

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES

of the proceedings of a meeting of the Executive Committee

held at the offices of the Board on
21st January 2025 at 2pm

Members

Chairperson - * Mr P Holmes

* Cllr P Bedford
* Mr M Leggott
* Cllr D Middleton

* Mr R Needham
* Mr M Rollinson
* Mr C Wray

* Member Present

In attendance: Mr D Withnall (Chief Executive)
Mr P Nicholson (Projects Director)

The Chairperson welcomed members, Cllr D Middleton, Mr R Needham and Mr C Wray to their first Executive committee meeting.

2409 Recording the Meeting - Agenda Item 1

Committee members were informed that the meeting would be recorded.

2410 Apologies for absence - Agenda Item 2

There were no apologies of absence.

2411 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3

There were no declarations of interest.

2412 Terms of Reference - Executive Committee - Agenda Item 4

There were no proposed amendments to the current Terms of Reference, however, it was noted that there is currently a requirement for two members of each of the Works Committee to be on the Executive Committee, but with the current membership, this is not the case (only one member from Southern Works). It was therefore suggested that this be removed to allow for more flexible membership rather than trying to 'tick a box'. It was further noted that all Executive Committee Members are invited to both works committee inspections and meetings anyway.

All AGREED to recommend the Executive Committee's Terms of Reference to the Board for approval, with the suggestion that the following criteria, '*The Board shall ensure that there are at least two members from each Works Committee on the Executive Committee*', be removed.

2413 Minutes of the Meeting - Agenda Item 5

Minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2024, copies of which had been circulated, were considered and it was AGREED that they should be signed as a true record.

2414 Confidential Minutes of the Meeting - Agenda Item 6

Confidential Minutes of the last meeting held on 17th September 2024, copies of which had been circulated, were considered and it was AGREED that they should be signed as a true record, with an amended typing error - £500,0000 should be £500,000.

2415 Matters Arising - Agenda Item 7

(a) Pumping Station Structural Review (Swineshead Pumping Station) – Minute 2364(a)

The Chief Executive confirmed that Swineshead Pumping Station has had the locks changed and a permit to work system is in place for entry to the building (no entry at all when pumps running).

The Projects Director briefly noted the reference to a possible £1.5million of funding for Ewerby Pumping Station (that may have been able to be transferred to fund Swineshead Pumping Station), confirming that this has not been successful but that the Board have recently been informed that they have achieved indicative funding of £6.3 million through Flood Defence Grant in Aid for 2025/26.

(b) IDB Recovery Funding - Minute 2364(d)

The Projects Director reminded the committee of the IDB Recovery Fund and the various Tranches as below:

- Tranche 1: £25 million available (Board achieved £2.7million). Must be spent by 31 March 2025.
- Tranche 2: £31 million available (Board achieved £500,000). Must be spent by 31 March 2025. Business cases still to be submitted and approved.
- Tranche 2b: £19 million available. Must be spent by 31 March 2026. Expressions of interest submitted, results due 28 February 2025.

The four pumping stations (Ewerby, South Kyme, Trinity College and Damford) with water flow around or near the pumping stations during high water volumes (causing potential further damage to banks and foundations of pumping stations) have not been successful in attracting funding from Tranche 2. Expressions of interest for this funding have been submitted into Tranche 2b but the results of this won't be known until 28 February 2025. It was also added that the Board had submitted an expression of interest for further funding for bank slips to Tranche 2 which was unsuccessful, which has been moved into Tranche 2b, however, the Board's Officer's are going to play the importance of this down in the hope to attract the funding required for the four pumping stations as above (c£6.5million). It was noted that all IDBs in the country are competing for this funding.

The Projects Director further added that the Board had an audit from the Environment Agency (EA) to view some of the works completed through this funding. They were shown Helpringham Pumping Station which achieved funding for refurbishment of the pump and motor and replacement of motor control centre. However, a supply change is required from National Grid which is still ongoing. The Projects Director was honest with the EA regarding this situation and the concern that it wouldn't be completed by 31 March 2025, noting that the orders have been placed. The EA were not concerned about this, adding that they are not looking to receive any monies back, with their main priority being to ensure that there was enough funding for the Board to be able to successfully complete the works.

