

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES

of the proceedings of a meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee

held at the offices of the Board on
25th April 2023 at 2pm

Members

Chairperson - * Mr M Brookes

Mr W Ash	* Mr V Barker
* Mr M Leggott	* Mr J Fowler
* Cllr R Austin	* Cllr S Walsh

* Member Present

In attendance: Mr I Warsap (Chief Executive)
Mr D Withnall (Finance Manager)
Mr C Harris (Internal Auditor)
Mr J Burton (NFU Representative)
Mr P Ingleby (NFU Representative)

The Chairperson welcomed Mr C Harris (Internal Auditor), Mr J Burton and Mr P Ingleby (NFU Representatives) to the meeting.

2134 Recording the Meeting - Agenda Item 1

Members were informed that the meeting would be recorded.

2135 Apologies for absence - Agenda Item 2

Apologies for absence were received from Mr W Ash.

2136 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3

No declarations of interest were received.

2137 Minutes of the last meeting - Agenda Item 4

Minutes of the last meeting held on 25th October 2022, copies of which had been circulated, were considered and it was AGREED that they should be signed as a true record.

2138 Matters arising - Agenda Item 5

There were no matters arising.

2139 Review the current insurance arrangements with representatives from the NFU - Agenda Item 6

Mr J Burton thanked the committee for inviting them, proposing to go through each element of the insurance outlined within the document, giving the committee an opportunity to ask any questions and discuss throughout. It was also noted that the correct version of the NFU document was circulated separately to the agenda, copies of which were available for the meeting.

Business Description

Mr J Burton referred to the Board's business description and that it should include everything the Board undertakes. Further noting that there is a slight difference in the description for those policies that aren't underwritten by the NFU. The Finance Manager referred to the 'Lessors of Land for Mobile Phone Mast' within the description, questioning whether the bungalow the Board owns and rents out should be listed? Mr J Burton confirmed that this would be covered within 'property owners'.

Motor Fleet and Commercial Vehicles

Mr J Burton referred to what is covered within this and the excesses applicable, as set out in the NFU document within the agenda.

Mr J Burton next referred to elements that are not currently insured, as below. Mr P Ingleby noted that it is a case of highlighting 'gaps' within the insurance policies to ensure that the committee and Board are aware of those and to discuss whether they need looking in to, as opposed to being a recommendation for them.

- *Loss of use* - the Board could pay a premium which would provide a contribution towards the cost of hiring a replacement vehicle if a Board vehicle was damaged and could not be used. The Finance Manager noted that this has been looked into previously, but the premium required was too much to make it worth doing. Mr P Ingleby noted that it may not be worth it for standard vehicles such as trucks but may be worth considering for specialist plant such as the excavators and Twigas. The Finance Manager noted that he was under the impression that it didn't cover specialist plant and that if one of the Twigas or excavators was not useable in peak season, this could become costly for the Board. Mr J Burton noted that he will look into what the premium would be and discuss with the Finance Manager further.
- *Loss of hiring charges* - if hired equipment was damaged and could not be used, but the Board were still obliged to pay for the full hire period. The Board are currently insured for up to £15,000 on an aggregate basis (maximum of £15,000 in total for the whole period of insurance). Mr J Burton questioned whether the Board feel this is adequate? The Chief Executive noted that the Board hire very little, and what they do, is relatively low cost.
- *Road Rescue* - Covered for private cars under the fleet insurance, which provides an hour's roadside repair and recovery to a location within 20 miles. This could be enhanced to a full recovery service and to include light goods vehicles. It was felt this was not necessary.
- *Protected No Claims Discount* - The Finance Manager noted that the Board's claims history suggests that this extra premium would not be beneficial.

Cllr S Walsh referred to the Motor Fleet Policy for light goods vehicles, Unimog, pickup trucks and trailers cover being for any driver over the age of 25, questioning if there are any restrictions based on the number of points on someone's licence?

Mr P Ingleby noted that they would need to be made aware of any driving licence points and that usually it would alter after six points or for different types of offence. The Finance Manager added that every driver completes a declaration annually.

Business Property

Cover is on a Commercial All Risks basis, including Subsidence apart from on the Pumping Stations where no subsidence cover is present.

