

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES

of the proceedings of a Meeting of the Board

held remotely on
25th November 2020 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 P Moseley
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)

Due to COVID-19, this meeting will be held remotely in accordance with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

The Chairman noted that some induction and refresher training is being arranged, if anybody is interested please let the office know.

1689 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Agenda Item 1

Apologies for absence were received from Mr N Scott and Mr P Robinson.

1690 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - Agenda Item 2

There were no declarations of interest.

1691 MINUTES OF THE LAST BOARD MEETING - Agenda Item 3

The Minutes of the last meeting of the Board held on the 30th June 2020, 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 1630(c)(ab) - SLWP Aquatic Plant Surveys - Spelling mistake of the word 'surveys' within the title.

1692 MATTERS ARISING - Agenda Item 4

There were no matters arising.

1693 TO RECEIVE UNCONFIRMED MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS - Agenda Item 5

(a) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING - 23 SEPTEMBER 2020

The Chairman presented the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on the 23rd September 2020, copies of which had been circulated.

Mr V Barker noted that it is difficult to approve minutes that include confidential items that aren't included. The Finance Manager responded that the confidential minutes are confidential to that committee and they will be presented and signed as true record of the meeting at the specific committee meeting.

The Board RESOLVED that the minutes should be received.

(i) TO APPROVE THE FIRST DRAFT 2021/22 BUDGET & TEN-YEAR ESTIMATES

The Finance Manager presented this item, explaining that these were the three options presented to the Executive Committee which can then be used to formulate the budgets. The Executive agreed to continue with the plan from last year - Option 1. The budgets will be presented to the Executive Committee in January 2021 and then to the Board in February 2021.

(ii) TO APPROVE THE 2021/22 PLANT BUDGET

The Chief Executive noted that enquires are still ongoing regarding the Drott, noting that the Officers will be looking for experience plant purchasers on the Board who may want to get involved with negotiations for the Drott.

(iii) TO APPROVE THE DRAFT TIMETABLE FOR 2021 MEETINGS (AMENDED)

Mr M Rollinson noted that Matt Hancock MP has announced that hopefully by Easter 2021 normality will have resumed in light of COVID-19. He felt that due to not having a works inspection in Spring 2020 it was important for the Northern Works Committee to hold a Spring 2021 inspection tour if possible, suggesting that the Northern Works and Southern Works are swapped over to hopefully provide more chance of the Northern Works being able to go ahead. The Chairman and Northern Works Chairman felt this was a sensible suggestion.

Cllr P Skinner noted that the first batch of vaccinations are due to come on stream in December 2020 and the second type of vaccination (Oxford) is hopefully due to arrive in January 2021. It is hoped by Easter 2021 that everybody who wants the vaccination should have received it.

Mr V Barker questioned if it would be possible to hold both works committee inspections after Easter 2021?

The Finance Manager suggested that the Northern Works Committee date (3rd March 202) be swapped with the Environment Committee date (28th April 2021).

All AGREED the following dates for meetings in 2021, also to be circulated to members following the meeting.

Executive	20 th January
Board	10 th February
Environment	3 rd March
Structures	24 th March
Southern Works	14 th April
Northern Works	28 th April
Audit & Risk	19 th May
Executive	9 th June
Board	30 th June
Executive	22 nd September
Audit & Risk	13 th October
Joint Works	26 th October
Board	24 th November
Executive	15 th December

(iv) TO ADOPT POLICY No. 28: LAND DRAINS DISCHARGING INTO BOARD MAINTAINED WATERCOURSES

The Chairman presented Policy No. 28, Land Drains Discharging into Board Maintained Watercourses, which was reviewed by the Executive Committee on the 23rd September 2020.

Mr V Barker noted that he has spoken to the Chief Executive earlier in the week regarding putting something in the Rating Brochure to clearly explain what should and shouldn't be done in regard to consent. The Chief Executive confirmed that a 'Do's and Don'ts' for consents will be included in the April 2021 Rating Brochure.

The Board RESOLVED that the Land Drains Discharging into Board Maintained Watercourses Policy be adopted.

MATTERS ARISING

(v) DUNSBY PUMPING STATION - Minute 1653(a)

The Operations Manager informed the members of the Board that the pump has been removed and taken for inspection and repair in the last week. There is a mobile pump set up to cover the catchment.

