

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES

of the proceedings of a Meeting of the
Southern Works Committee

held at the offices of the Board
22nd March 2017 at 15:30

Members

Chairman - * Mr M Rollinson

* Mr W Ash	* Mr J F Atkinson
* Mr V A Barker	* Mr K C Casswell
* Mr J Casswell	Cllr R Clark
* Mr R Dorrington	Mr C Dring
Mr A Mair	* Mr M Mowbray
* Mr M E Richardson	Cllr B Russell
* Mr C Wray	Mr J R Wray
	(* Member Present)

In attendance at the meeting:

Mr I M Warsap (Chief Executive)
Mr P Nicholson (Operations Manager)
Mr D Withnall (Finance Manager)
Mr P Holmes (Chairman Northern Works Committee)
Cllr P Bedford (Board Member)
Cllr M Brookes (Board Member)

Additional attendees on Inspection:

Mr P Craven (Guest)
Mr N Morris (Guest - Welland & Deepings IDB)

1093 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Agenda Item 1

Apologies were received from Cllr R Clark, Mr C Dring, Mr J Fowler, Mr A Mair, Cllr B Russell and Mr J R Wray.

1094 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - Agenda Item 2

(a) Drain 2/17 Northwest from Eaudike Road to Long Oliver's Road

A declaration of interest was received from Mr J Casswell with regard to Minute 1097(a).

(b) Drain 2/4 Southside of North Ing Drove

A declaration of interest was received from Mr C Wray with regard to Minute 1097(c).

(c) Drain 2/22 Southeast from Wykes Drain to Washdike Farm

A declaration of interest was received from Mr J Casswell with regard to Minute 1097(p).

1095 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING - Agenda Item 3

The Minutes of the last meeting regarding the Southern Works Committee at the Joint Works Committee held on 12th October 2016 copies of which had been circulated were considered and it was agreed the Minutes should be jointly signed as a true record.

1096 MATTERS ARISING - Agenda Item 4

(a) Apologies for Absence - Minute 1018

Mr J Atkinson remarked on the attendance which could be due to the timing on a very busy farming calendar and guessing that other Members probably have the same problem, he asked would it be advisable to move the meeting date.

The Chief Executive responded that Mr Atkinson is referring to the Joint Works Committee October meeting; it was also discussed about the timing of today's meeting and obviously the Northern Works. He asked when is a good time and obviously now is the time to discuss this – Mr Atkinson suggested a late February meeting and pushing the joint meeting in to November. The Chief Executive presented on the screens the programme for 2018 stating that the meeting is programmed for the 28th February and Joint Works on the 3rd October 2018.

The Finance Manager reminded Members that last year it was agreed that they would have Northern Works then Southern Works one year and then swap them around the following year.

Members agreed to leave the Southern Works on the 28th February 2018 and the Northern Works to swap with the Structures Committee on the 11th April 2018. The Joint Works meeting to be on the 8th November 2017 and move the Board meeting to 29th November 2017.

(b) Drain Maintenance Alternate Banks - Minute 1022(r)

Mr Barker asked was there a programme for alternate banks cuts, some of these drain bank sides could be done now before these bushes get bigger. He believes that not enough of the alternate banks works are being done.

The Chief Executive responded that he understands what Mr Barker is saying and added that the Officers have increased works over the last two years with regard to alternate bank cut works which have been identified. He explained that it is often easier for the Operators to cut off one bank, the Officers have challenged them and it can happen using machinery with extension arms which can reach and cut the other side of the bank.

The Chief Executive then clarified that Mr Barker is clearly suggesting for further debate that the Operations Manager actively pursue alternate bank cuts as much as we can for reasons stated. Mr Barker – yes.

Mr Barker then added it would be beneficial for the alternate bank to be done one in four years especially whilst the machines are not busy before nesting.

Mr C Wray added he would agree with Mr Barker that the trees are growing in some of the banks which could easily be accessed on the other side just as feasibly the hedges.