The Chief Executive added that central government funding (£3million) has been committed for the special levy paying councils again, it is not yet known how it will be split between the councils.

(c) Board's response to the Phase 2 Consultation for the Lincolnshire Reservoir - Minute 2364(e)

Cllr D Middleton referred to the note in the minutes about the South Forty Foot Drain (SFFD) having to be navigable by law and the potential deepening of the SFFD; questioning who would be responsible for this?

It was noted that this is all in relation to the construction of the Lincs Reservoir (Anglian Water), so the purpose of it being deepened would be to be able to hold more water for pumping into the reservoir. This would also benefit the Board as there would be more holding capacity within the SFFD in times of heavy rainfall. Currently, there is a summer and winter level, if it was to be deepened there may be the potential to have one level, which may allow the Board to gravitate more so require less pumping.

Cllr D Middleton noted that the Board stopped pumping into the SFFD in the event earlier in the month? The Chief Executive confirmed this (as per the Board's Emergency Response Plan).

(d) Planning & Enforcement Officer Vacancy - Minute 2364(f)

It was noted that the job specification has been amended to make it more a primarily administrative role and more applications have been received (third time of advertisement). The Projects Director is to shortlist for interview.

The previous Chief Executive, Ian Warsap, has been approached to see if he would be willing to work on a consultancy basis doing this role while the recruitment process is still ongoing to try and keep up to date with this workload. This would be charged to the Development account and so wouldn't impact on the Board's finances. Mr M Rollinson felt this was a good idea. The Projects Director noted how difficult it would have been to complete this work on a 'normal' year, let alone with all the additional work created by the IDB Recovery Fund.

(e) 2024/25 Plant Budget - Minute 2367(b)

It was noted that the new DXB 8" pump was delivered and used immediately at Dunsby, where the training was carried out. The pump worked well, and the operatives seem happy with it. There is another 8" and 6" DXB pump on order.

Further funding was also requested for a ramp to be able to use in conjunction with the pumps for laying pipes across roads. This funding has been approved and so the ramp is currently being sourced.

The new trailer is also on order from Bailey trailers and is due to be approved by the VOSA, using the Board's Unimog.

(f) Felling of trees - Aswarby Estates - Minute 2367(c)

The Chief Executive noted that this matter is with the insurers who will deal with the matter directly on behalf of the Board. The committee were reminded of the situation, that happened in 2022, whereby some Board operatives felled the wrong trees that were too big for their certification (was dealt with under the disciplinary procedure at the time). Aswarby Estates are trying to claim for the loss of the wood as they are arguing that the way in which they were chopped down means it can only be used for firewood as opposed to milling.

Mr R Needham questioned the value of the wood? It was confirmed that Aswarby Estates submitted an invoice for £6,000.

(g) Mobile Phone Contract Renewal - Minute 2368

The Chief Executive noted that the Vodafone signal is not as good as EE but was a lot less money.

2416 Period 08 Management Accounts - Agenda Item 8

The Chief Executive presented the Period 08 management accounts, highlighting the following points:

- Rechargeable income is down due to less rechargeable work being completed due to focusing on the IDB Recovery Fund works.

Mr C Wray questioned what rechargeable work is? It was explained that it is mostly Public Sector Cooperation Agreement (PSCA) work for the Environment Agency (EA) but can also include ad hoc work for landowners etc. A further example was given of the cutter suction desilting work completed on the SFFD. It also includes the work completed on behalf of South Kesteven District Council (SKDC). Mr R Needham questioned if this work has been completed by others? The Chief Executive noted the issues experienced with SKDC not wanting to agree the work through a PSCA and so it was issued on a contract basis for one year and to be done through the PSCA going forwards. It was confirmed that the work has not been completed by another organisation and so not causing the Board to have to compete for the work because of this.

The Chief Executive noted that most of the Board's PSCA work is summer cutting, the Board completed two cuts last year, the EA originally asked the Board to price for three cuts and have now asked the Board to price for four cuts. Peter Reilly (EA Operations Manager) has been completing a grass sward study which has shown that by keeping the grass cut and maintained, it stabilises the bank more.

