

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES

of the proceedings of a Meeting of the
Southern Works Committee

held at the Offices of the Board on the
4th July 2023 at 15:30

Members

Chairperson - * Mr M Rollinson

* Mr W Ash	* Mr J F Atkinson
* Mr V A Barker	* Mr K C Casswell
* Mr J Casswell	* Mr R Dorrington
Mr C Dring	* Cllr M Geaney
* Cllr Z Lane	Mr A Mair
Mr M Mowbray	* Mr M Taylor
* Mr C Wray	

(* Member Present)

In attendance: Mr I Warsap (Chief Executive)
Mr D Withnall (Finance Manager)
Mr P Nicholson (Operations Manager)
Mr K Methley (Pump Engineer)
Mr P Holmes (Northern Works Chairperson)
Mr M Brookes (Executive Committee)
Cllr P Bedford (Executive Committee)
Mr D Leverton (Guest)

2173 Recording the Meeting - Agenda Item 1

Members were informed that the meeting would be recorded.

The Chairperson welcomed newly appointed members, Cllr Z Lane and Cllr M Geaney to their first Southern Works Committee meeting, also welcoming Mr D Leverton (guest). The Officers were thanked for organising an interesting and informative inspection.

2174 Apologies for absence - Agenda Item 2

Apologies for absence were received from Mr C Dring, Mr A Mair, Mr M Mowbray, Mr J Fowler, Mr G Atkinson (invited guest).

2175 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3

A declaration of interest was received from Mr J Atkinson in relation to Minute 2180(e) - Drainage issues, Pinchbeck North Fen.

2176 Review the Southern Works Committee Terms of Reference - Agenda Item 4

The Committee RESOLVED to recommend that the Southern Works Committee Terms of Reference be approved at the next Board meeting.

2177 Minutes of the last meeting - Agenda Item 5

The Minutes of the Joint Works Committee, which was held on 4th October 2022, copies of which had been circulated, were considered. It was AGREED that the Minutes should be signed as a true record.

2178 Confidential Minutes of the last meeting - Agenda Item 6

The Confidential Minutes of the Joint Works Committee, which was held on 4th October 2022, copies of which had been circulated, were considered. It was AGREED that the Minutes should be signed as a true record.

2179 Matters Arising - Agenda Item 7

There were no matters arising.

2180 Discuss the Operations Report and Inspection - Agenda Item 8

The Operations Manager led discussions about the inspection, as follows.

(a) Donington North Ings Pump & Sump Works

This was not visited on the tour but was raised by the Operations Manager as a point of interest. Photos were displayed on screen of the works completed in the suction chamber of the pumping station, it being noted that issues have arisen lately with bolts rusting away and the bellhousing section falling off as a result of this. The Board's workforce are therefore trying to complete inspections and complete any required maintenance works within all the pumping stations suction bays as quickly as possible. Going forward, the aim is to have a ten-year inspection programme.

(b) Swaton Catchment Natural Flood Management Scheme

The Board first met with the Environment Agency (EA) to discuss completing these works on their behalf in 2020, this is a national pilot project for natural flood management and attenuation. It will be monitored over the next three years by a graduate student.

The attenuation capacity across all five sites and c1.8km of swales adjacent to the sites is 22,000m³ (the equivalent of nine olympic swimming pools).

The cost of these works is c£1million.

Mr P Holmes referred to the Holland Road Farm site which has been completed some time, questioning if it has been proven to work in fluvial events? The Operations Manager confirmed that it has proven that it captures and holds the water, however, the efficiency of the sites will be monitored by the graduate student over the following years and a report produced.

Smaller Scale Natural Flood Management

The Operations Manager referred to smaller scale, lower cost projects that reduce flows into rivers. It was noted that a Farm Engagement Advisor has been employed, to meet with farmers and identify sites. 150 sites have been identified and some of the work is now being delivered. Some examples of this work were displayed on screen (enlarged pond with swale and outfall pipe, leaky dam, reprofiled bank).

