

# **BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

## **MINUTES**

of the proceedings of a meeting of the Executive Committee

held remotely on  
7<sup>th</sup> April 2021 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 D Withnall (Finance Manager)  
Mr P Cookson (Solicitor specialising in employment)  
Mr C Harris (Internal Auditor)

Due to COVID-19, this meeting was 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.

#### 1761 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Agenda Item 1

There were no apologies of absence.

#### 1762 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - Agenda Item 2

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 1763 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER - Agenda Item 3

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 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

#### 1764 ANY OTHER BUSINESS - Agenda Item 4

##### (a) SOUTH LINGS WATER PARTNERSHIP (SLWP) ESIF BID

The Finance Manager referred to the ESIF bid, which is part of the SLWP, which is for the monitoring equipment. The bid is with Lincolnshire County Council (LCC), it is out for tender, however, one of the polices for this size bid is that 10% of the overall bid is withheld for 12 months as a retainer.

Officers have tried to come to an alternative arrangement such as a Memorandum of Understanding, Public Sector Cooperation Agreement etc. The Finance Manager added that the role the Board is playing is an intermediary, the 10% is the Board's money at risk. However, by not signing this agreement it is currently delaying the awarding of the contract.

The Chief Executive has therefore requested it be brought to the committee's attention, suggesting that it is signed based on the fact that the 10% retention will only be against BSIDB invoices for labour, possibly totalling £25,000 and therefore £2,500 retention. If everything is completed as it should in the 12 months the Board would then get the £2,500 back.

The Chairman added that the bid for around £700,000 worth of monitoring equipment being installed. There is a long term benefit to the Board.

All AGREED that the agreement with LCC for the SLWP ESIF Bid, for the installation and maintenance of the monitoring equipment, be signed, despite the 10% retention.

(b) COVID-19 - WORKING FROM HOME

The Finance Manager informed the committee, that it was planned for the office to re-open on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021. During his most recent press conference, the Prime Minister has emphasised that the 'work from home' guidance will continue, encouraging people to work from home wherever possible, in accordance with the government roadmap.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> April, all non-essential retail, hairdressers etc. are due to reopen, which is why it was planned for the office to reopen on the 12<sup>th</sup> April.

From the point of view of the Chief Executive, he believes that the Prime Minister will continue to advise working from home for the rest of the year, and possibly into next year. The Chief Executive therefore suggests that the re-opening of the office goes ahead on 12<sup>th</sup> April for those that wish to return to the office. It has also been suggested that some employees could work on a hybrid basis, part home part office.

The Finance Manager noted that he and the Chief Executive have discussed returning with employees. The opinion of Miss J Baxter, minute taker, was asked who responded that working from home has gone on for some time now, completing work may be quicker and easier in the office and so was not concerned about returning to the office but was equally of the mind that if it is safer to stay at home, in line with the government guidance, would not be against this either.

The Finance Manager also added that he has signed the Board up for workplace testing which will provide two tests, per week, per employee for 25 employees. It is supposed to be for business' with more than 50 employees, but the Finance Manager is hoping to be successful due to being a public body.

The Finance Manager noted that remote meetings are allowed until 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021, ADA are trying to extend this, it being thought that the Standing Orders could be changed again to extend it further. ADA have put to Defra the option of fully remote and hybrid meeting as well as face to face meetings, as it needs an Act of Parliament, which is hoped to be in place by 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

The Inspections for the Northern and Southern Works Committees were noted, suggesting it may have to be an open sided marquee with a BBQ, with people arriving in sperate cars, noting that the location will have to be chosen carefully because of the amount of cars that will require parking room.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 15:24.