The Projects Director added that it also usually includes ad hoc work for the EA such as slip repairs and bank repairs, but the Board have not had capacity to complete anything extra this year due to the amount of work needing to be completed for the IDB Recovery Funding.

- Solar income - The work required at Chain Bridge Pumping Station is still outstanding, the inverter needs replacing (was installed with the panels in 2014), which has been priced at £1,700. This is using a Skegness based Electricians; Hallgate Lincs Ltd, a couple of the committee members recommended a local Electrician; Smiths Electrical. Mr M Rollinson noted that he has been informed that an inverter only really has a life span of 10 years.
- Electricity – The Chief Executive noted the surplus for electricity, noting that this will now change due to the rainfall event earlier in the month. From 01 January 2025 – 19 January 2025, the estimated electricity for the pumping stations is £75,150.
- The value of both investments has started to improve.

2417 2025/26 Budget & Ten-Year Estimates - Agenda Item 9

The Chief Executive presented the 2025/26 budget and ten-year estimates as follows.

Rates & Levies

It is suggested that the penny rate be set at 19.59p in the £, which is an increase for 2025/26 of 3.98%. This includes using a 3.5% inflation figure (November CPIH).

Attention was drawn to the amount of land developed within the Board's area that has been transferred from agricultural to Special Levy (134 acres). Particular attention was drawn to the increase in the North Kesteven District Council (NKDC) area, which is subject to an increase of £39,319.47. Officers have been liaising with NKDC officers to confirm the change is correct and so they are not surprised by the increase. This is due to a solar farm that has been classified as commercial and has therefore had to be transferred to Special Levy. A lot of solar farms opt to remain as dual use (agricultural and commercial) meaning they pay both drainage rates and business rates.

Mr M Rollinson noted that if more solar farms are put up in the area, then it may affect the constitution of the Board (i.e., number of agricultural members verses appointed members). However, it was noted that, within the Land Drainage Act, there can only be one more appointed member than Elected (agricultural) members.

Cllr D Middleton questioned whether such industrial developments need to have some sort of special payment associated with them if not paying drainage rates? The Chief Executive clarified that the Board still receive payment for them through the councils paying the Special Levy (which is more income than it would be at an agricultural drainage rate value). The problem for the special levy paying councils is that they do not keep the business rates collected from such sites but still have to find the money to pay the IDBs. The Chief Executive noted that there is a Special Interest Group in Westminster to try and find a solution for this, but nothing has been proposed yet.

Interest and Investment Income

The Chief Executive noted that one of the Board's investments came up for renewal during the recent heavy rainfall event (Vernon Building Society). It was at 5.2% for six months, they offered terms of 4.67% for six months and so it has been renewed at this rate (with approval from the Chairperson).

Interest rates of the Board's accounts were highlighted:

- Reserve account (£2.2million) at 1.51%
- 35 Day Notice Account (£2.5million) at 2.75%
- Loughborough Building Society (£200,000) at 5%
- Vernon Building Society (£200,000) at 4.67%

If these balances were maintained, it would generate an interest income of £121,000, however these balances won't be maintained as it includes the IDB Recovery Fund money to be spent this financial year.

Grants & Local Levy

The Chief Executive referenced the figure within the report (£7,589,267) and that because of the recent news of achieving more funding this figure has now increased to £13,834,267. A new 10-year schemes budget has been produced and circulated to the committee (discussed below).

10 Year Schemes Budget

The Projects Director noted the below new revised FCRM GiA Capital Schemes indicative allocation, highlighted in red on the Schemes budget for 2025/26 (totalling c£6.3million). Business cases are still to be produced and submitted.

