

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES

of the proceedings of a Meeting of the Board

held at the Offices of the Board on
30th October 2019 at 2pm

Members

Chairman - * Mr K C Casswell

Mr W Ash	* Cllr T Ashton
Mr J Atkinson	* Cllr R Austin
* Mr V Barker	* Cllr P Bedford
* Mr J Fowler	Cllr M Cooper
* Mr P Holmes	* Cllr F Pickett
* Mr R Leggott	* Cllr P Skinner
* Mr P Robinson	* Cllr M Head
* Mr M Rollinson	* Cllr C Benn
Mr N J Scott	* Cllr S Walsh
* Mr J R Wray	* Mr M Brookes

* Member Present

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

The Chairman welcomed Cllr C Benn, Cllr F Pickett and Cllr M Head to their first meeting.

1527 TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON THE OCTOBER 2019 RAINFALL EVENT

The Finance Manager gave a presentation on the recent flooding events as follows:

The first emergency was declared on 15th October 2019. Telemetry traces were displayed on screen, identifying the point at which the South Forty Foot Drain (SFFD) reached 2.3m; at which point an emergency is declared. The SFFD did not reach 2.7m (the level at which pumps are turned off) in this emergency and returned back to a non-emergency state.

The second emergency was declared on 26th October 2019. Again, telemetry traces were displayed on screen, however, this time, the SFFD reached 2.7m and so analysis into which pumps to turn off began. This would cause levels within the Board's catchment to rise, but take pressure off the SFFD to prevent over topping or a breach.

The Chief Executive noted that telemetry traces like those displayed on screen have never been seen before.

Several videos were displayed on screen of different pumping stations highlighting how high the levels of water at the pumping stations were. The Finance Manager continued by outlining some of the problems experienced with the pumping stations, as displayed on screen, including matters such as water finding its way back round both sides of South Kyme and Ewerby pumping stations because the main river levels were too high (effectively pumping the water around in a circle), water lapping under the control panel inside South Kyme pumping station, overheating causing pumps to trip out, water level sensors being under water and weed issues. It was also noted that the Unimog and farmer's tractors were used to drive pumps at Mallard Hurn pumping station.

During discussion around the pumping stations, Mr M Rollinson questioned how long the pumps are warranted for? Showing concern that some of the pumps with possible problems are not particularly old. The Operations Manager noted that the recently replaced pumps at Donington Wykes were installed several years ago and therefore the warranty was no longer available. It may be a simplistic problem such as something is stuck in it.

With all of the explained issues in mind, the Finance Manager explained some proposals in relation to the pumping stations and rectifying some of these problems. The current budget included £167,000 in the 2020/21 budget with the hope of achieving £55,000 Grant, £55,000 Local Levy and £57,000 from Board funds. This funding was to put CCTV in all of the pumping stations, set up a remote control system at all of the pumping stations and to purchase metric gauge boards. The CCTV cameras will aid with the monitoring of the station, water levels, weed screens and act as a security deterrent (£63,800 + £336pa per site). The remote control system will reduce the health and safety risk of sending the workforce into potentially dangerous scenarios to turn the pumps on / off as this will be able to be implemented by the click of a button on a computer (£83,000). Finally, the metric gauge boards will then be in line with the telemetry system as this system uses metric figures as opposed to the current gauge boards using imperial.

The Finance Manager continued that this could possibly be progressed quicker than first anticipated (2020/21) so that works can start to be completed sooner and displayed the following proposal in light of this:

Modified Scheme to fund from reserves immediately (possible retrospective grant):

- 2020/21 = £57,000 budget
 - Initial Development £6,416 + 22 x £2,321 = £57,478
- Consider other 11 in future years with CCTV and Metric gauge Boards

The Chairman added that the remote control system will not only prevent health and safety risks but also save the Board money as there may be less workforce required to be on standby. It was noted that the possibility of a retrospective grant is unlikely. The Finance Manager also added that more investigative work needs conducting in relation to the CCTV system as it has been quoted over £10,000 per year just for the data sim cards to send the data back.

