park, Doncaster. The works are to facilitate desilting works and inspection of 3 span culvert passing under railway line.

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(b) Section 23 Applications

The following Section 23 applications had been dealt with since the last meeting:

DEIDB/LDC/2020/010 The construction of a new surface water outfall in a riparian watercourse at Bankwood Lane at national grid reference 460627 - 399095 in the parish of New Rossington.

DEIDB/LDC/2020/023 Proposed drainage outfall discharging into riparian watercourse via flow control manhole with maximum peak discharge rate of 9.9l/s. Residential development off Westminster Drive, Dunsville, Doncaster at national grid reference 463940 - 407715.

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(c) Planning Applications

Officers had consulted on 13 planning applications since the last meeting and appropriate comments relating to surface water drainage had been made.

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2021.18 STAFFING

The Corporate Services Manager reported that the Financial Data Entry Assistant had started work with the Board. It was also reported that the Rating/Land Officer for Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board and Doncaster East Internal Drainage Board was retiring in March 2021 and the Board would be advertising for the role in due course. In response to Mr M. Brooke, the Corporate Services Manager confirmed that applications for the Mechanical and Electrical Field Engineer had been reviewed and interviews would be scheduled in due course.

As the annual pay award was pending, members felt it opportune to undertake a review of the terms and conditions of staff to ensure these were in line with neighbouring Boards.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be given delegated authority to review staff terms and conditions.

2021.19 RECONSTITUTION OF THE BOARD

Following the loss of one nominated member and one elected member, it was now necessary to put forward names to the Minister as soon as possible as the Board was due to reconstitute on the 1st April 2021.

RESOLVED

That an email be circulated to Board members asking for nominations for the vacancy. If there was more than one nomination, a vote would be held.

2021.20 THORNE AND CROWLE MOORS SSSI – RESTORING THE HUMBERHEAD PEATLANDS LIFE PROJECT

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.

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2021.21 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

CHAIRMAN