Total declared value for all buildings including pumping stations: £60,947,707

Total contents including general contents, machinery, solar panels, plant, computers, tools: £772,715

Total stock and goods held in trust: £35,000

Additional cost of working and loss of income - covers additional cost of working if impacted by an insured event up to 12 months for a sum of up to £500,000. Also covers loss of rental income from the Board's bungalow up to £7,366. The Finance Manager noted that he believes the sum of £7,366 includes the income from the mast.

Money & Malicious Attack - Money is protected against loss of theft at the Board's premises and whilst taken to the bank.

Mr J Burton next referred to elements that are not currently insured, as below.

- *Machinery and/or Computer Breakdown & Resultant Business Interruption* – includes sudden and unforeseen breakdown as well as any subsequent business interruption. The Finance Manager noted that the Board has had this additional cover in the past, but never used it even when required, noting that the Board's network can be restored within 24 hours and can be ran remotely if required.
- *Terrorism* – this would cover property and business losses arising from an act of terrorism. Mr V Barker questioned if there is a difference between terrorism and vandalism? Mr J Burton confirmed that there is a difference between terrorism and vandalism; terrorism being about trying to overthrow the government. They are clearly defined, with definitions read to the committee. Mr V Barker noted that he doesn't believe terrorism is a concern for the Board, but vandalism would be. The Chief Executive felt that the risk of terrorism in the Board's geographical location is low. Mr M Leggott noted the Board's actions of starting to put metal doors instead of glass doors to the pumping stations etc. to make entry less easy and so by trying to prevent entry and vandalism it also helps to prevent terrorism.
- *Business Interruption Terminal Ends* – provides for loss of income arising from damage to the land-based premises of the utility provider, therefore the main risk for the Board would probably be loss of electricity. The Finance Manager referred to the pumping stations and that some can be run by PTO with a tractor and others by generators. The Finance Manager added that this could be a real-life situation; a flood could quite possibly take the electricity supply out, questioning if the hire of tractors and generators to run the pumps would be covered under this insurance? Mr P Ingleby responded that he would have to look into it and find out, adding that he will look back at the transformer claim from 2010. The Finance Manager noted that the transformer was the Board's and so may be a different case.

Mr P Ingleby and Mr J Burton noted that they will look into this further and communicate with the Finance Manager about it. Reference was made to electricity cables and poles, with Mr P Ingleby noting that there is a problem within the area of struggling to get equipment underneath.

The Chief Executive responded that there are a number of poles that, just by being there, cause hinderance and additional cost e.g. along the South Forty Foot Drain.

Goods in Transit

This covers the loss or damage to own goods while in transit in your vehicle or trailer up to value of £5,000. There are six vehicles covered – four trucks, unimog and tipper.

The Finance Manager questioned if there is an extension for the workforce's tools? Mr J Burton confirmed the following cover; employee's tools, portable power equipment - £2,500 per employee, £75,000 UK wide.

Mr V Barker referred to the value of £5,000, questioning whether this is enough? The Finance Manager responded that he can't think of anything that would be over that value in those vehicles specified, noting that the fuel tank on the unimog is covered separately. Mr J Burton clarified that the £5,000 covered of own goods whilst in transit refers to dead stock items and materials, rather than tools, as they are covered separately, as above.

Cllr R Austin questioned whether laptops are covered? Mr J Burton confirmed that laptops are covered on a UK wide basis. The Finance Manager noted that the Board also have a couple of low value tablets; Mr J Burton suggested that he will amend the wording to 'portable devices' to ensure it is all covered. Reference was made to Board mobile phones, noting that with the terminology 'portable devices', as long as the declared value within the policy is sufficient to incorporate laptops and all portable devices including tablets and mobile phones, the value is £11,615. The Finance Manager noted that he doesn't believe that value includes mobile phone and so will complete an exercise at the next renewal to include the phones.

Mr M Leggott noted that the Board need to be mindful of the weight limit of a vehicle with the additional weight of tools. The Finance Manager noted that the Fitter's van has been taken to a public weighbridge to confirm it is under the weight limit with all the tools. A stock take of all the tools within the van has also been carried out.

Liability

Employers Liability – Covered for a total of £15m (£10m provided by NFU Mutual and the further £5 million provided by Great Lake Insurance).

Public and Products Liability – Covered for a total of £10m (£5m provided by NFU Mutual and the further £5 million provided by Great Lakes Insurance).

The Finance Manager noted that these levels of cover were increased previously based on some PSCA work for the Environment Agency, suggesting that the committee consider whether this level (£15m employers' liability and £10m public and products liability) is still adequate?