Mr M Rollinson questioned the impact of this on the budgets? The Finance Manager noted that it will impact long term, but that some of these problems, as previously highlighted, need addressing sooner rather than later and will source the funding, possibly through the reduction of future schemes or pushing them back a few years.

Cllr T Ashton expressed his support for the modified scheme.

Mr V Barker suggested that some of the lower gauges, such as Black Hole or Dowsby Fen, might be considered for funding by the Environment Agency (EA).

The Chairman acknowledged Mr V Barker's suggestion but it was felt that the EA would not see this as a priority and so wouldn't complete it. The Chairman further added that the Board will prioritise which gauge boards are replaced.

Cllr M Head questioned that if the scheme runs into the next financial year; could the outstanding pumps still to be completed be funded by the grant? The Finance Manager explained that the scheme is the at the top of the reserve list with the RFCC local choices funding. The other possible funding with the flood defence grant in aid is a lengthy process.

The Finance Manager also added that mutual aid has been received from South Holland IDB for two nights as Black Sluice IDB did not have enough workforce. Mr V Barker noted that he has provided unskilled labour before in these scenarios.

Mr R Leggott express his concern towards the overheating of some of the pumps – there is no point in being able to get everything working if it going to overheat and cut out. The Finance Manager responded that a debrief will take place at which all of these concerns will be identified and responded to. The Chief Executive added that previous issues of overheating have been simplistically prevented by inputting an airbrick.

Following the discussion around the issues encountered at the various pumping stations, all AGREED that the problems at Ewerby pumping station (£12,000) and Dyke Fen pumping station (£11,524) be repaired and resolved.

The Chairman proposed the new modified initial development, seconded by Cllr P Bedford. All AGREED.

The Chairman concluded by complimenting the hard work of all the staff involved. All AGREED that a letter of thanks be sent to all employees from the Board, signed by the Chairman and Vice-chairman.

Mr P Holmes noted that a letter of thanks should also be sent to South Holland IDB. All AGREED.

1528 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Agenda Item 1

Apologies for absence were received from Mr N Scott, Mr J Atkinson and Cllr M Cooper.

1529 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - Agenda Item 2

Declarations of interest were received as follows:

- Mr P Holmes: Agenda Item 10(b) – Byelaw Consent 2019/B08
- Mr M Rollinson: Agenda Item 10(b) – Byelaw Consent 2019/L02

1530 MINUTES OF THE LAST BOARD MEETING - Agenda Item 3

The Minutes of the last meeting of the Board held on the 26th June 2019, copies of which had been circulated, were considered and it was AGREED that they should be signed as a true record.

1531 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE LAST BOARD 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.

1532 MATTERS ARISING - Agenda Item 5

(a) ADA MODEL OF LAND DRAINAGE BYELAWS – Minute 1469(a)

The Finance Manager noted that this has been raised at the recent Lincolnshire ADA Branch meeting and David Sisson has taken it on. He has secured a working group with the highest levels of Defra to try and get this matter resolved.

(b) DAMAGE TO CONCRETE FARM YARD AT CLAYDYKE, HOLLAND FEN – Minute 1469(b)

The Chairman noted that the agreement is still with the landowners to be signed and returned.

1533 TO RECEIVE UNCONFIRMED MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS - Agenda Item 6

(a) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING - 18 SEPTEMBER 2019

The Chairman presented the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on the 18th September 2019, copies of which had been circulated. The Board RESOLVED that the minutes should be received.

(i) DRAINAGE RATE ACCOUNT 30-2512-2

The Chairman explained that it was the request of the ratepayer for this matter to be presented to the Board.

All AGREED that the Officers had responded to the case in the appropriate and correct way.