The Chief Executive reminded Members from the Boards account management process the Officers review the remaining budget expenditure at this time of year. It is feasible if not cutting that some of these alternate banks could be done but currently within the works programme other works are being carried out. The Officers, in the future, are looking at completing some culverting works in the Summer which have historically been done at this time of the year because of land access and dryer drains, all these options can be explored by the Operations Manager for future programme works.

The Chairman added that ratepayers are concerned about the growth of hedges which has been pointed out to the Officers.

Mr Barker stated bushing should be kept under control on the opposite bank out of season.

Mr Ash suggested that the workmen drivers report lots of things and this could be another item by informing Officers of overgrowth on the opposite banks.

Mr C Wray stated some trees are getting to the size of a wrist and they were not there 6 years ago which will ultimately cost to remove; the Chief Executive asked at some point in the past that bank has been flailed. Mr C Wray responded that historically at some point that bank would have been flailed but now it is over grown and concluded that it can be easily accessed.

The Chief Executive stated that we have 1,000 miles of banks and there are still some banks the machines cannot access because of open drains with no culvert access crossing routes. Some drains the Board physically cannot gain entry or there is an obstruction ie there are woods which the Board own at Bourne that block passage to maintain watercourses. He concluded that these comments will be taken on board and the Officers will review.

Mr Barker pointed out that over many years there were hand gangs who worked both sides of the bank. When the Board moved on but too quickly, and left these alternate banks behind and this is what we need to review.

The Operations Manager stated that there needs to be an acceptance from the Members of what's been done in the past and now. There are designated routes to cut trees and where we have a route that is not the easiest ie we need to go on the other side it is because it is generally cropped at that time of year; yes we could change our programmes and look to go at a different time of year. Obviously, the ideal time of year is when we need to be everywhere. It is about looking at the biggest problem areas first and trying to tick these off and then develop and look at future budgets. Ultimately, it is going to cost more money to do that.

Mr Barker responded there has been a savings in the budget whilst not using gangs in the past and these savings should be put towards doing some of the banks where there are bushes.

The Finance Manager pointed out that those savings are not realised savings, had the Board been putting up the drainage rate at the rate of inflation then we may have had surplus cash but the Board have not. The Board has quite a balanced budget, and there may be a surplus this year but there is no extra cash in the budget to be able to do these works, it would have to be at the compromise of something else.

(c) Dowsby Lode - Minute 1022

Mr Barker asked about the maintenance works at Dowsby Lode as nothing seems to have happened, when was work due to be done. The Operations Manager responded it is still on the list for future works, the query is how to progress on the survey results.

Mr J Atkinson asked if it had been decided which bank to work from. The Operations Manager responded that following the discussions with Mr Atkinson, Officers have looked onsite regarding the query of what is the bank there for and what purpose does it serve. Mr Atkinson concluded that the bank is in a very bad condition in places.

1097 TO RECEIVE THE INSPECTION WORKS BROCHURE - Agenda Item 5

The Operations Manager presented his Inspection of Works:

(a) Drain 2/17 branch Northwest from Eaudike Road to Long Oliver's Road

Mr J Casswell declared an interest in this item.

The Chairman explained that a desktop exercise has been completed to indicate potential sections of watercourses either which serves only one landowner or where it is not in the interest of the Board to carry on maintaining including end runs and short lengths. This was discussed at the Northern Works Committee meeting, it was suggested that if there were 'easy wins' and it is viable for the landowner to maintain it and the landowner has no objection the Board would like to give it up.

The Finance Manager placed on the screen the draft minutes from the Northern Works Committee.

The Operations Manager outlined we have highlighted along all of the catchments some of the drains that the Officers believe no longer require Board maintenance. Going forward we have found at the Northern Works Committee meeting some watercourses found to be potentially given up but for various reasons did not get a green light.

RED – would not be progressed any further
AMBER – potential for further investigation
GREEN – first ones to be progressed

The Chairman informed Members that if we all agree that the reasons given, then the Operations Manager will arrange further discussions with the landowners to hand them over.

The Chairman added that the Board spends £700,000 on maintaining 755 km of watercourses.