(vi) PAY AWARD (APRIL 2021) - Minute 1653(c)

The Chairman highlighted the agreement in place for the Pay Award and felt that the Board should honour the agreement, despite the high increase of 4.1%.

The Finance Manager gave an update from the BBC news website which stated that 'Public Sector pay rises will be frozen next year except for those earning less than £24,000 who will get a pay rise of at least £250. NHS staff will also be exempt.'

The Finance Manager noted that the 2021/22 Pay Award has already been agreed by the Employers and Union and so he would be expect that will be honoured by the Pay and Conditions Committee and Lincolnshire Boards.

(vii) INSURANCE RENEWAL - Minute 1653(d)

The Finance Manager presented on screen the confirmed figures for the insurance renewal, noting that the overall increase is 2.75%. The Low Claims Rebate is less than expected, reminding the committee of the claim for the break in at Swineshead Pumping Station. The increase in the premium is due to the increase in Business Interruption Cover from £100,000 to £500,000, giving an increase of 5.92%, the rest being due to the reduction in the Low Claims Rebate.

(b) AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE MEETING - 14 OCTOBER 2020

The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee presented the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on the 14th October 2020, copies of which had been circulated.

A spelling mistake in Minute 1664 was noted; '*Normal* Robinson' should be '*Norman* Robinson'.

The Board RESOLVED that the minutes should be received.

(i) TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL RETURN INCLUDING EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S OPINION FOR 2019/20

The Chairman noted that there were no concerns raised from the External Auditor, congratulating the Officers on this achievement.

The Board RESOLVED that the annual return including External Auditor's opinion for 2019/20 be received.

(ii) TO ADOPT POLICY No. 15: EMPLOYEES CODE OF CONDUCT

The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee presented Policy No. 15, Employees Code of Conduct, which was reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee on the 14th October 2020.

The Board RESOLVED that the Employees Code of Conduct Policy be adopted.

(iii) TO ADOPT POLICY No. 16: FRAUD & CORRUPTION

The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee presented Policy No. 16, Fraud and Corruption, which was reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee on the 14th October 2020, highlighting that the only proposed change is the addition of the definition of fraud.

The Board RESOLVED that the Fraud and Corruption Policy be adopted.

(iv) TO ADOPT POLICY No. 20: OFFICERS CAR LOAN

The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee presented Policy No. 20, Officers Car Loan, which was reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee on the 14th October 2020, highlighting the one proposed amendment to ensure that a minimum of 1% interest is always paid in light of dropping interest rates.

The Board RESOLVED that the Officers Car Loan Policy be adopted.

(v) TO ADOPT POLICY No. 42: NEAR MISS REPORTING

The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee presented Policy No. 42, Near Miss Reporting, which was reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee on the 14th October 2020, noting that there was a lot of discussion had at the meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee about encouraging the reporting of near misses.

The Board RESOLVED that the Near Miss Reporting Policy be adopted.

(vi) TO ADOPT POLICY No. 47: BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN - COVID-19

The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee presented Policy No. 47, Business Continuity Plan – COVID-19, which was reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee on the 14th October 2020, reminding the committee that these changes are made by management as and when required in line with the ever changing guidelines.

The Board RESOLVED that the Business Continuity Plan – COVID-19 be retrospectively adopted.

MATTERS ARISING:

(vii) RISK REGISTER - Minute 1664

Mr R Leggott made reference to Mr Norman Robinson chasing up the operations manual being waited for from the Environment Agency (EA), questioning if there is any progress with this?

The Chief Executive explained that they have not yet received anything further, noting that he will chase this up, also confirming that this is in relation to the resilience factor of the emergency plan for the Black Sluice Pumping Station (Boston) i.e. if the Sluice gates and / or navigation lock fails, what is in place.

The Chief Executive referred to a second element of this; the South Forty Foot catchment monitoring, water control and operations of the Sluice and Navigation Lock.

The Chief Executive noted that information has been received from the EA in relation to this element, which is going to be included within the Board's Emergency Plan.

The Chief Executive noted that once the resilience documentation is received from the EA it will be presented to the committee to then review the associated risk score on the Risk Register.

Mr R Leggott noted its importance. The Chairman noted that Norman Robinson did say he will take it on himself to get the documentation.

