

# BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

## MINUTES

of the proceedings of a meeting of the Executive Committee

held at the Offices of the Board on  
18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 2019 at 2pm

### Members

Chairman - \* Mr K C Casswell

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| * Cllr P Bedford | * Mr M Brookes |
| * Mr J Fowler    | * Mr P Holmes  |
| * Mr M Rollinson |                |

\* Member Present

In attendance: Mr I Warsap (Chief Executive)  
Mr D Withnall (Finance Manager)

#### 1503 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Agenda Item 1

There were no apologies for absence.

#### 1504 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - Agenda Item 2

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 1505 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING - Agenda Item 3

Minutes of the last meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2019, copies of which had been circulated, were considered and it was AGREED that they should be signed as a true record with the following amendment:

- Minute 1456(c) – the date within the title be changed to 31 March 2019 as opposed to 21 March 2019.

#### 1506 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING - Agenda Item 4

It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to exclude the public from the next part of the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, in accordance with section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

#### 1507 MATTERS ARISING - Agenda Item 5

##### (a) CONTRIBUTION TO DAMAGE TO A CONCRETE FARM YARD AT CLAYDYKE, HOLLAND FEN - Minute 1453(c)

The Chief Executive updated the committee that an agreement, with the agreed sum of money stated, has been sent to the landowner for signing to which they have confirmed they are going to sign and return.

(b) DAMAGE TO ROAD CAUSED BY BLACK SLUICE IDB MACHINES - Minute 1453(f)

It was confirmed that the detail was with the relevant minute.

(c) TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON FINANCE & RATING - Minute 1459

It was clarified that the landowner has paid the drainage rates.

(d) TO CONSIDER PERIOD ONE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS - Minute 1460

The Finance Manager informed the committee that the electricity contract is due for renewal on the 30 September 2019 and Woldmarsh have achieved a reduction of 11%.

(e) TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON WATER RESOURCE EAST BOARD MEMBERSHIP - Minute 1463

The Chief Executive made reference to the agreement made within minute 1463; 'It was AGREED that no finance should be offered towards a seat on the Board'.

He explained that a draft letter is being sent out to the relevant Chairmen and Chief Executives of a number of Boards in the Water Resource East (WRE) area regarding the appointment of an IDB representative onto the WRE Board and the apportioning of the cost of this between the Boards. The proportion of the total cost of £15,000 from Black Sluice IDB would be £1,105.81.

However, the Chief Executive referred back to the agreement made at the previous meeting, noting that the agreement would have to be rescinded following six months from the Board meeting if the committee now wish to go ahead with the £1,105.81 contribution towards the IDB representative on the WRE Board.

The Chairman explained that ADA do not want to give the full funding for the appointment because in future there may be more Water Resource committee's in other areas of the country which may also then require funding. It was therefore decided that the relevant Boards in the WRE would be asked to contribute.

It was questioned whether the agreement at the previous meeting was made based on a full funding request of £15,000 rather than an apportionment of £1,105.981. However, it was noted that the minute agreement states 'no finance' to be given which the committee had agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting.

The Finance Manager raised his concern that the Board have no legal basis to give the contribution because an IDB is only allowed to spend money on land drainage and the environment as per the Land Drainage Act. He therefore could not see how giving the contribution could be justified.

The Chief Executive noted that this concept could bring additional flood resilience to the catchment as well as possible financial reward for 'farming the water' as a resource.

Mr P Holmes noted that all IDBs are guided by the same legislation and so all IDBs being asked to contribute will be in the same position as to whether it is justifiable.

Mr J Fowler added that if the concept is likely to be using the Board's assets in the future then it is in the Board's interest and therefore justified to contribute.

The Finance Manager questioned what legal basis is going to be used to justify him to process the payment, questioning whether the possible use of the Board's assets is actually an interest in drainage?