Cllr S Walsh noted that from previous experience, these are the levels that were required to run an NHS contract.

Mr J Burton noted that he is seeing more and more at higher levels, noting that the Board could potentially be exposed to higher levels than this, noting that the additional cost for perhaps another £5m or £10m would not be vast and so is worth considering.

Cllr R Austin questioned whether this risk is assessed, further noting that if the Board could be exposed to £10m it is a significant risk to the Board. The Finance Manager questioned what the likely pay-out would be for a child who sustained life changing injuries at one of the pumping stations or depot, for example?

Mr P Ingleby responded that for a young person in a motor claim that is quadriplegic, they are often seeing £6-£7m per person. Mr P Ingleby continued that from an employer's liability perspective, it could be an explosion or serious fire where people couldn't get out of the building. Therefore, it is about the concentration of people in the office, continuing that he doesn't believe the Board require anymore for employers' liability. Mr P Ingleby next referred to public liability and that consideration needs to be given to the effect the Board could have on any other infrastructure the Board could come into contact with, particularly in a flooding incident. The Chief Executive noted that he sees the biggest risk as juveniles playing at pumping stations. Mr J Fowler asked for an estimate of what the premium would be to increase the public liability by £5m? Mr P Ingleby noted that it is not something known, he would have to look into it. All AGREED for the NFU representatives to find out the premium for £15m and £20m to be presented to the Board for consideration.

Mr V Barker noted his concern for the Board's liability for flooding (from the sea) at the new Bicker Power Station which has been built in a low area of the catchment. The Chief Executive noted that the sea defence is controlled by the Environment Agency, likewise, is the South Forty Foot Drain and therefore the liability would not lie with the Board.

Restrictions in cover for both Employers Liability and Public and Products Liability - Mr J Burton referred to the restrictions listed within the NFU document circulated and included within the agenda, it being noted that, working with the Finance Manager, they have been tweaked slightly and should now be reflective of the Board's work.

Environmental Liability - £1m indemnity limit, provided by AIG, with an excess of £10,000. Mr J Burton explained that he has tried to include the details of the main insured elements within the NFU document.

Cllr S Walsh questioned if it is industry standard? The NFU representatives responded that it is a little low, noting that the farming policies are £2m. The Finance Manager noted any instance with the Board would be isolated to around a pumping station or depot or machine, rather than the whole length of a field in a farmer's case.

Mr J Fowler referred to the recent EA prosecution of a farmer in Shropshire that has generated costs above £1m.

Mr P Ingleby gave the example of runoff from a fire, that pollutant (water) would be your responsibility to third party land and your own and can then enforce you to carryout improvement works. If it can't be improved, then you would have to look at create biodiversity as recompense. All AGREED for the NFU representatives to find out the premium for £2m cover to be presented to the Board for consideration.

Drones - Mr P Ingleby noted that drones are not currently covered, questioning if the Board operates any drones? The Chief Executive explained that the Board uses one small drone (falls within the category that doesn't need a licence). It is used for the Board's own purposes, visual inspection of pumping stations, watercourses, assets etc., and the information is only used internally. Mr P Ingleby confirmed that liability associated with the drone will be excluded because it is an ariel device.

It is a specialist policy, that the NFU don't write. The Chief Executive questioned what the risk is? Mr P Ingleby noted that it is the risk of bringing something down. The Chief Executive noted that the risk is low, it is operated by an employee who does have an operator licence due to having his own larger drones at home. Further adding that it is used in remote areas and not over highways or rail lines etc. The committee felt it did not require insuring.

Cllr S Walsh questioned whether the Board should have a policy on the use of drones? To include prohibiting flying over highways, railway lines etc. The Chief Executive noted that the Board's Officer's will produce a policy.

Legal Expenses

Legal Expenses insurance provides cover for legal costs up to a maximum of £250,000 in pursuing or defending incidents arising from:

- Employment disputes and compensation awards
- Legal Defence
- Contract disputes over £250
- Property Protection and bodily injury
- Tax Protection

Engineering Inspection

This provides an inspection service of plant as required to comply with statutory requirements. This cover is currently provided by Vulcan. The Finance Manager noted the issues experienced with Vulcan so far, i.e. arriving for inspections which have not been planned. Mr J Burton noted that he will set up a meeting with the Board and Vulcan to discuss a way forward. The Finance Manager noted that he corrected the list with the Vulcan Engineer and believes that all the six-monthly inspections should now be completed.