Great Hale Fen PS New Transformer	£55,000 removed from the indicative FDGiA funding
Black Hole Drove PS Structural Repairs	£50,000
Chain Bridge PS Structural Repairs	£1,500,000
Cooks Lock PS Structural Repairs	£50,000
Donington NI PS Structural Repairs	£450,000
Gosberton PS Structural Repairs	£970,000
Great Hale PS Structural Repairs	£1,290,000
Holland Fen PS Structural Repairs	£970,000
Horbling Fen PS Structural Repairs	£50,000
Wyberton Marsh PS Structural Repairs	£970,000

The Projects Director noted that he, and the Grant in Aid Manager, believe that there is still opportunity to be able to move some of this funding to other schemes that did not get allocated anything, i.e. Swineshead Pumping Station. A rough estimation for the replacement of Swineshead Pumping Station is £20-£30million. The first phase of that will be to produce a proposal, specification and tendering pack (c£750,000).

The Projects Director noted that DXB have indicated that they also supply larger pumps for pumping stations and so he has a site meeting booked in with them at the beginning of February to gauge an estimated cost, for Wyberton Chain Bridge Pumping Station

The Projects Director reminded the committee of how business cases work and the need to maximise the ask, due to not being able to claim anything further for the benefit period, e.g., if the benefit period is 25 years no further funding can be claimed at that site in that time.

The Projects Director also explained to the committee that the previous Grant in Aid (GiA) funding programme was a six-year programme and has been reduced to a five-year programme, with £2.4billion now left to spend in just twelve months. Therefore, some approved schemes may not now be delivered, which may mean there are in year opportunities that could be allocated funding for other schemes, that are prepared and ready to be delivered.

The Projects Director referred to the schemes in the table above and that the pumping station structural repairs have come about from visual inspections completed by himself, the Pump Engineer and the Grant in Aid Manager. The Projects Director referred specifically to Black Hole Drove Pumping Station, noting that the piles visible (intake side) do not look in very good condition and if this is the 'wet dry' zone, where the steel is corroding, the piles will be in similar condition the whole way along the site. Therefore, a structural survey is required to determine this, with the Projects Director of the opinion that it could fail its inspection.

Cllr D Middleton questioned if it could be caused by ground conditions? The Projects Director responded by noting the age of the steel elements of the Board's pumping stations (mid 1960's).

The Projects Director noted some positive news that not all the repairs required are as complicated, which just require the steel to be rubbed down and painted. Mr C Wray noted that some form of chemical needs to be put on the rust, otherwise it will just continue to rust behind the paint.

Reference was next made to the four pumping stations with water seepage issues that did not get any allocated funding (South Kyme, Ewerby Trinity College, Damford). Mr M Rollinson noted there was water seepage at Dowsby Fen this time? The Chief Executive noted it was only a very small crack and not comparative to the other four with issues. Mr M Rollinson noted his concern that it starts as a small crack and becomes progressively worse. The committee looked at the photographs included within the report, noting the size of the hole at Ewerby Pumping Station. Structural Engineers attended Ewerby Pumping Station yesterday and will be providing a report. The Projects Director did note that the Engineer suggested that it may be an option to use ready mixed concrete to fill the hole temporarily to stop it getting worse. This was also suggested as a possibility for Trinity College Pumping Station. For South Kyme Pumping Station, the Engineer has suggested that the best way to seal it is to use polythene with sandbags as a temporary measure. The Projects Director next referred to funding this work; it has been submitted into Tranche 2b of the IDB Recovery Fund (expected feedback 28 February 2025). If it is unsuccessful through this, then the next potential funding source is through Grant in Aid in a year's time or, local levy or getting a loan (last resort). Stantec (Engineers who have designed the specifications for repair works) have provided an estimated cost of £4million for the four sites. Balfour Beatty have quoted £7.5million for the four sites. It has therefore gone out to tender, with the hope being to receive some quotes closer to the £4million estimated.

Pumping Station Maintenance

The Chief Executive noted the estimated electricity costs calculated for a dry, average and wet year, noting that last year the actual cost was between the average and wet (£735,000). The figure that has been included in the 2025/26 budget is £517,592 (average 2025/26). The figure used to meet the reserve aim of being able to fund two wet years based on estimate cost is £873,907 (wet 2025/26).

Summer Cutting

Whilst not in the same timescale as usual, the same amount of summer cutting has been completed.

Winter Drain Maintenance

This work has been deferred to future years, to allow the Board to focus on the IDB Recovery Fund works.

Bushing

This work has been deferred to future years, to allow the Board to focus on the IDB Recovery Fund works.