The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee noted that Cllr P Skinner may be able to provide some assistance as the Chairman of Flood and Water Management Scrutiny Committee at Lincolnshire County Council. Cllr P Skinner noted that he will contact the Chief Executive following the meeting to discuss.

The Operations Manager added that, from invitation from the EA, the Board's Workforce are going to receive incident response training.

(c) NORTHERN WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING - 04 NOVEMBER 2020

The Chairman of the Northern Works Committee presented the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on the 4th November 2020, copies of which had been circulated.

A mistake was noted within Minute 1677(f), Fallen Tree – FX1742 as follows; 'Mr J Fowler felt that it would set a dangerous precedent if the removal costs were pursued...' should be '... if the removal costs were not pursued'.

The Board RESOLVED that the minutes should be received.

(i) TO ADOPT THE NORTHERN WORKS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chairman of the Northern Works Committee presented the Terms of Reference. The Board RESOLVED that the Northern Works Committee Terms of Reference be adopted.

MATTERS ARISING

(ii) DRAIN MAINTENANCE - SUMMER CUTTING - Minute 1672(b)(i)

The Operations Manager informed the members of the Board that, due to the amount of work required, the costings associated with the proposed change in summer maintenance programme will be presented to the Executive Committee in January 2021 and Board in February 2021.

The Chief Executive added that some initial figures have been put together, however, it was felt more detail and work needed to be done before being presented, it being likely that there will be additional costs to find.

The Operations Manager highlighted that there will be upfront costs related to the alternate bank cutting (bushing works and piping side entry drains to gain access). The first year costs will be higher than the ongoing costs will be.

(iii) FALLEN TREE – FX1742 – NORTH FORTY FOOT DRAIN – Minute 1677(f)

The Operations Manager explained that the Board's solicitor has advised that the red line boundary should extend the centre line of the watercourse in respect to where the tree fell. A letter will be sent to the occupant to try and recover the costs.

(d) SOUTHERN WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING - 12 NOVEMBER 2020

The Chairman of the Southern Works Committee presented the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on the 12th November 2020, copies of which had been circulated.

Mr M Rollinson noted that a mistake has been made with the attendance, Mr J Casswell did attend and Mr C Dring did not.

The Board RESOLVED that the minutes should be received.

MATTERS ARISING

(i) REMOTE MONITORING & CONTROL (H&S SCHEME) - Minute 1683(a)(v)

The Operations Manager informed the members of the Board that a bid has now been submitted for Local Levy funding. The EA representative is of the opinion that it is a solid and hopeful bid.

(ii) PUMPING STATION MAINTENANCE - Minute 1683(c)

The Operations Manager explained that he has spoken to Adrian Clack at the EA regarding their contribution towards the cost of these investigations who has asked for it to proceed, an order and instructions will be raised from the Public Sector Cooperation Agreement (PSCA) for the investigation works.

(iii) SFFD DE-SILTING WORKS - Minute 1686(e)

The Operations Manager explained that he has spoken to Adrian Clack at the EA who has given him confidence that there is budget for the continuation of desilting of the South Forty Foot Drain (SFFD) next year.

(iv) REPLACEMENT OF CULVERT 1959 – FX1130 – GOSBERTON HIGH FEN – Minute 1688(a)

The Chairman of the Southern Works noted that he has spoken to the Chair of the Structures Committee regarding this.

Mr J Fowler explained that he has inspected this culvert and believes there needs to be an updated written approval system for pipes and headwalls of culverts before they are back filled. This will be further discussed at the next meeting of the Structures Committee.

Mr J Fowler referred to culvert 1959 noting that he feels the headwalls need rebuilding in drier conditions.

The Operations Manager highlighted that if the Board give a specification then it needs to be followed.

Photographs of the culvert were displayed on screen and the Southern Works Chairman explained that Culvert 1959 has been rebuilt by the tenant. They chose not to use the Board as contractors which is perfectly alright as long as the contractors used build the culvert in line with the Board's specification given, which they haven't. As the policy currently stands, approval is signed off at consent, which, as Mr J Fowler has suggested, needs reviewing.

Mr V Barker noted that if there is a vote on this matter he will abstain. He further made reference to the minutes of the Southern Works Committee on this matter and that it states the Board weren't informed of the works commencing, noting that he believes there were emails sent. Mr V Barker did agree that the culvert had not been built to the Board's specification, but questioned, from an environmental point of view, if this is a negative thing.