The Chief Executive added that the WRE is the overall 'umbrella' over the South Lincs Water Partnership (SLWP). The SLWP project includes within it, to try and introduce additional flood resilience to the catchment.

The Finance Manager posed his two concerns to the committee:

1. Has a decision been made on this in the last six months?
2. Do we, as an IDB, have the legal authority to spend this money?

The standing orders were displayed on screen, noting that it was presented to the Board in June 2019 from the previous Executive committee. It was therefore to be proposed to the Board, in accordance with standing order regulation no. 23, by Mr M Rollinson that the previous agreement within minute 1463 be rescinded and the payment of £1,105.81 be made following the six months preceding the last Board meeting for the appointment of an IDB representative on the WRE Board. Mr J Fowler and Mr M Brookes seconded this proposal.

The committee felt that WRE entails both drainage and the environment. Therefore, the committee AGREED that the Finance Manager is to process the payment as directed by the Executive Committee.

(f) CO-OPTED MEMBERS - Minute 1464(c)

It was noted that the South Holland District Council co-opted member is Cllr S Walsh.

(g) NORTHERN WORKS - FENCE AT B&M'S & DUNELMS - Minute 1464(d)

It was noted that the meeting has not yet taken place, it is still ongoing.

1508 TO RECEIVE THE EXTERNAL AUDITORS OPINION 2018/19 - Agenda Item 6

The Finance Manager presented the external auditors opinion, noting his mistake regarding the period of inspection which should have been 30 working days as opposed to 20 working days, apologising for this.

All AGREED that the External Auditors opinion for 2018/19 be noted.

1509 TO CONSIDER PERIOD 05 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS - Agenda Item 7

The Finance Manager presented the period 5 management accounts, inviting any questions and noting a big contingency showing for electricity from June 2019, the bill will not be received until the end of September 2019.

The Finance Manager further displayed on screen, for interest purposes only, the Brewin Dolphin investment figures at the current date, highlighting that currently there is less than a 0.1% difference between risk level three and risk level five.

1510 PURCHASES, UPGRADES & CONTRACT RENEWALS - Agenda Item 8

The Finance Manager informed the committee that the IT support contact is currently with HBP, who have helped get the IT system set up as desired, with an established working relationship. The disaster recovery procedures have also been tested during summer 2019 and have worked successfully. The new server has also been installed and is successfully working.

The renewal contract from HBP has increased by 0.16% since the last contract that commenced October 2016 for three years, it being noted that the renewal contract is also for three years again.

The Finance Manager further noted that previously it has been difficult to source like for like quotes with the same pro-active support that HBP offer.

All AGREED to go ahead with the three-year contract with HBP, given the already established working relationship between HBP and the Board.

1511 DIRECTION ON 2019/20 BUDGETS & TEN YEAR ESTIMATES - Agenda Item 9

The Finance Manager presented the initial draft 2019/20 budgets and ten year estimates.

The Finance Manager noted that he has included the rate increases as per this year's estimate. At the moment, other than capital schemes, there is only a 2% inflationary increase.

The Finance Manager displayed on screen the average weekly earnings 3-month average for the public sector, noting that it is currently at 3.7% which he expects the Union will negotiate for at the October Pay and Conditions meeting.

It was clarified that the big increase between actual and budget in the investment income is due to the fact that the Brewin Dolphin investment was not invested for a full twelve months last year, whereas it is a full year's investment this year.

The Chairman questioned if Boston Borough Council would be informed of the possible increase? The Finance Manager noted that they were given notification last year, it being further noted that they can be sent the predictions again.

The Finance Manager made reference to land movements within the borough of Boston and all the building developments taking place that will make a difference to the special levy.

The Finance Manager also noted that the three-year cycle for the make-up of the Board is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 and so if the developments continue to grow then the Board may have to be reconstituted with another co-opted member for Boston Borough Council and one for South Holland District Council as previously discussed.

(a) REVIEW OF 2019/20 CAPITAL SCHEMES BUDGETS - Agenda Item 9(a)

The Chief Executive presented the 2019/20 capital schemes budgets.