(ii) TO APPROVE THE FIRST DRAFT 2020/21 BUDGET & TEN YEAR ESTIMATES

The Chairman explained that he would like to present the 2020/21 Budget & 10 Year Estimates in conjunction with agenda item 11 – minute no. 1538.

The Chairman explained that he has attended a meeting with the Finance Manager at Boston Borough Council.

At this meeting, Boston Borough Council requested that the budgets and figures be reviewed in regard to the percentage increase on rates in order to give the council a short term gain.

The Chairman continued by explaining that the Finance Manager has put together various alternative budgets /estimates in agenda item 11 but it is felt that the only really viable option is the last option presented on page 101.

The Chairman felt that the Board should accept this alternative option, however, it is the Board's choice and so opinions were invited.

Cllr S Walsh questioned whether this took into consideration the expenditure that had just been approved for the pumping station development? The Finance Manager responded that there was already £57,000 in the budget so it will just be spent from the reserves this year.

Mr M Rollinson questioned how long the increase can be delayed for? He further expressed his concern that the Board have encountered five flooding events this autumn and if this continues the reserves could take a hit as a result of this. Mr M Rollinson proposed that he would like the Board to stick to the original budget.

Cllr P Skinner acknowledged Mr M Rollinson's concern, but stated that until the council receive fairer funding, this would be quite crucial, noting that the council get less of the rate than the IDB do and still have to provide all the services. He further added that the council are looking to work together.

Cllr T Ashton agreed that the 'breathing space' would be crucial and very much appreciated, this year in particular, with having no government to negotiate with. He further noted that this isn't a crisis that will go away, it can only be postponed, resulting in more significant increases in the future. He continued that it may be necessary that once there is a government in place to hold a meeting with the relevant minister. He concluded by stating that the IDBs and councils should not be in competition.

Mr R Leggott acknowledged Cllr P Skinner and Cllr T Ashton's point of view but felt the issue Boston Borough Council face is not the responsibility of the Board to solve. He felt that the Board should be focused on drainage matters and not financial matters of the local borough council. Mr R Leggott added that if the Board choose to use the alternative budget to help the council then effectively the Board will be 'subsidising' them and whilst that is ongoing the problem will not be resolved as the government will see it is already being 'fixed'. Mr R Leggott therefore expressed his support for Mr M Rollinson's proposal of the original budget.

Cllr P Skinner disagreed with Mr R Leggott, stating that these financial matters are of interest to and should be discussed at Board meetings.

Cllr T Ashton added that it is the fault of the government that this situation has arisen, stating that the Board can levy its precept at whatever figure they wish and the Boston Borough Council are obliged to find that money. Therefore, services of Boston Borough Council, such as emptying the bins for example, would have to be cut in order to accommodate the money being found. He again expressed his dislike to thinking the IDB and council are in competition.

Mr P Holmes expressed his support to the proposal from Mr M Rollinson to keep the original budget. He drew attention to the proposed alternative budget on page 101, particularly to the year 2027/28, when the Board's reserves will be low - at less than 17% of expenditure. He feared that this same conversation will then be had again then, when the Board will not be able to help the council due to it being not financially viable for the Board.

The Chairman called for a vote on the following proposal:

- To use the original budget, as planned before the meeting was held with Boston Borough Council – proposed by Mr M Rollinson

Eleven members were in favour of this proposal and six against. It was therefore CARRIED that the original budget be adhered to, as opposed to an alternative as requested by the Boston Borough Council.

Mr V Barker noted that he dislikes seeing this particular vote.

(iii) TO APPROVE THE 2019/20 CAPITAL SCHEMES BUDGETS

The Chairman presented the Capital Scheme Budgets. There were no comments or questions from members.

(iv) TO APPROVE THE 2020/21 PLANT BUDGET

The Chairman presented the plant budget. There were no comments or questions from members.