Management Liability

Directors and Officers - £3 million indemnity limit, which also includes the entity of Black Sluice IDB. Mr J Burton questioned whether £3m was quantified by anything and that they can look into higher cover if required. The Finance Manager believed that they were previously quoted between £1m and £5m and £3m was selected.

It was confirmed that this covers fraud and dishonesty by employees, but does not include crime by third parties e.g. somebody posing as the Chief Executive for instance. This cover can be added if required. The Finance Manager felt that the Board have measures in place to prevent this but can only do what they can foresee. Further to this, there is another additional element that would cover cybercrime. The Finance Manager noted that the cybercrime policy has previously been considered, but it was felt that with all the restrictions in place, they wouldn't actually be able to gain access to commit the cybercrime in the first instance. Mr P Ingleby added that the elements to consider with cybercrime include a data breach, the impact on the workings of the Board etc.

The Finance Manager added that the Board pay an IT company to keep a virtual server at a different location which would enable the continuation of working by logging on to that. Also adding that the Board have invested in hard and soft firewalls, decryption software and a dual authority access process. Mr P Ingleby suggested that it may be beneficial, in the absence of insurance, to have a penetration test by an outside company to see if they can gain any access.

Mr V Barker noted that he believed it had previously been mentioned that there are over 100,000 potential attacks a week? The Finance Manager confirmed this, and that the decryption software monitors the system and will stop and reverse it if it sees any of the files being changed. It also being noted that 90% of all attacks are employee error.

Miscellaneous

Personal Accident & Illness – Where there is negligent injury to anyone deemed as an employee (this includes Board Members), the employer's liability will cover that injury (any age). Mr P Ingleby referred to Minute 2047 of the previous Audit & Risk Committee meeting and clarified that because the Board is an NFU Member they are eligible for 'Union advantage' which gives accidental death cover to any employee of £10,000, however, the employee must be under the age of 75. All AGREED to amend Minute 2047 as follows, 'It was noted that NFU would pay £10,000 accidental death payment to employees under the age of 75.'

The NFU next referred to personal accident, with the Finance Manager confirming that the Board pay six months full pay and six months half pay. The personal accident policy would reimburse the Board for the money it pays through the current sick pay policy; the limit could be set by the Board e.g. a percent of salary.

The Finance Manager confirmed that the reason for having it previously with NFU and Towergate is because the Board didn't realise that Board Members were classified and covered as employees.

Professional Indemnity

This relates to breaches of professional duty; this policy has a £2m limit on an aggregate basis. The Finance Manager noted that this was increased from £1m to £2m because the Environment Agency increased their limit in the Public Sector Cooperation Agreement. The Finance Manager also noted a recent case where the Board were asked to provide professional advice for a court case, and it has been confirmed that the Board are not insured as expert witnesses to be able to give that legal advice. The Board has therefore provided the information, but not as a legal opinion.

(a) To consider the provision of using tractors to run pumping stations in the event of an emergency and how this is insured

The Chief Executive referred to if tractors were required to run the pumping stations and that some would charge for this use, but others wouldn't and therefore questioned where this would stand in terms of being insured? It was confirmed that some farmers would operate their own tractors whilst others would leave it for the Board to operate. It was confirmed that the tractor would be static and therefore wouldn't need adding to the motor policy. It was suggested that this could be reacted to at the time, the Board would inform the NFU of the number of tractors being hired which would be added.

It may even be that the tractor is covered with the NFU by the tractor owner anyway and may not be necessary to do anything further. It was confirmed that the Board will contact the NFU in that scenario.

There being no further questions, the NFU representatives thanked the committee for inviting them to attend. The Chairperson thanked them for their attendance, the representatives then left the meeting.

2140 Presentation from the Internal Auditor - Agenda Item 7

(a) Internal Audit Report 2022/23

The Chairperson welcomed the Internal Auditor to report to the committee.

The Internal Auditor presented the Internal Audit Report 2022/23 and noted what a good job the Finance Manager does of managing the affairs of the IDB, with the outcome being 'substantial assurance'. Further noting that there is only one action point and no recommendations. The action point related to the reserves and to ensure that the exact wording within the Financial Regulations and Board meeting minutes align, it being noted that this is being dealt with later in this meeting.