The Chairperson referenced the dams, questioning who is responsible for keeping it clear of debris once operational? It was confirmed that it will be the responsibility of the landowner.

Some drone footage of works at Folkingham was shown on screen, noting that it is designed so that the water overflows into the areas created to hold water. It was noted that the landowner is paid compensation, either loss of crop or loss of land, dependant on the type of work, for ten years.

(c) Proposed revetment works, Drain 31/3, North Drove, Quadring Fen

The Operations Manager has met with LCC highways to establish that the cracking of the road is not connected to the watercourse. The works will require the road being closed and is estimated to cost £24,000.

(d) Gosberton and Dowsby Fen Pumping Station 750kva Transformer

The installation of a new 800Kva was completed in April 2023, funded by Grant in Aid.

(e) Drainage issues, Pinchbeck North Fen

The Operations Manager reminded the committee that this was visited and discussed in March 2020.

The pipe is in fair to poor condition. There is an Anglian Water main that runs across the site, which may dictate the level of the pipe that outfalls into the main drain. When looking at the difference in falls between the open drain where the pipeline starts and the downstream end, there isn't a lot of fall (approx. 50mm).

The Operations Manager added that, in respect of the pipe, he doesn't know what can be done. An internal discussion has been had around whether a small diameter pipe can be placed at a different location that will take some of the water away.

The Operations Manager also added that this was previously discussed at a Board Meeting in 2006, where the conclusion was that there 'is no further action taken'. The Operations Manager believed the current situation is not any different to in 2006.

Mr V Barker noted that a syphon could be something for the future once more is confirmed regarding the Lincolnshire Reservoir. As a short-term measure, Mr V Barker suggested a small pump with its own float valve and pump into the South Forty Foot Drain.

The Operations Manager noted that the difficulty is that if it is low lying land, how does this differ from any other low-lying land in any other areas. The option into the South Forty Foot Drain may be viable, but it will need to be at a level that is sufficient to allow it to gravitate. The Operations Manager noting that it may be investigated once the catchment studies are completed.

The Chairperson questioned if there has been any change in the situation since it was recommended by the Board in 2006 that no further action is taken? Mr J Atkinson confirmed there is no change.

Mr J Atkinson noted that he had envisioned a suggestion similar to Mr V Barker's suggestion, which he felt would be a relatively cheap option.

Mr V Barker suggested that the landowner (Mr J Atkinson) pays for the capital cost of putting a small pump in but that it is run from the Board's pumping station.

The Chairperson felt this was not for discussion within the meeting and suggested it be discussed between Mr J Atkinson and the Operations Manager outside of this meeting.

(f) Refurbishment Works – Sempringham Pumping Station

Photos of works to create a new dump area to receive a new weedscreen cleaner were shared, the new weedscreen cleaner should be installed by the end of the calendar year.

(g) Dyke Fen Pumping Station – Proposed pump motor refurbishments

The Operations Manager noted that the bell mouth fell off (due to bolts rusting – further discussion about this at Minute 2180(a)), which caused damage of the motor of the pump. This was refurbished last year due to the damage, another pump is due for refurbishment as part of ongoing maintenance.

(h) Project with Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Bourne North Fen

The Operations Manager referred to the aerial photograph within the agenda and that the white area is land that the Board already own (wetland pond area). Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust (LWT) have obtained a grant to create a new wetland area. The Board have been approached to complete these works on behalf on LWT. The works are planned to take place at the end of the calendar year / into next year.

The Chief Executive added that it is a 50ha reed bed nature reserve. Water is to be abstracted from the Bourne Eau, move through the reeds which will polish the water. It is then going to either be lifted, by wind pump, into the Glen or retained within the South Forty Foot catchment to be used for irrigation.

The Chief Executive confirmed that LWT are aware that if the water is retained in the Board's catchment and the Board has to lift it with the pumps, there will be a cost associated.

