

# BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

## MINUTES

of the proceedings of a Meeting of the  
Northern Works Committee

held remotely on the  
2<sup>nd</sup> June 2021

### Members

Chairman - \* Mr P Holmes

* Cllr T Ashton	* Cllr R Austin
* Cllr P Bedford	* Mr M Brookes
* Mr D Casswell	* Cllr M Cooper
* Mr J Fowler	* Cllr M Head
Mr R Leggott	Mr R Needham
* Cllr F Pickett	* Mr J E Pocklington
* Mr P Robinson	Mr N Scott
* Cllr P Skinner	Mr R Welberry

(\* Member Present)

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

#### 1792 TO APPROVE THE AMENDED STANDING ORDERS – Agenda Item 1

The Finance Manager explained that there were temporary amendments made to the Standing Orders last year to allow remote meetings to take place due to COVID-19, which had an expiry of 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021. There has now been a permanent replacement paragraph added, as displayed on screen, to allow for remote meetings to continue, which will be presented at the next meeting of the Board for approval but are required to be presented at the beginning of any meeting prior to that due to the temporary version having expired. All APPROVED.

#### 1793 RECORDING THE MEETING – Agenda Item 2

Members were informed that the meeting would be recorded.

#### 1794 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Agenda Item 3

Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Rollinson, Mr R Leggott, Mr R Welberry, Mr R Needham and Mr K Casswell.

#### 1795 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - Agenda Item 4

There were no declarations of interest.

1796 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING - Agenda Item 5

The Minutes of the Northern Works Committee, which was held on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020, copies of which had been circulated, were considered. It was AGREED that the Minutes should be signed as a true record.

1797 MATTERS ARISING - Agenda Item 6

(a) FALLEN TREE - FX1472 - NORTH FORTY FOOT DRAIN

Cllr P Bedford questioned if this matter has been resolved yet? The Operations Manager noted that it is not yet resolved.

1798 RECEIVE THE ENGINEER'S REPORT - Agenda Item 7

The Operations Manager presented the report on Engineering Works, highlighting points as follows.

1. CAPITAL ASSET IMPROVEMENTS

(a) 2020/21 Defra/EA Funded Grant in Aid (GiA) Schemes

(i) NORTH FORTY FOOT CLEANSING/REVTMENT & LANGRICK ROAD PIPELINE

The works have started; all the planned replacement of existing pipeline is completed and are now awaiting quotations for the sections proposed to be lined.

Contact has been made with Lincolnshire County Council regarding the section under the highway who have agreed to fund that section of work.

Royal Smals will complete the desilting of the North Forty Foot Drain from Cooks Lock Pumping Station to the footbridge at Roseberry Avenue. These works are planned for late October 2021 and are expected to take between 4 – 5 weeks. The silt settlement lagoon having been completed in March.

(b) 2020/21 Board Funded Capital Schemes

(i) WYBERTON MARSH PS WEEDSCREEN CLEANER

The replacement of the weedscreen cleaner at Wyberton Marsh Pumping Station has been completed, photos were displayed on screen.

(ii) CHAIN BRIDGE PS WEEDSCREEN CLEANER

The refurbishment of the weedscreen cleaner at Chain Bridge Pumping Station has been completed, photos were displayed on screen.

(iii) JETTING TO MAJOR PIPELINES

The elements still to be completed in Kirton / Wyberton and Donington were displayed on screen, having encountered accessibility issues because of weather conditions and water levels. It was confirmed that when inspecting, defects in the pipes, separation of joints etc. are being looked for, however, there have been no major causes for concern in relation to the conditions of the pipelines already completed.

(iv) REMOTE MONITORING & CONTROL (H&S SCHEME)

This work has started; installing metric gauge boards and remote operation of the pumps. Some of the pumping station's control panels will require upgrading to be able to run the remote operation.

It was explained that the original source of funding (£110,000) was proposed through joint funding of Local Levy and Grant in Aid (GiA), however, unfortunately the scheme was not eligible for this. Local Levy funding (£110,000) has now been approved instead.

The Chairman questioned if a GiA Manager would have been able to help achieve the GiA funding? The Operations Manager responded that a new GiA Manager has been appointed and is due to commence work next month, however, noted that he didn't think it would have made a difference to achieving the funding as the required criteria was not met.

The Finance Manager added that the automated pumping stations used over the winter period worked well and as they were designed to.

(c) 2021/22 Defra/EA Funded Grant in Aid (GiA) Schemes

(i) REMOTE MONITORING, TELEMETRY H&S SCHEME

This scheme was explained in the above item; 1(b)(iv).

(d) 2021/22 - Board Funded Capital Schemes

(i) JETTING TO MAJOR PIPELINES

This scheme was explained in the above item; 1(b)(iii).