The committee expressed their thanks and congratulations to the Finance Manager and whole team for the successful outcome of the audit.

(b) Audit Programme 2023/24

The Internal Auditor explained that the audit follows a standard approach every year but that he does vary the work carried out each year, noting that the audits are completed remotely.

The Internal Auditor noted that he is happy to take direction from the committee, if there is a specific area they would like him to look into. Noting that this committee previously asked for pensions to be included, which now forms part of the audit.

The Chairperson noted that it was mentioned last year about looking at the Board's health and safety systems and it was decided to defer that as the Finance Manager was due to be undertaking some training. The Finance Manager has just completed the full NEBOSH General Certificate, further noting that the Operations Manager, Works Supervisor and Ganger are going to complete the IOSH Managing Safely qualification. Upon the retirement of the Chief Executive, the health and safety policy and practices will be reviewed, with a division of responsibilities within that. The Finance Manager therefore suggested that a detailed review of the health and safety is deferred until all this is in place and operational. The Internal Auditor accepted this, noting that he does a review of the health and safety every year anyway, but that he can then look into it in more detail (2024/25).

Mr J Fowler questioned whether remote auditing produces a higher workload for the Board's Officer's in comparison to a face-to-face audit? The Finance Manager responded that it may seem like it does, due to having to collate all the documents into a one drive ready for the Internal Auditor to access in advance, but, in fact, if the Internal Auditor was present in the office it would be drip fed over a number of days which then influences all of those days, instead of the half a day it takes to

prepare everything for remote access. The Internal Auditor noted the importance of GDPR and confidential data whilst conducting the audit remotely.

The Chairperson questioned if any committee members or the Internal Auditor would like to have discussion with the Board's Officer's not present. It was felt that this wasn't necessary.

The Internal Auditor noted the retirement of the Chief Executive which will inevitably cause a higher risk at some point. The Internal Auditor will therefore look into how the Financial Regulations are modified for this transition. The Chief Executive and Finance Manager explained that they have produced a report to be presented to the Executive Committee next month, which details the amendments to policies and procedures that need to be made in order for the Board to continue its operations on the retirement of the Chief Executive. The Finance Manager suggested that the report be sent to the Internal Auditor for his opinion, who was happy to do this.

Thanks were expressed to the Internal Auditor for his help to the Board and for his attendance today.

2141 To review the following Board's policies - Agenda Item 8

The Finance Manager explained that these are policies that have been identified for review and any changes have been made in red.

(a) Policy Statement Water Level & Flood Risk Management (Policy A)

The Finance Manager explained that most of the changes proposed within this policy are changes to terminology.

The changes within the figures of paragraph 4.3 refer to the updated figures of agricultural and non-agricultural land within the Board's District. Mr V Barker noted that he didn't understand the figures presented within 4.3. It was suggested that the table be laid out as below, to make the figures clearer to understand, all AGREED:

<i>Total area of the Black Sluice IDB Drainage District</i>	<i>47,220 ha</i>
<i>Catchment area draining to the district from Highland Carriers</i>	<i>20,073 ha</i>
<i>Total area draining to and including the District</i>	<i>67,293 ha</i>
<i>Area of Agricultural Land</i>	<i>43,886 ha</i>
<i>Area of other (non-agricultural) land</i>	<i>3,334 ha</i>
<i>Total area of the District</i>	<i>47,220 ha</i>

The sentence within paragraph 6.4 proposed to be removed refers to the fact that the Board are mindful of national policy but that the policy won't be updated every time the national policy changes.

The Committee RESOLVED to recommend that the Policy Statement Water Level & Flood Risk Management (Policy A) be approved at the next Board meeting.

(b) Policy No.1: Risk Management Strategy

The Finance Manager highlighted the proposed changes as below:

Appendix A – Risk Management Strategy Statement

Proposed to remove the reference to the insurer's recognising the Board as being a 'low risk' because the current insurers haven't specifically stated this.

Appendix B – Risk Management Policy Document

Proposed to remove the reference to Policy No. 41 (Public Sector Co-operation Agreement) as it is now established and doesn't require a specific reference to it.

Appendix C - Risk Analysis

1.1(b) Fluvial flooding from failure or overtopping of defences

Proposed addition to highlight that the pumps are now remotely controlled.