Environmental

The Maintenance Director and Environment Officer have worked together to put together the Environment budget, which was included in the report and this will be presented to the Environment Committee at their next meeting.

Environment Agency Precept

The RFCC meeting is on Friday, it is expected that it will be frozen, as it has been since 2009.

Development Reserve

The Chief Executive noted the estimated closing balance at 31 March 2025 of £623,643 and that this is where Ian Warsap's time as a Planning & Byelaw Consultant would be charged to if he was willing to complete some of this work.

10 Year Plant Replacement

The Chairperson questioned if there is a need to replace the Hitachi if it is reliable and the operative likes it? The Projects Director noted that it is the unknown of how much it could end up costing if a machine is kept too long and so felt it was worth exploring trading it in at least. Mr C Wray noted that you can't always keep pushing it back otherwise other new machinery will be required at the same time.

Equipment and Building Maintenance

The Chief Executive noted that he has got a quote for 4 EV Charging points on the front of the building (£7,148), which could hopefully be offset by 4 x £350 grants. Further noting £1,455 for a power analyser for the office to try and better understand and analyse the electricity bill and use of electricity generated by the solar panels. (c£1,000per month).

Mr M Leggott suggested that EV Chargers be installed into pumping stations when having other works completed through funding. The Projects Director noted that this would, at least, be considered within the business case. The Chief Executive noted the possibility of charging the public to be able to use them and that, eventually, the workforce will probably be provided with an EV in the future. Mr C Wray noted that a lot of people walk their dogs along the banks and may be interested in being able to charge their car while doing so.

Wages oncost

The Chief Executive noted the increase to Employer's National Insurance contributions from the next financial year, however, noted the current healthy balance produced from the extra overtime being completed for the IDB Recovery Fund works.

Solar Panels

The Chief Executive noted that Swineshead Pumping Station, the depot and Holland Fen PS solar panels have now broken even (without savings from electricity used). The length of time for each set to break even ranges from 6.94 years to 15.3 years (Great Hale – assumed due to orientation of the pumping station in relation to the sun).

General Reserve

The Chief Executive confirmed that the Board's three targets are being met by the current proposal:

Maintain - Maintain the General Reserve at between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure. (As per JPAG Practitioners Guide).	The General Reserve maintains a level between 25% and 100% over the entire 10 year period.
Aim - Aim to be able to fund a minimum of two consecutive "Wet" years of Electricity from the General Reserve.	£873,907 is the calculated "Wet" year figure using the October 2024 tariff for electricity equating to a reserve aim of £1,828,128
Budget - With the General Reserve at the target level aim for a balanced budget.	With the current rate profile, a balanced budget will be achieved in the sixth year and then increases in line with inflation will maintain this trend.

The following documents were noted in conjunction with the above:

- *2024/25 Budget & 10 Year Estimates*
The Chief Executive noted that he doesn't usually include 'Actuals' for previous years in this but added them in for the benefit of Boston Borough Council and thought it was beneficial to keep it to show how it has built up over time. The committee noted the transparency of it.
- *10 Year Capital Schemes*
- *2025/26 Summary budget by month*
- *2025/26 Detailed budget by month*
- *10 Year Plant Replacement Budget*
- *2024/25 Cumulative Solar Panel Report*
- *Electricity analysis October 2024*

The committee RESOLVED to recommend this to the Board for approval.

2418 Review Bourne Fen Farm Rate Alleviation - Agenda Item 10

The Chief Executive reminded the committee that they are the Trustees of the Bourne North Fen Farm account , explaining that the farm was gifted to the people of Bourne North Fen and the income from the farm was split between the people of Bourne North Fen to alleviate their drainage rates.

The alleviation rate has been at 2.4p in the £ and is able to be maintained at this for the next year.

Mr M Leggott noted the administration fee seemed high in comparison to the cash balance. It was confirmed that the investment balance is £338,844 (not the cash balance C/F of £12,452). Mr M Leggott noted this and that that is more in line.

Due to the cash balance in reserve, all AGREED to maintain the rate alleviation at 2.4p in the £ for 2025/26.