(ii) GENERAL CULVERT CONTRIBUTIONS

The following culverts are proposed to for replacement / contribution:

No. 635	Swineshead	15m x 0.6m	Armco	£1k max contribution
No. 1795	Kirton	12m x 0.6m	Armco	£1k max contribution
No. 2880	Kirton	9m x 0.6m	BAT	Potential to give this up

It was also agreed at the recent Structures Committee Meeting that Culvert No 1469 in Bicker Fen would have a £1,000 contribution from the Board.

Culvert No. 2880 has the potential to be given up as the Board are considering giving that watercourse up. Culverts No. 635 and 1795 are used for maintenance works and so have the potential for contribution. A contribution won't be made until it has been further investigated.

#### Culverts 1469 & 1408 – Bicker Fen

The Operations Manager next referred to an ongoing situation in Bicker Fen regarding two culverts, No. 1469 and 1408.

One culvert completely failed and the other partially failed. The culvert that failed completely was entirely removed by the Board, and the culvert that partially failed was partly removed by the Board as both were causing obstruction to the conveyance of water through the watercourse.

The two culverts are owned by the same landowner, with whom discussion has taken place, explaining that the Board would be willing to make a contribution to Culvert No. 1469 as the Board use it for their operations. The landowner argues that if the Board are using the culvert, then the Board should be fully responsible for it, that he is not willing to replace the culverts at his cost and that he won't pay his drainage rates until resolved. The Operations Manager is meeting with the landowner on site next week to explain the Board's position. The landowner has had formal notification and received the Structures Policy.

The Chairman questioned if the Board could carry out its operations without either of the culverts? The Operations Manager responded that, yes, the Board can carry out its operations without either culvert but noted that one of the culverts is required for the landowner to access his field as it is the only access point.

The Chairman felt that a contribution appropriate to the amount the Board use it, in line with the Structures Policy, be offered and that is it.

Mr J Fowler noted that from looking at it on Google Earth, it looks like a critical crossing point for the farm holding, noting that the Structures Policy should be adhered to. Adding that it looks a useful crossing point to the Board and so the standard contribution should be made.

Mr D Casswell questioned if the Board have accepted liability by removing the culvert? It was confirmed that the Board are obliged to remove any obstruction blocking the conveyance of water, as per the Structures Policy.

Cllr M Head questioned how much the replacement would cost? The Operations Manager responded that if the Board did it, it would be £7,000 + depending on the diameter and length. The Chairman noted that the Board is, admittedly, dearer than the market place, a landowner with their own labour and machinery would reduce the cost.

Cllr M Head next referred to the 'standard Board contribution' questioning what this is? Also adding, that setting a precedence needs to be considered with the action of this situation.

The Operations Manager noted that the contribution is calculated based on how much time using the culvert saves the Board operationally over a period of twenty years.

The Chief Executive noted the Structures Policy that holds a lot of information that can be found on the Board's website.

Cllr P Bedford felt that he should be offered the Board contribution only and no more and adhere to the Structures Policy.

The Finance Manager also noted that if the landowner refuses to pay his drainage rates they will be recovered through the court.

(e) Pumping Station Schemes

(i) GREAT HALE PS WEEDSCREEN REFURBISHMENT

The weedscreen at Great Hale Pumping Station has been deferred once and is due to be refurbished, however, it is proposed to defer this again and use the resource at Wyberton Marsh Pumping Station instead, as the pumps at that pumping station are making a worrying noise.

All AGREED to defer Great Hale Pumping Station weedscreen refurbishment and go ahead with work at Wyberton Marsh Pumping Station.

(ii) KIRTON MARSH PS NEW ROOF

Photos of the current roof at Kirton Marsh Pumping Station were displayed on screen, it being noted that they have been taken using the Board's drone which is helpful for completing roof inspections.

It was confirmed that it will be a pitch roof and that solar panels will be considered.

2. Proposed Works 2022/23

(a) Defra/EA Granted Schemes

(i) EWERBY FEN CATCHMENT WORKS

It was explained that this is about establishing the benefits in the whole of the catchment.

It further being added that GiA funding is based on identifying benefits within the area that are attributional to release funding. Currently, the greatest benefit is property (both residential and commercial), with a lot of pressure now being made to make agricultural land more valuable in this. If more value is given to agricultural land, then the Board will be successful in achieving GiA funding.

The medium term plan has just been completed; this is a six year projection of schemes wanted to be considered for funding. There are 26 schemes in this plan, however, it is not expected to achieve all of these in six years.

This is a survey of the Ewerby Fen Catchment to try and achieve betterment of every asset in the catchment. The Operations Manager felt this is something important, noting that the majority of pumping stations are at end of life, and it would be beneficial to consider developing the catchment in a different way.

Mr D Casswell questioned if the pumping stations were to be rebuilt if they would have increased pump capacity?

The Operations Manager responded that if funding was achieved, the Board would need to consider a 'start from scratch' method, and look at all the modern ways of pumping, and with it the potential to reconfigure the existing pump catchments.