(v) TO APPROVE THE DRAFT TIMETABLE FOR 2020 MEETINGS (AMENDED)

The Chairman noted the change of dates for the February Board meeting and December Executive meeting which will now be held on the following dates:

Board: Friday 7th February 2020 at 10am
Executive: Thursday 17th December 2020

(vi) TO CONSIDER FINANCIAL SUPPORT TOWARDS THE SOUTH Lincs WATER PARTNERSHIP

The Chairman explained that there is a request that if the South Lincs Water Partnership (SLWP) does go forward then the partners will be requested to contribute. At the moment all that has been completed is a letter of support, once more is known, it will be presented to the Board.

(vii) PERIOD ONE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS - Minute 1507(d)

The Finance Manager noted that 11% reduction will not make that much of a difference with the October 2019 electricity bills but it will help.

(viii) WATER RESOURCE EAST BOARD MEMBERSHIP - Minute 1507(e)

The Chairman explained that it was felt that ADA should have a representative on the WRE Board. ADA decided they would not fund this place on the Board and so it has been requested by IDBs to fund it. It will cost £15,000 in total, it is currently a £1,105.81 contribution from Black Sluice IDB. The Chairman emphasised the importance of having a representative on the Board.

All AGREED that this payment is to go ahead.

(ix) PERIOD 05 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS - Minute 1509

The Finance Manager noted that the contingency for the June 2019 event electricity covered the bill, highlighting the reliable method used to calculate what the electricity bills will be. The same will be done for the October 2019 event.

(x) LINCOLNSHIRE IDB'S TRAINING DAY - Minute 1515(e)

The Finance Manager explained that the training day, for both IDB staff and Board Members, is due to take place on Wednesday 27th November 2019 at the Dower House, Woodhall Spa. There was a show of hands to indicate how many members would like to attend – 13 members.

(b) AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE MEETING - 09 OCTOBER 2019

The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee presented the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on the 9th October 2019, copies of which had been circulated. The Board RESOLVED that the minutes should be received.

(i) TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL RETURN INCLUDING EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S OPINION FOR 2018/19

The Board RESOLVED that the annual return including external auditor's opinion for 2018/19 be received.

(ii) TO ADOPT POLICY NO. 14: COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee presented Policy No. 14, Complaints Procedure, which was reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee on the 9th October 2019.

The Chairman noted that the proposed change on the last page of the complaint form actually needs to be reverted back to the original as the change is not correct.

Mr M Rollinson also suggested that if the fax number has been removed, it should be replaced with the email address.

The Board RESOLVED that the Complaints Policy be adopted with the following amendments:

- The proposed change on the last page of the complaint form actually needs to be reverted back to the original; 'Following the next Board Meeting,'.
- Addition of 'mailbox@blacksluiceidb.gov.uk' in replacement of the fax number.

(iii) TO ADOPT POLICY NO. 33: SMOKING POLICY

The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee presented Policy No. 33, Smoking Policy, which was reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee on the 9th October 2019. The Board RESOLVED that the Smoking Policy be adopted.

(iv) TO ADOPT POLICY NO. 36: H&S MANUAL HANDLING OPERATIONS

The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee presented Policy No. 36, H&S Manual Handling Operations Policy, which was reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee on the 9th October 2019. The Board RESOLVED that the H&S Manual Handling Operations Policy be adopted.

(v) TO ADOPT POLICY NO. 37: H&S MANAGING STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE

The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee presented Policy No. 37, H&S Managing Stress in the Workplace, which was reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee on the 9th October 2019. The Board RESOLVED that the H&S Managing Stress in the Workplace Policy be adopted.

(vi) TO ADOPT POLICY NO. 38: H&S VIBRATION AT WORK

The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee presented Policy No. 38, H&S Vibration at Work, which was reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee on the 9th October 2019. The Board RESOLVED that the H&S Vibration at Work Policy be adopted.

(vii) TO ADOPT POLICY NO. 39: H&S WEARING OF SEATBELTS

The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee presented Policy No. 39, H&S Wearing of Seatbelts, which was reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee on the 9th October 2019. The Board RESOLVED that the H&S Wearing of Seatbelts Policy be adopted.