The Chief Executive highlighted the pump scheme within 2020/21 – the remote monitoring and control H&S scheme. Quotations have been sought for CCTV cameras at every pumping station to view the suction and outfall bays, replacement gauge boards and remote pump control which will enable the Pump Engineer to switch any pump off / on remotely from a computer. This would bring a health and safety benefit as the workforce would not have to physically visit a pumping station, as it will be able to be seen through the cameras. A business case has been submitted to Local Choices for review.

The Chairman questioned whether the North Forty Foot Drain works are any closer to being completed? The Chief Executive responded that it is expected these works will commence in this financial year. The South Forty Foot Drain works will re-commence in October 2019 with the de-bushing, with a meeting with the EA taking place next week to continue negotiations with desilting. The Chief Executive noted that he would hope that the desilting up to the A17 is completed in the next three years, and in the long term, all the way through to Boston, before starting again. He further noted that the trees and bushes were Eco plugged, following expert advice, however, some have grown back and so it is to be re-investigated how to remove these using other methods.

(b) 2020/21 PLANT BUDGET - Agenda Item 9(b)

The Chief Executive presented the 2020/21 plant budget.

It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to exclude the public from the next part of the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, in accordance with section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the commercially sensitive information within.

Drott

The Chief Executive noted that he is looking into the possibility of the Board purchasing a Drott machine for the spreading / pushing out of spoil onto land as the Board are struggling to find one to hire. It would be C£45,000. The Chairman noted that it could also be hireable to other Boards.

(c) CONFIDENTIAL - SALARY REVIEWS - Agenda Item 9(c)

It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to exclude the public from the next part of the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, in accordance with section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

1512 TO REVIEW DRAINAGE RATE ACCOUNT 30-2512-2 - Agenda Item 10

The Chairman presented this case, noting that this is not the first time the Board has encountered an issue with this ratepayer.

The Chairman explained that the ratepayer had requested it be presented to the Board and so it has been presented to the Executive Committee now and will therefore be within these minutes presented to the Board in October 2019.

The Chief Executive explained that the Board have approximately 1,250 ratepayers, with this being the only written complaint received. Mr P Holmes noted the defamatory statements used throughout the letters and commended the Chief Executive for his positive outlook on the matter.

Cllr M Brookes added that the Board are acting in accordance with the Land Drainage Act, as they should, and so struggled to see the basis of the complaint.

An additional letter, dated 7<sup>th</sup> August, from the ratepayer was displayed on screen, due to an omission in the agenda papers.

All AGREED that the Board were acting as guided by the law and in line with all other drainage boards. The case will be presented to the Board on the 30<sup>th</sup> October 2019. The draft minute of the meeting will then be sent to the ratepayer.

1513 TO REVIEW THE 2019/2024 PSCA ADMINISTRATION RATE RECOVERY - Agenda Item 11

The Chief Executive explained that all costs are recovered within the Board's charge out rate. An additional 5% is added for administrative costs; other Board's range between 5% - 10%.

The Board is about to sign another five-year Public Sector Co-operation Agreement (PSCA) and so there is the opportunity to increase the additional percentage to recover administrative costs. The Finance Manager added that effectively, the added percentage counteracts the time officers and staff spend doing work towards it, i.e. invoicing, quoting and analysis.

The Chairman suggested that it is increased to 10% to cover the administrative costs. All AGREED.

1514 CONFIDENTIAL - TO REVIEW THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY MAIN RIVER TRANSFER AND PRECEPT - Agenda Item 12

It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to exclude the public from the next part of the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, in accordance with section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

1515 ANY OTHER BUSINESS - Agenda Item 13

(a) ATTENDEES FOR THE NATIONAL ADA CONFERENCE - Agenda Item 13(a)

It was confirmed that the Chairman, Chief Executive, Vice Chairman and Grant in Aid Applications Manager will attend.