2419 CONFIDENTIAL - Review of HR Policies - Agenda Item 11

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.

2420 Any Other Business - Agenda Item 12

(a) Heavy Rainfall Event - January 2025

The Chief Executive referred the committee to the documents circulated:

- Executive summary
- Report
- Incident Log (only one copy circulated – better in electronic format which can be circulated as includes lots of photos and videos).

The Chief Executive suggested that these documents be circulated with local councils etc. and Richard Tice MP. It was also suggested to be included in the Board agenda.

The Chief Executive reported that he had spoken to a retired engineer from another local board who was consulted following the December 2013 floods and he reported that when the Environment Agency (EA) drained the salt water out of the gearboxes and engines at Black Sluice Pumping Station (Boston) , the oil coated all of the engines and gearboxes as it did so, and so he is of the opinion that it would only take a couple of days / weeks to get the pumps working again and even offered some engineers to do it.

The Chief Executive noted that when the Board investigated the possibility of taking responsibility of the Black Sluice Pumping Station during the decommissioning process in 2018, the concept of installing two electric pumps was explored. This would have required a new power supply, which would have been too cost prohibitive and so a diesel generator would have needed to be installed to run the electric pumps. The Board wanted to keep the pumping station running but there was no funding with the pumping station to allow the Board to be able to do that.

The Chief Executive questioned to what extent the EA had already made the decision to decommission the pumping station and then provided the reasoning to support that. It being confirmed that the only organisation who had the power to make the decision about it was the EA.

The two TV news broadcasts were noted, with the Chief Executive noting that a lot of the explanation that he had given had been cut and edited, whereas the live radio interview was more detailed and gave the full picture. Further noting that the EA Area Director, has expressed he is not pleased with the TV interviews and disappointed in the lack of partnership in his view.

Cllr D Middleton noted his opinion that he doesn't see what purpose the EA serve; noting their inability to purchase, deliver, project manage etc.

Mr M Rollinson noted that there was not a huge amount of rainfall received, going into quite a dry system, so what caused it to flood so quickly?

The Chief Executive referenced the broken sluice door at the Black Sluice complex and that rain came unexpectedly overnight but could not discharge as the only way of opening the sluice door was manually (nobody on site overnight to manually operate) and so four hours of discharge time was lost. Therefore, the starting point was higher, combined with the rainfall and snow melt and a quicker run off rate due to frozen ground. Mr M Rollinson suggested there may be a case of negligence against the EA from the flooded homeowners because of the sluice door not being opened. Cllr D Middleton questioned how long the sluice door had been broken? The Chief Executive explained that the Board were informed of it on 18th December 2024, but had been broken around a week by this point (Board were only informed due to rainfall expected).

Mr M Rollinson noted Helpringham Fen and that it has occurred in the same place again. Mr R Needham noted the overtopping at the top of the Helpringham Eau in 2012, the local farmer had a pump on a ledge which was overtopped with water. The last three times when water has overtopped, it has not come above the pump. Mr R Needham noted one of the issues being the bushes preventing the water from moving through. Mr R Needham also noted a new housing development in Sleaford (still being developed), has a discharge of 1.41litres per second per hectare, which is not actually a great amount of water. Mr R Needham questioned if there is any way that rate can be checked? Mr R Needham also noted that there should have been five attenuation ponds and only one has been built. The Chief Executive noted that there is no way of physically checking the volume of water discharging, noting that it would be a matter for the council if they have not constructed the number of attenuation ponds agreed and breached their planning approval (North Kesteven District Council Board representative was noted – Cllr A Hagues). The Chief Executive further noted that the concept of Schedule 3 of the Floods and Water Management Act 2010 was that all developments would have to attenuate down to green field rates. This is not currently in place in England (it is in Wales), the previous government were trying to progress it, however, any developments since 2012 haven't had to work to this condition. It also means that anything built from 2012 onwards doesn't count towards benefits to attract funding.

Mr M Rollinson also noted that the Board also have no idea of the impact of the Highland Carriers.

The Projects Director added that he doesn't believe that the impact of the Board's Emergency Response Plan has been taken into consideration by the modelling carried out by the EA. It being confirmed that very minimal pumping was done for 48 hours during this event.