2181 Receive the Engineer's Report - Agenda Item 9

1. Capital Asset improvements

(a) 2023/24 Defra/EA Funded Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Grant in Aid (GiA) Schemes

(i) Swaton Natural Flood Management Schemes

This was discussed at Minute 2180(b).

(ii) Sempringham Fen Pumping Station Refurbishment

This was discussed at Minute 2180(f).

(iii) Upper catchment South Forty Foot Natural Flood Management Studies and Works

This was discussed at Minute 2180(b).

(iv) Black Sluice Catchment Strategy

The inception study is completed and another order has just been placed with Stantec (consultants), the ideal being to look at the whole catchment with the question 'If we were going to design a new catchment, would it look like it does now?' The Operations Manager also noted the potential impacts the Lincolnshire Reservoir and Lower Witham Strategy could have on the catchment.

(b) 2023/24 Board funded capital schemes

(i) Quadrang North Fen roadside revetment – Estimate £24,000

This was discussed at Minute 2180(c).

(ii) Jetting / CCTV survey of Major Pipelines – Estimate £75,000

There are a couple of sites, in Donington, that can't currently be accessed due to cropping, which will then complete the works. Wyberton will be the main area of focus for this year and into next year.

(iii) Dyke Fen Pumping Station and pump motor refurbishment - Estimate £25,000

This was discussed at Minute 2180(g).

(iv) Alternative Access Programme - Estimate £20,000

The Board aims to work on alternate banks as much as possible. Development of this programme is being achieved by installing side entry field culverts and removal of bushes and vegetation to enable machine access for future maintenance.

(v) General Culvert replacement contributions - Estimate £5,000

The Board will only offer a contribution to the cost of the replacement of culverts that the Board benefit from using.

(c) 2024/25 Defra/EA FCERM GiA schemes

(i) Dunsby Fen Catchment Works Study – Estimate £10,000

This has been deferred, until the catchment study reaches a more informed stage.

(d) 2024/25 Board funded capital schemes

(i) Graft Drain - Estimate £25,000

This scheme was deferred due to other priority works including a lot of large slips to repair. The remaining work involves the lining of existing culverts.

(ii) SFFD Desilting Guthrum to Black Hole Drove Pumping Station - Estimate £65,000

It is proposed that this section (c1600m of the South Forty Foot Drain from Guthram Gowt to Black Hole Drove Pumping Station) is desilted. It has not yet been decided how it will be desilted; it could be with the cutter suction dredger (big additional costs for lagoon holding site) or with a large machine and bucket with cradges to contain the removed silt.

2. Emergency Response Plan

The Operations Manager noted that this hasn't changed, reminding the committee that it is classified as an emergency when the level in the South Forty Foot Drain (SFFD) reaches +2.30m ODN, the Board's Officer's will begin to turn off pumps at +2.70m ODN.

3. Crop Loss

The Operations Manager noted that he has included the Crop Loss Compensation policy to remind the committee what the Board will pay for various crops and how to claim.

2182 Confidential - To receive an update on the Open Channel Transfer of raw water to the Lincolnshire Reservoir - Agenda Item 10

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.

2183 Report on Rainfall - Agenda Item 11

The rainfall figures at Black Hole Drove were circulated. The Committee RESOLVED that this report be noted.

2184 Any Other Business - Agenda Item 12

(a) Thanks to Chief Executive at Final Committee Meeting

Mr V Barker thanked the Chief Executive for all the work he has done for the Board over the years and all the future work. The committee echoed this.

The Chairperson thanked the Chief Executive for his contributions to the Board. The committee applauded.

(b) Soil Bund Query – Twenty Road

Mr D Leverton referenced the Twenty Road and that a sheet pile temporary dam has been installed and would ask that it be moved back a field as it is holding some of the water up. The Operations Manager noted this and agreed to arrange to meet with Mr D Leverton to discuss further.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 17:25.