(b) Board Funded Capital Schemes

(i) HELPRINGHAM FEN PS ROOF

The current flat roof at Helpringham Fen Pumping Station will be replaced in the same way as Mallard Hurn Pumping Station Roof was replaced in 2018.

3. Information on investigations at Ewerby, South Kyme and Damford

The Operations Manager explained that the conclusion of each report for each of the above pumping stations have been included in the agenda for information.

From the reports, it is now known what work needs to be completed. The Operations Manager proposed to ask Stantec to provide a quotation for the works they suggested in their report.

The Operations Manager continued that he is still trying to achieve an order from the EA for the investigations already carried out and for the recommended works. Discussion has also taken place around a potential insurance claim if the EA do not provide the funding.

The Chairman questioned the scale of the required works? The Operations Manager responded that he believes it will likely be around £100,000 per site.

The Chairman questioned whether the EA are likely to refuse responsibility for it? The Operations Manager noted that he has had email confirmation from the EA to go ahead with the inspections and are aware of those costs, accepting responsibility and not challenging as of yet. The Chairman expressed his concern that the EA will refuse responsibility.

The Finance Manager added that the report shows the problem is where the pumping station and bank meet.

Mr J Fowler noted that presumably there is a specification of a normal working water level within the EA drain and in these rainfall events this is exceeded and that is what causes the problem.

The Chief Executive felt that the water levels are above the design level which increases the pressure on the banks, therefore forcing the water through / around / under the bank and it being the EA's responsibility as a result of their water control.

#### 4. Trinity College PS issues during high water levels

The Operations Manager explained that the water is getting through the bank around Trinity College Pumping Station during high water levels.

Stantec were proposing to be on site mid May 2021 but have not yet been. However, they have provided a proposal and it is £1,970 for the initial inspections, which will provide a report which will include further suggested investigation works to establish the problem.

The Chairman felt it needing doing to know what is going on. Cllr M Cooper agreed that it needs to be found out what is going on.

The Operations Manager noted that the proposed catchment works can be identified on the Capital Scheme Budget in red.

Cllr M Head referred to the high water levels, questioning whether the lack of desilting is an affecting factor? Further noting that if this is going to be a recurring pattern of large amounts of rainfall, what can be done to mitigate?

The Operations Manager noted the Board's proactive approach to getting the South Forty Foot Drain (SFFD) desilted from Black Hole Drove to Black Sluice Pumping Station (Boston); 11km of the desilting has been completed and negotiation is currently ongoing regarding desilting of the next 9km. The Operations Manager noted an improvement of the SFFD's ability to recover after an event and also it's capacity to hold water. The Operations Manager further noted the 8 uncontrolled watercourses that flow into the SFFD and an ongoing project around Natural Flood Management (NFM) in the upper catchment which will slow flows into the uncontrolled watercourses. NFM works have commenced in Swaton to provide attenuation through swales, and attenuation ponds The Operations Manager finally noted the potential of the South Lincs Reservoir (SLR) and the opportunities it could present.

The Chairman added that with some of the amounts of rainfall there is no infrastructure that would be able to cope, especially with already naturally saturated ground.

1799 REPORT ON RAINFALL - Agenda Item 8

The rainfall figures at Swineshead were circulated. The Committee RESOLVED that this report be noted.

1800 ANY OTHER BUSINESS - Agenda Item 9

(a) BOARD'S PLANT IN FARM SALE

The Operations Manager explained that there are 7 items proposed to be entered into the local farm sale on 17<sup>th</sup> July, photos were displayed on screen.

- Low Loader trailer - minimum of £2,200
- 2 x Diesel Bowsers – both at 'end of life' (one with a hole in and one no longer meets towing requirements) – minimum of £500 and £400
- John Deere 6630 weights, carriage blocks and parts – no reserve.
- Fuel tank
- 3" pump

The Chairman noted that if the Operations Manager sends him the photos, he can help with the reserve price, also noting that if any members have any interest in the items, please contact the Operations Manager directly.

(b) FLAIL MOWING

Mr J Pocklington made reference to the early flail mowing on the four week cycle, which started this Spring. He noted that you can't tell what was flailed three weeks ago because of the rapid growth, questioning what advantage there is of doing it in relation to the cost.

The Operations Manager explained that the reason for early flail mowing is to be able to cut/mechanically weed control the watercourse channel early, and to keep the grass within 4 - 6 inches, between each flailmowing visit, preventing ground nesting birds. The Operations Manager noted that this seasons main cutting programme will not commence until at least the 1<sup>st</sup> August and so to be able to complete the programmed works within similar timescales, it either has to be started earlier or work longer / extra hours. The Operations Manager also noted that alternate bank cutting is also being developed and felt that with the environmental restrictions in place, there is no alternative, with the reason for the flail mowing being so that the excavator can see the bottom of the watercourse, to enable the channel vegetation to be removed.

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