(viii) TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON DATA TAGGING

The Finance Manager explained that this system would act as a deterrent whilst also meaning that if the police found it, once stolen, it would be identified back to Black Sluice IDB.

The Finance Manager further noted that G&J Peck Ltd were half the price of the other two quotes sourced.

Mr M Rollinson felt that it should be put on all new vehicles purchased in the future.

Mr M Brookes also noted that it could give reductions on the insurance premium.

Mr P Robinson questioned that unless the machine came into contact with the police, the machine cannot be tracked as it could be with GPS tracking? The Finance Manager explained the problems with tracking and how easy it is to disable the tracking device, it being more expensive and not as effective. It also offers no discount in the insurance premium.

All AGREED that G&J Peck Ltd be used to put the data tag system on the following machines; 5 x Excavators, 3x Twiga's, 1 x Teleporter and 1 x Unimog (new).

(ix) REPORT ON INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS - Minute 1521

The Finance Manger referred to the business interruption insurance and the recommendation from the Audit & Risk Committee to increase £100,000 to £500,000 with a 12-month indemnity period at £1057.73.

All AGREED with the recommendation to increase to £500,000 with a 12-month indemnity period.

(x) SEA EMBANKMENT WORKS - Minute 1526(a)

The Finance Manager noted that Simeon Disley will be attending the Joint Works Committee meeting on the 21st November 2019 to give a presentation on the sea embankment works around the Wash.

1534 TO REVIEW THE RISK REGISTER - Agenda Item 7

The Chairman presented the Risk Register.

The Board RESOLVED that the Risk Register be accepted.

1535 TO RECEIVE THE PERIOD 06 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS - Agenda Item 8

The Finance Manager presented the Period 06 Management Accounts, highlighting that 17 distress warrants were awarded in court on Monday 28th October 2019.

The Board RESOLVED that the Period 06 Management Accounts be approved.

1536 TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL REPORT ON HEALTH & SAFETY INCLUDING NEAR MISSES - Agenda Item 9

The Chairman noted that ADA are really pushing Health and Safety at the moment, noting that they take the view that if a serious health and safety accident occurs then it is the responsibility of the Board.

The Chairman added that guidance will be distributed from ADA and that the matter will probably be aimed towards the Executive and Audit & Risk Committee.

Cllr S Walsh made reference to paragraphs 3 and 4 of the annual report on health & safety. He questioned if the reporting process is correct, with the unusualness of no near miss incidents reported and only two accidents reported.

The Operations Manager noted that it is an unusually low number; however, the procedure is clear on reporting.

The Board RESOVLED that the annual report on Health & Safety be received.

1537 REPORTS ON THE FOLLOWING: - Agenda Item 10

(a) MONTHLY ACCOUNTS (JUNE 2019 - SEPTEMBER 2019)

The Board's monthly accounts, inclusive of June 2019 - September 2019, were circulated.

It was noted that the Chief Executive hasn't signed them due to being off work unwell, he will therefore review the accounts following his return to work, which will be noted in the minutes of the following meeting.

The Board RESOLVED that this report be noted.

(b) SCHEDULE OF CONSENTS (JUNE 2019 - SEPTEMBER 2019)

The Board's Schedule of Consents, inclusive of June 2019 - September 2019, were circulated. The Board RESOLVED that this report be noted.

(c) RAINFALL

The rainfall figures at Swineshead and Black Hole Drove were presented, copies of which had been circulated. The Board RESOLVED that this report be noted.

Mr P Holmes gave a further update on the rainfall as follows:

- Black Hole Drove:
October 2019 rainfall so far = 84mm
Total Rainfall for the last year = 567.4mm
Average = 95%
- Swineshead:
October 2019 rainfall so far = 107mm
Total Rainfall for the last year = 701.2mm
Average = 114%

Mr P Holmes noted that Black Hole Drove is recording consistently lower than Swineshead by similar proportions and so questioned if there was possibly a hole in it. The Finance Manager acknowledged that this would be looked into. The Chairman suggested that John Atkinson may have kept rainfall figures of their own that it could be compared to.