1.3 Risk of Pumps Failing to Operate

Proposed to remove the item about self-insuring pumping stations as the Board now insure them.

1.6 Risk of Claims from Third Parties for damage to property or injury

Proposed to replace 'Loss of income' with 'Uninsured costs'.

1.8 Risk of unplanned loss of senior staff

Proposed to include a reference to the ongoing work to develop a more resilient structure to coincide with the retirement of the Chief Executive.

1.9 Insufficient Finance to carry out works

Proposed to include a reference to the excessive electricity costs.

It was noted that the committee previously agreed to increase the potential impact of risk to 'high', resulting in a risk level of 6. Hopefully this time next year the electricity prices will have stabilised, and this will be able to be reviewed.

1.11 Insufficient Staff Resource

Proposed to include a reference to the retirement of the Chief Executive.

5.2 Risk of loss of money invested in Building Societies & Banks & Managed Funds

Mr J Fowler felt that, in light of having £300,000 invested in one place and a further £500,000 invested in another place, the risk should be greater than medium.

The Finance Manager noted that the definition of a 'high' risk is a financial loss over £100,000.

All AGREED the potential impact of 'medium' be increased to 'high', which would therefore result in a higher risk level of 3.

The Finance Manager next brought to the attention of the committee whether it should be a maximum of £200,000 in investments as opposed to £300,000. This matter has been brought to the attention of the Executive Committee by email.

The Chairperson questioned whether it would affect the returns? The Finance Manager didn't feel it would.

The Internal Auditor felt it would be more prudent to spread the money over a wider base.

The Committee RESOLVED to recommend decreasing the maximum investment amount to £200,000.

7.1 Risk of collecting insufficient income to fund expenditure

Proposed to include a reference to the increase in reserves due to the excessive electricity costs.

8.1 Risk of loss of telemetry

Proposed to include a reference to the ability of remote operation of the pumping stations.

Mr V Barker added that as discussed at a previous meeting, the cost of electricity relates to the cost of starting the pump and suggested that the current levels and pumping regime can be improved on by pumping some drains down further at night. Further adding that it reflects on tide times as to whether the drains will gravitate during the day, and if they are not going to, he suggested that the pumping levels are lowered at night so that the pump doesn't have to start.

The Finance Manager noted that it can't be set up based on the tide, it is a set day level and set night level for winter and summer. The suggestions were noted and will be reviewed as to whether anything further can be done.

8.2 Risk of loss of telephone communications

Proposed to remove the reference to 4G Assure in Broadband lines as this is no longer in place.

Proposed addition of reference to the mobile broadband router and test to see whether it will support phone calls.

Mr J Fowler noted that himself and some neighbours have recently gone onto Starlink satellite broadband which is proving very effective as an alternative to 4G.

The Board's Officers noted that this has been discussed and that the Board Vice-Chairperson is going to report on it to the Board's Officers.

8.3 Risk of loss of internet connections

Proposed to remove the reference to 4G Assure in Broadband lines as this is no longer in place.

8.5 Risk of breach in cyber security

Proposed to add a reference to the Board's dual authentication system.

8.6 Risk of network security breach

Proposed to add a reference to the Board's dual authentication system.

The Committee RESOLVED to recommend that the Risk Management Strategy (No. 01) be approved at the next Board meeting with the additional amendments agreed above.

(c) Policy No. 3: Financial Regulations

4.2 - Proposed addition of the Chief Executive to be able to authorise invoices, claims and accounts as well as the Finance Manager. The Chief Executive already has this authority, it is a matter of ensuring this policy is reflective of that.

10.1 - Proposed changes to the long-term aim of the Board's reserves to reflect that agreed by the Board on 14th February 2023.

The Committee RESOLVED to recommend that the Financial Regulations (No. 03) be approved at the next Board meeting.

(d) Policy No. 04: Procurement

The Finance Manager referred to a recent situation where the piles couldn't be purchased for Sempringham weed dump area as the quote was over £10,000. Therefore, the Operations team requested that the number of piles be reduced to bring the price under £10,000. It worked out favourably for the Board as the quote was reduced but the number of piles remained the same. However, this has highlighted that, with inflation, £10,000 doesn't go very far, therefore suggesting that the upper limit is increased to £20,000. All AGREED. It was noted that this change will need to be reflected in paragraph 3.2(b) and the delegation of authority.