Mr M Rollinson noted that in discussion with Mr M Sly, he believes the Board need to do everything to either get it re-commissioned or purchase.

The Chief Executive noted that he has spoken with Ms K Samms (EA), Morgan Wray (EA), Amy Shaw (Fens 2100+), Norman Robinson (Fens 2100+), Alan Lovell (EA Chairperson) about this so has tried to escalate it as much as possible.

Mr M Rollinson noted his concern that the system responded quicker, with less rainfall and this is going to become more frequent with the effects of global warming. The Projects Director noted the catchment study being completed and that climate change is a factor considered on this.

Mr M Rollinson noted that he is in the Board Officer's WhatsApp group and so can see all the effort and time put in by Board employees, thanking them for this.

The Projects Director noted the catchment study being completed and that climate change is a factor considered on this. It has already been outlined that Swineshead Pumping Station could potentially have 10% increase in pumping capacity, but if there is no way of increasing the capacity of the SFFD then what is the point in increased pumping capacity. It was noted that if the SFFD is widened / deepened through the Lincs Reservoir this would increase capacity.

The Chairperson questioned how many times the record level of the SFFD has been exceeded since the EA's modelling was completed? It was confirmed four times. Cllr D Middleton noted that an independent inquiry has been completed on some EA modelling done for Horncastle and has shown that the figures used were not accurate or correct. The Chief Executive noted that Innes Thomson (ADA Chief Executive) used to work for the EA in the Hull area where there was some modelling done for a barrier in that area. The council didn't agree with it and wanted the EA to check the modelling. When the modelling was checked it was found that the EA consultant had based the modelling on perfectly smooth banks of watercourses with no allowance for any drag friction. With the re-done modelling it proved a different outcome and that there was a need for the barrier to be built. The Chief Executive outlined his point that 40 properties have been flooded in Boston directly from the SFFD because it was tide-locked, and the water couldn't discharge; so therefore, the modelling needs reviewing based on this.

Reference was made to Richard Tice (MP), it being noted that the Board's Officers have had a meeting with him, and providing him with as much information as possible, including the Incident Report and Executive Summary presented today. Gareth Davies (MP) has also been in touch requesting any information that may be helpful to him.

Mr M Leggott noted that the EA Skerth Drain at Billingham (outside Board area) was overtopping in the early morning hours, where the EA invested a lot of money into building the bank up.

The Projects Director noted that he has only today been informed of overtopping at Swaton, which the Board were not aware of, outlining the importance of notifying us, Lincs County Council and the EA Flood Line. It can also be reported on Fix My Street.

(b) Ignoring of Road Closures

Mr M Leggott noted that he was speaking to one of the Board's 360 Excavator operatives completing works on the North Forty Foot Drain (NFFD) banks recently, where there was a road closure in place. However, Mr M Leggott noted that there were multiple cars that ignored or moved the road closure signs and came through. The excavator operator noted his concern for a potential collision.

It was noted that access must be allowed to residents and the Maintenance Director is aware of it.

Mr M Leggott noted other road closure cases where Lincolnshire Police have put CCTV in operation. Mr C Wray noted that the best deterrent is cameras. The Chief Executive concluded that the Board's Officer's will look at options to secure the work site (possible Heras fencing) or camera options.

(c) Realignment of Towns Drain (Quadrant development)

Cllr P Bedford questioned if there is any progress on this matter? The Projects Director noted that Chestnut Homes (developer) was notified of the three options as directed by the Board and no response has been received. Cllr P Bedford noted his concern about how close the development is getting to the drain.

(d) Hare courser's vehicle in South Forty Foot Drain

Cllr P Bedford noted that he saw on the news that a hare courser's vehicle ended up in the South Fort Foot Drain (SFFD) earlier this week? It was noted that it was in a feeder drain.

(e) Culvert work

Mr M Leggott noted that an under-road culvert has been blocked off at Cheetham's Lane and wondered why. The Projects Director noted that he is not involved with day-to-day operations and so Mr M Leggott to discuss with the Maintenance Director.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 16:03.