Mr V Barker added that 50% of the rainfall in the Board's catchment comes from highland water, he noted that he has previously suggested having a rain gauge in this higher catchment – possibly George Atkinson may be able to supply the Board with figures? This would allow the Board to understand the water coming from the highland catchment.

The Chief Executive made reference to the South Lincs Water Partnership (SLWP), noting that some of the partners of the groups are now receiving confirmation of funding applications. This funding will initially be directed at the SLWP to capture data of the upper catchment over the next few years.

Mr V Barker suggested to contact Mr Richardson who could possibly supply some figures.

1538 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON A MEETING HELD WITH BOSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL & BUDGET AND ESTIMATE PROPOSAL - Agenda Item 11

This matter was discussed in minute no. 1533.

The outcome was as follows:

The Chairman proposed a vote on the following proposal:

- To use the original budget, as planned before the meeting was held with Boston Borough Council – proposed by Mr M Rollinson

Eleven members were in favour of this proposal and six against. It was therefore CARRIED that the original budget be adhered to, as opposed to an alternative as requested by the Boston Borough Council.

1539 ANY OTHER BUSINESS - Agenda Item 12

(a) COMPLAINT OF VEGETATION ON THE NORTH FORTY FOOT DRAIN

Cllr C Benn noted the letter of complaint received from a resident living adjacent to the North Forty Foot Drain.

The Chief Executive explained that years ago, this would have been hand cut, which the resident can probably remember. This has been stopped due to mechanical cutting now. It was explained that the owner of the property does actually own the bank to the centreline of the watercourse, unless there are other land registry involvements. This has been explained to the property owner, however, she does not accept this and so has written a second letter of complaint.

The Chief Executive noted that one member has replied to the property owner as an individual member and so the Chief Executive asked that if he is copied into responses, do members want them circulating to the other members of the Board? All AGREED that any responses can be circulated around Board members.

The Operations Manager noted that grant funding has been achieved to clear this section's banks of vegetation and desilt the watercourse.

Mr M Brookes added that it needs to be made clear to the property owner that this is a one off scheme.

(b) DESILTING OF THE SOUTH FORTY FOOT DRAIN

Mr P Holmes questioned if there was any progress on the desilting of the rest of the South Forty Foot Drain (SFFD)?

The Operations Manager responded that he has recently had a meeting with the Environment Agency. There isn't currently any funding to continue with the desilting on the SFFD, but there was an indication given that there could be. He added that he will keep pressing for it, noting the benefits seen in the stretch that has been completed. There is funding in place, with works taking place currently to remove the bushes from the next 3km section from the A52 downstream to around Donington Northorpe / Bicker Fen.

The Operations Manager explained that there may be funding available for further bushing works to be completed. It is believed there is not as much silt in the further downstream section of the watercourse, however, this is subject to survey which is to be carried out next.

(c) ENVIRONMENT AGENCY SURVEYS

Mr V Barker noted that it has previously been mentioned that the Environment Agency were conducting a survey of outfalls into the South Forty Foot Drain, he wondered whether the results had been received? The Chief Executive could not recall this.

(d) POSSIBLE AMALGAMATION OF BLACK SLUICE IDB & WELLAND & DEEPINGS IDB

Mr V Barker mentioned the possibility of amalgamation with Welland & Deepings IDB that had been circulated via email prior to the meeting and questioned whether there was any more information on this?

The Chairman responded that it has been presented at the Welland and Deeping Board meeting, where it was completely voted against.

Mr V Barker added that he felt it was a way forward for the future.

Mr P Robinson added that Black Sluice IDB is a very progressive Board and should be proud of that.

Cllr T Ashton also showed his support for a possible amalgamation in the future.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 15:40.