Mr V Barker highlighted that this perhaps shows the quotes being sought aren't as good as they could be. The Finance Manager acknowledged this, whilst also noting these specific piles are only available from one supplier.

The Committee RESOLVED to recommend that the Procurement Policy (No. 04) be approved at the next Board meeting.

(e) Policy No. 23: H&S Policy for Display Screen Equipment

The Finance Manager noted that the only proposed amendment to this policy is the addition of the Display Screen Equipment Workstation Checklist.

The Chairperson suggested that between 2.2 and 2.3 there should be reference to completing an additional DSE workstation checklist if working from home is required. All AGREED.

Cllr S Walsh noted that a risk assessment should be carried out for somebody working from home anyway and that workstation assessment should be carried out as part of this.

The Committee RESOLVED to recommend that the H&S Policy for Display Screen Equipment (No. 23) be approved at the next Board meeting with the above added amendment.

(f) Policy No. 25: Lone Worker

The Finance Manager explained that there are no amendments to the policy as such, the only proposed changes relate to how the updated Peoplesafe Lone Worker App now functions.

Mr V Barker questioned if the phones are always within areas with signals? The Finance Manager noted that the phones are with EE as it gives the best coverage in the Board's area and the GPS element of the lone worker app will give the last known location of that person. The Finance Manager wasn't sure what else could be done other than having dual sim and having two mobile phone services per person, which would be an extra financial cost.

The Committee RESOLVED to recommend that the Lone Worker Policy (No. 25) be approved at the next Board meeting.

(g) Policy No. 32: Data Protection

The Finance Manager explained that on the 31st December 2023, all the European legislation that is currently relevant ceases to be (General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) is part of this legislation). The Data Protection Act (DPA) will take over as the data protection regulations on 31st December 2023. Therefore, all the references to GDPR have been amended to DPA to reflect this.

The Committee RESOLVED to recommend that the Data Protection policy (No. 32) be approved at the next Board meeting.

2142 To review the following proposed new policies: - Agenda Item 9

The Finance Manager presented the following new policies, noting that they are based on the current operations of the Board:

(a) Health & Wellbeing

The Finance Manager highlighted that three employees (two in office, one workforce) are going to complete mental health first aid training next month.

The Committee RESOLVED to recommend that the Health and Wellbeing policy be approved at the next Board meeting.

(b) Sickness absence management

The Finance Manager noted that this policy outlines what is already implemented, noting that the seven-day self-declarations had slipped a little, but is required for the statutory sick pay element.

Cllr S Walsh noted that, in his opinion, the Board's sick pay is generous, noting the danger of it becoming abused. It was noted that employee sickness levels are monitored.

Mr M Leggott questioned if there is a requirement for the employee to physically see a Doctor, as opposed to an over the phone consultation. Cllr S Walsh noted that telephone appointments are standard practice as it increases capacity and reduces cost for the practice. Mr M Leggott referred to a personal situation whereby an employee continuously gained a Fit for Work Note through telephone consultations only.

The Finance Manager noted that employees can self-certify for seven days, anything over seven days requires a Fit for Work Note (which could be given over a telephone consultation). The Board could also send the employee for a medical (forms part of the employee contract). The Finance Manager noted that the Board has previously used the occupational health service successfully.

The Committee RESOLVED to recommend that the Sickness absence management policy be approved at the next Board meeting.

2143 To review the Risk Register - Agenda Item 10

It was noted that this has been reviewed as part of the review of the Risk Management Strategy.

The committee AGREED that the Risk Register be accepted.

2144 To receive the catalogue of Board Policies with recommended approval dates - Agenda Item 10

The Committee AGREED that the Catalogue of Board Policies be adopted.

2145 Any other business - Agenda Item 11

(a) Pollution of Watercourses

Cllr R Austin noted that there is currently quite a lot of public discussion about pollution in watercourses, questioning if this affects the Board?

The Chief Executive noted that pollution is dealt with by the Environment Agency, who may ask for the Board's involvement (costs are recovered).

Mr J Fowler left the meeting.

(b) Tiaa Contract (Internal Auditing)

The Finance Manager informed the committee that the Tiaa contract (internal auditing) has concluded. There is an option to extend the contract for a further two years. The Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments have suggested the Board extend the contract. All AGREED to extend the Tiaa contract for a further two years.

The Internal Auditor thanked the Board for being his first IDB to audit.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 16:23.