The Operations Manager stated that the Board is potentially taking on 18 km of main rivers that the EA are looking to de-main, this is not an exercise we are looking to do specifically for this reason but something we are doing all the time. The Officers are looking at sections the Board does not need to maintain in the future but obviously this has focused this exercise more in order to recover some of the budget spend that the Board will require to maintain these de-mained EA main rivers approximately 18km.

Mr J Casswell asked if a field is sold and then comes back to two ratepayers where there was only one previously what is the situation with that.

The Chief Executive responded the one landowner or serving one landowner is from the 1991 Drainage Act and really don't want to get hung up about that we can have some drains serving one landowner that are vitally important to the catchment but it's a terminology we want to put to one side. We are looking for three green lights;

- GREEN light - if the Officers believe that there is no real merit to this drainage board to maintain this watercourse
- GREEN light - for the Operations Manager to approach that landowner or landowners to say "there is no real merit what is your thoughts in being given up in decent condition handed back to you and if the landowner / landowners are in agreement
- GREEN light - there is no objection from the Works Committee and thence the Board

The Chief Executive added that once we commence this it will be a roll on programme year on year and initially approach the 'easy wins'.

In some cases, the Officers have been approached by landowners asking the Board to stop maintaining drains for various reasons so that's the reverse scenario. It was highlighted at the Northern Works Committee meeting there may be some explanation as to why this drain should not be given up and it is given an AMBER which is to further investigate and put back a couple of years.

The Chief Executive clarified that there is no quick fix. These various drains are top ends, small drains, insignificant drains, drains that arguably should never have been maintained or adopted by the drainage board for numerous reasons because of the low priority but what we have realised is every single one is different and we cannot have a simplistic approach to them. He pointed out that some of these drains are deep and large and the landowners or contractors contacted did not have equipment large enough to maintain them therefore at the Northern Works Committee meeting were given a RED and we will continue to maintain them because the Board has the specialist machinery.

The Chief Executive outlined the discussion at the Northern Works Committee meeting of how best do Officers move forward and they agreed this was the best way using the traffic light system. It does not move forward until it receives three green lights once again the Officers, the landowner and the Committees, any form of AMBER or RED it is immediately put back for a year or two or not progressed at all.

The Chief Executive stated that the Officers are trying to recover or within the Boards own budgets as much expenditure as possible on drains we do not want to be maintaining because we are going to be handed the drains de-mained from the EA. The EA class these drains as low consequence main rivers but to the Board they are quite important so the Officers are having to find our lowest consequence watercourses to give those up.

The Chief Executive concluded by saying that if there were unlimited funds the Officers would not have to review this but we are not in that position. He also mentioned that he had been asked "if handing back a length of watercourse would this mean a reduction in their drainage rates", unfortunately it does not work like that.

The Chairman asked Members if they have any comments about these drains as we progress through the brochure please raise any points to consider.

The Operations Manager asked Members for their directive on Drain 2/17 branch northwest from Eaudike Road to Long Oliver's Road approximately 377m.

Mr Rollinson responded by confirming that it is a neighbour's drain and falls into the category that he does not have the equipment to be able to maintain this drain as it is a big drain.

The Members agreed AMBER for review in a few years' time.

Mr Ash asked about the Armco pipe in this drain and if you were to give it up would you repair it before and would there be an agreement in place.

Mr Holmes responded we would not repair in normal everyday usage anyway if we were not using it why would we repair it. Mr Ash concluded that yes the usage point.

The Chief Executive pointed out that the ownership of drains is often the difficultly and if it is used as an access to gain entry to land we would not be looking to renew it ourselves unless it was within our Structures Replacement policy.

(b) Drain 16/2 branch to North from Engine Drove

The Chairman asked Members for their directive on Drain 16/2 branch to the north from Engine Drove approximately 423m.

Mr D Casswell asked when the board is giving up does that mean the maintenance of the culvert particularly one under a highway.

The Chief Executive responded that any culverts under highways are under the responsibility of Lincolnshire Highways. If there is a culvert on the stretch of drain being given up then it does mean that the culvert will be given up also.

The Chairman felt that without any pictures or inspecting these drains outlined in the brochure nothing further could be done.