The Chairman of the Southern Works Committee emphasised that if the Board provides a specification then it should be built to that, otherwise there is no point in providing a specification. Mr V Barker agreed.

1694 TO REVIEW POLICY No. 46: CROP LOSS COMPENSATION - Agenda Item 6

The Finance Manager explained that this policy was originally presented to the Audit & Risk Committee on 14th October 2020 at which it was suggested that an additional paragraph be included to explain how the process works and how landowner should claim their compensation. A proposed paragraph has therefore been added in red, as presented in the agenda. The Finance Manager noted that, in reference to numbers 6 and 7 of Summer Cutting, currently the landowner has to request their form, suggesting that the claim form is sent out to them to make the Summer Cutting procedure the same as the Winter Cleansing and Land Loss.

Cllr R Austin joined the meeting.

The Board RESOLVED that the Crop Loss Compensation Policy be adopted with the proposed change, as outlined above, to make the three claim procedures the same.

1695 TO REVIEW THE RISK REGISTER - Agenda Item 7

The Chairman presented the Risk Register.

The Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee highlighted that the only Risk Score over 4 is 1.1(b) which is due to still waiting for the EA documentation. Once this has been received, the Risk Score can be reviewed.

The Board RESOLVED that the Risk Register be accepted.

1696 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON FINANCE & ADMIN - Agenda Item 8

(a) PERIOD 07 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

The Finance Manager presented the Period 07 Management Accounts, highlighting that a court date has now been agreed for the 25th January 2021 (2.5 months later than usual due to COVID-19). The Finance Manager also highlighted that the electricity bill is £105,000 less than this time last year.. Overall, it is expected that there will be an additional £10,000 in the general reserve but noted that that is only one third of the percent of expected income for the year.

The Board RESOLVED that the Period 07 Management Accounts be received.

(b) DRAINAGE RATES REPORT

The Finance Manager presented the drainage rates report, referring to account 2860, explaining that he has visited site to confirm that the poultry sheds have changed used to storage and therefore are proposing to remove the special buildings value.

The Finance Manager next referred to the drainage rate write offs that he has authorised and are presented to the Board for information.

The Board RESOLVED that the Drainage Rate Report be approved.

1697 TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL REPORT ON HEALTH & SAFETY INCLUDING NEAR MISSES - Agenda Item 9

The Operations Manager presented the Health and Safety Report.

The Chairman questioned why a broken window screen would be classed as a near miss? The Operations Manager explained that there was a potential for harm and noted that one of the broken window screen incidents did actually cause harm to the operator; the window wiper hit the operator on the head cutting it open.

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

1698 REPORTS ON THE FOLLOWING: - Agenda Item 10

(a) MONTHLY ACCOUNTS (JUNE 2020 - OCTOBER 2020)

The Board's monthly accounts, inclusive of June 2020 – October 2020 were circulated. The breakdown of Woldmarsh was presented on screen, noting that it will be included within the agenda in the future.

It was noted that the Chief Executive and Finance Manager have not signed the monthly accounts due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The Board RESOLVED that this report be noted.

(b) SCHEDULE OF CONSENTS (JUNE 2020 - OCTOBER 2020)

The Board's Schedule of Consents, inclusive of June 2020 – October 2020, 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.

1699 ANY OTHER BUSINESS - Agenda Item 11

(a) CLLR R AUSTIN

Cllr R Austin apologised for joining the meeting late.

(b) INSTALLATION OF NEW GAUGE BOARDS

Mr V Barker referred to the new gauge boards that have started to be installed, noting the confusion of the new index being used.

The Operations Manager responded that a conversion chart can be provided if that would help, there is one kept at all pumping stations already. The Chief Executive also suggested highlighting any minus figures in red going forward.

(c) ELECTRONIC AGENDAS

Mr M Rollinson noted that every member having a physical paper agenda adds up to a lot of paper being used.

The Finance Manager noted that some members of the Board do not have a physical paper copy of the agenda and just receive an electronic agenda. There is the option to do this if individual members wish.

The Chairman noted that whilst doing virtual meetings it may be more difficult to have an electronic agenda as opposed to a physical copy.

Mr R Leggott noted that he prefers to have a physical copy of the agenda as he is then able to read it anywhere and not have to be sat at the computer to do so.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 15:02.