(b) TO REVIEW THE DRAFT TIMETABLE FOR 2020 MEETINGS - Agenda Item 13(b)

The Finance Manager presented the draft timetable for 2020 meeting dates.

All AGREED to propose this timetable to the Board, as below:

|                |                                      |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Board          | Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> February  |
| Southern Works | Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> March      |
| Structures     | Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> March     |
| Northern Works | Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> April      |
| Environment    | Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> April     |
| Audit & Risk   | Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> May       |
| Executive      | Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> May       |
| Board          | Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> June      |
| Executive      | Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> September |
| Audit & Risk   | Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> October   |
| Joint Works    | Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> November   |
| Board          | Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> November  |
| Executive      | Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> December  |

(c) MEMBER ORGANISATIONS OF THE SOUTH Lincs WATER PARTNERSHIP (SLWP) FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION REQUEST - Agenda Item 13(c)

The Chief Executive explained that this is a request for the partners of the SLWP to show their commitment towards offering financial support to the grant application presented by the SLWP.

The Chief Executive explained that the current funding partners are as follows:

- Anglian Water - £60,000
- Lincolnshire County Council - £60,000
- Regional Flood & Coastal Committee - £60,000

The funding grant is a 60:40 split, with the maximum partner contribution being £320,000. There is therefore the capacity to obtain a further £140,000 funding from partners in order to gain the maximum grant contribution.

The Chief Executive further noted that Anglian Water have allocated a further £47million towards the Water Resource East (WRE) project of which they have identified the SLWP project as a possible benefactor.

The Chief Executive explained that he has informed the relevant bodies, that the Board would not be in a position to commit a figure of a sum of money before the deadline date and so it was suggested that a letter of 'provisional agreement of financial support' be written, with no figure of money.

The Board will not have to decide how much money they are willing to contribute until mid 2020.

The Finance Manager noted that he felt this is relevant to the Board because it is inclusive of telemetry, upgrading the Board's systems and climate change resilience.

All AGREED that the letter of financial support be sent.

(d) DAMAGE TO BT CABINET - Agenda Item 13(d)

The Chief Executive explained that a BT cabinet has been damaged along the new Hammond Beck near Tesco. Photos were displayed on screen.

One of the Board's Twiga machines was working nearby and so BT have accused the Board of causing the damage. Both the operator of the machine and the Works Supervisor explained to BT on site that the Board's machinery had not caused the damage. The operator is also completing a written statement to certify the damage was not caused by the machine he was operating.

BT are trying to claim £2,042 for the recovery of costs and a letter of intention to pursue the claim has been received. The Chief Executive and Finance Manager recommended to the committee that the Board does not pay this claim and contest it with BT. Mr P Holmes noted that BT have got to prove the Board caused the damage.

Mr M Rollinson added that a lot of organisations now have cameras in the cabs of vehicles to assist in proving things with incidents such as this. The Finance Manager noted that the workforce would most likely see it as 'spying' on them as opposed to for their own protection. Mr M Rollinson felt it would be beneficial to have a camera in the new Unimog.

(e) LINCOLNSHIRE IDB'S TRAINING DAY - Agenda Item 13(e)

The Lincolnshire IDBs joint members training day will take place on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2019, venue to be confirmed.

(f) REMOTE RAINFALL MONITORS - Agenda Item 13(f)

Mr P Holmes made reference to remote rainfall monitors, noting that they are now becoming more widespread and cheaper. He questioned whether the Board should consider buying some in bulk and offer them to members if they wish to put one at the pumping station in their area. The rainfall readings can be sent to any smart phone within the system at any given point.

Mr P Holmes noted that he has looked into a Sencrop monitor which was around £360 plus the subscription for the year.

The Chief Executive stated that the Board currently have three automated rainfall stations – Swineshead, Black Hole Drove and Cooks Lock.

It was noted that the Board would be able to see what was coming and therefore be proactive.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 15:43.