The Chief Executive acknowledged that in future photographs could be taken to present to the relevant Committee.

(c) Drain 2/4 Southside of North Ing Drove

Mr C Wray declared an interest in this item.

The Chairman asked Members for their directive on Drain 2/4 Southside of North Ing Drove approximately 325m.

Mr C Wray stated that he could not see any way this would be beneficial for him to take back this drain, he does not have a flail and therefore cannot maintain it.

The Chairman asked do other landowners drain into that dyke; Mr Wray responded that the Board would have better ideas regarding flows. The dyke on the top 3/14 is a main drain which runs back to the forty foot, the bottom one drain 2/3 runs into the forty foot as well, the middle drain 2/4 not sure which way the flows go, it can depend on the levels.

Mr K C Casswell suggested that the Operations Manager visit site and identify where the water does flow from and to.

Mr Wray stated that other interested parties would include National Grid who are building a substation near to this drain.

Members agreed AMBER for this drain.

Mr Holmes explained that when this was discussed at the Northern Works Committee meeting that a green light from the landowner was the last green light so really do we need to look at these now or do we want to be bringing them to Works Committees having had the Operations team gone out to the landowners and if we get an AMBER or RED we don't need to bring it to the Works Committees.

The Chairman confirmed these should be put to the landowners before the Works Committees.

The Chief Executive confirmed this document is a green light from the Officers, the Operations Manager now needs to talk to the landowners and only come back to the relevant Committee if we have two green lights.

(d) Drain 1/5 main outfall drain

The Chairman asked Members for their directive on Drain 1/5 main outfall drain approximately 145m. There was no comment so it was left for further investigation.

(e) Drain 1/7 Mallard Drove South

The Chairman asked Members for their directive on Drain 1/7 Mallard Drove South approximately 81m. There was no comment so it was left for further investigation.

(f) Donington North Ings Pumping Station

The Chairman then presented the weed screen cleaner at Donington North Ings Pumping Station.

The Operation Manager reported that the weed screen cleaner is at the end of its life and needs replacing. There is a budget in 2018/19 for £90,000 with an estimated replacement cost of £85,000. He requested agreement from this Committee that they proceed with this.

It was proposed by Mr J Atkinson and seconded by Mr V Barker and all AGREED.

(g) Drain 19/4 branch to North from Billingborough Pump Drain

The Chairman asked Members for their directive on Drain 19/4 branch to North from Billingborough Pump Drain approximately 628m. There was no comment so it was left for further investigation.

(h) Drain 31/4 Old Ouse Mere Lode – East from Hammond Beck

The Chairman asked Members for their directive on Drain 31/4 Old Ouse Mere Lode East from Hammond Beck approximately 529m. There was no comment so it was left for further investigation.

(i) Drain 31/5 North branch South from Old Ouse Mere Lode

The Chairman asked Members for their directive on Drain 31/5 North branch South from Old Ouse Mere Lode approximately 479m.

Mr K C Casswell stated he is unsure of the flows and direction of the flow and stated there is a tunnel under the road. The Operations Manager does not believe there is a connection under the road and hence why there seems to be two sections of drain.

Mr Casswell confirmed it belongs to two landowners and the dyke is very small. The Members agreed AMBER.

(j) Drain 31/5 South branch North from Ten Foot Drain

The Chairman asked Members for their directive on Drain 31/5 branch North from Ten Foot Drain approximately 474m. There was no comment so it was left for further investigation.

(k) Drain 31/1 Ten Foot Drain - Quadring Pump Drain

The Chairman stated that this was viewed on the tour and it can be maintained due to its small size.

Mr Barker pointed out that this dyke goes into a tunnel and suggested there should be a weed screen in front to protect the culvert drain as it does not want to get blocked in front of the properties which would cause additional works.

The Chairman asked does the Board usually put a weed screen up, does that not increase the risk of it damming up. Should the landowner keep the pipe end clear to drain his water.

Members agreed GREEN.

(l) Billingborough Pumping Station

The Operations Manager stated we had a budget outlined for a replacement roof for Mallard Hurn Pumping Station. Billingborough has

become more of a priority to be replaced. He requested an agreement from this Committee that £10,000 be put towards Billingborough roof replacement in 2018/19 budget. The Chief Executive asked if the budget was correctly stated, was it 2017/18.

Proposed by Mr Ash and seconded Mr P Holmes all AGREED.

(m) South Forty Foot Drain De-silting Scheme

The Operations Manager presented a map and location sites for the proposed lagoon sites and explained to Members that the Officers were required to find 30 acres of lagoon sites equally placed in three sites to use for the silt deposits.

(n) Drain 22/9 Ten Foot Drain West from fifth connecting drain to Fifth Drove

The Chairman asked Members for their directive on Drain 22/9 entire length west from fifth connecting drain to Fifth Drove approximately 222m.

Mr Barker stated that the discharge flow is from the west side of the road from the property into the drain beside the property, many years ago all the drains along that side belonged to Black Sluice and all were given up except that one on the request of a landowner. Two of those piped culverts carry Anglian Water pipes.

The Operations Manager responded that they were only aware of one pipe. He clarified that it is a difficult section to maintain and the Officers believe it is a GREEN light. The Chief Executive concluded it be taken back to the landowners for discussion.

(o) Slip in Drain 28/6 Twenty Pumping Station

The Operations Manager showed pictures of the large slip caused by an Anglian Water burst main.

The Operations Manager stated the burst was on the opposite side of the road and the force of water coming across the road found a weak point in the bank and caused a slip. The workmen have been to repair and the costs will be recovered from Anglian Water.

Mr M Richardson confirmed the burst was in the road, the road is higher than the field of which 2 acres were flooded.

(p) Drain 2/22 branch Southeast from Wykes Drain to Washdike Farm

The Chairman asked Members for their directive on Drain 2/22 upstream end of branch Southeast from Wykes Drain to Washdike Farm approximately 554m.

Mr J Casswell declared an interest.

Mr J Casswell reiterated that he could not see a benefit on taking back this drain. Members AGREED - AMBER.

1098 REPORT ON RAINFALL - Agenda Item 6

The rainfall figures at Black Hole Drove were presented, copies of which had been circulated.

1099 ANY OTHER BUSINESS - Agenda Item 7

(a) ADA Floodex

The Chief Executive reported to Members that he had attended the first ADA Floodex last year which was a very successful two day event. This year Floodex 2017 will be held on the 17th & 18th May 2017 at Peterborough showground.

The Chief Executive stated he found the company Royal Smals at last year's event and Mud Pump Dredging the company that offered to de-silt Mackeys Pit, Swineshead free of charge on behalf of Swineshead Parish Council. It was a very successful event and the IDBs were very well represented.

He recommended attendance by members would be very beneficial, it is free to park and enter and Members can complete an online pre application.

The Operations Manager added that the large walking digger machine being used in the South Forty Foot drain was also found by a contact made at last years Floodex it is a worthwhile event.

Mr Barker asked if the visit to view the Royal Smals pumping could coincide with the Board meeting. The Chief Executive responded it would be too much to complete in one day.

Mr Barker suggested full utilisation of the publicity, maybe Look North. The Chief Executive responded the events will probably be in May and July. The Officers will invite press and advertise to encourage attendance plus anybody else that is interested in the industry. It will be promoted as much as we can from the Boards point of view, the vision the Board has and the success because of the dramatically reduced costs to what it would have cost we know it is going to be successful.

He stated that this will be the first time Royal Smals dredger machine has cut open silt in British waters so Royal Smals are extremely enthusiastic to promote this for their company. A month ago there were 22 of their machines frozen in water in Germany. It is the way silt removal on the continent is done not many dragline hydraulic digging operations anymore this is the way they go forward. On "you tube" under Royal Smals there are some very interesting videos for all to view.

The Chief Executive stated that Royal Smals want to keep this machine in the UK, they have been visiting Scotland to try and negotiate a contract to keep the machine in the UK. The Board is paying £45,000 mobilisation charge to bring the kit from Holland to here and this will benefit the next contractor who uses it as the mobilisation fee will be between £5,000 to £10,000.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 16:25.