

# **BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

## **MINUTES**

of the proceedings of a Meeting of the Board

held at the Offices of the Board on  
11<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 2pm

### **Members**

Chairperson - \* Mr P Holmes

Mr W Ash	* Mr G Atkinson
* Mr T Ashton	* Mr V Barker
* Cllr P Bedford	* Cllr A Dorrian
* Cllr M Geaney	* Cllr A Hagues
* Cllr Z Lane	* Mr M Leggott
* Cllr D Middleton	* Mr M Mowbray
Cllr A Iazard	* Mr R Needham
* Mr P Robinson	Mr M Rollinson
* Cllr C Rylott	Cllr D Scoot
Cllr B Pierpoint	Cllr S Welberry
* Mr C Wray	Cllr N Drayton

\* Member Present

In attendance: Mr D Withnall (Chief Executive)  
Mrs A Chamberlain (Finance & Admin Director)

#### 2421 Recording the Meeting - Agenda Item 1

Members were informed that the meeting would be recorded.

#### 2422 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 2

Apologies for absence were received from the Projects Director, Maintenance Director, Mr M Rollinson, Mr W Ash, Cllr A Iazard, Cllr B Pierpoint, Cllr D Scoot, Cllr N Drayton, Cllr S Welberry.

#### 2423 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3

No declarations of interest were received.

#### 2424 Minutes of the last Board meeting - Agenda Item 4

The Minutes of the last meeting of the Board held on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024, copies of which had been circulated, were considered and it was AGREED that they should be signed as a true record.

(a) Policy No. 01: Risk Management Strategy – Risk 8.9 Loss of Rating Records – Minute 2402(a)

The Finance & Admin Director confirmed that the current Drainage Rate System is scheduled to be updated week commencing 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

(b) IDB Recovery Funding - Minute 2403(b)(a)

The Chief Executive gave an update as follows:

- Pumping Station Refurbishments (Helpringham, South Kyme, Dunsby, Ewerby, Dyke Fen, Pinchbeck)
  - Electrical panels have been purchased and received but not yet installed.
  - Motors have been purchased and due to be received but not yet installed.
  - Upgrade to supply is required from National Grid due to moving to variable speed motors, which requires applying for a new supply. It is currently proving difficult to get National Grid and the motor manufacturer communicating to be able to establish the requirements of the new supply. It is hoped that this can be achieved and the agreements in place prior to 31 March 2025 so that the invoice is received before the deadline date for funding (31/03/25).
- Donington Northorpe Culvert Repair
  - Order had been placed with a contractor, but due to difficulties are now looking to place the order with a new contractor.
- Donington Northings Alternative Access Track
  - This work commenced last week and will remove the need to cross the railway, which will eliminate that health and safety risk.
- Catchment Wide Bank Slips
  - As at w/c 13 January 2025, the current spend on slips is £502,000 of the £705,000 awarded. In addition there is £100,000 worth of material in stock.

The Chief Executive confirmed the amount awarded to the Board in Tranches 1 and 2 is £3.2million, with a spend deadline of 31 March 2025. Applications have been submitted to Tranche 2b for £4.9million, to be spent by 31 March 2026.

(c) Planning & Enforcement Officer Vacancy – Minute 2403(c)(v)

A Planning & Enforcement Admin Officer has been recruited, due to commence employment on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

It was noted that the previous Chief Executive and current SLWP Consultant, Ian Warsap, has been asked to temporarily step in as a Planning & Byelaw Consultant to help with the workload until the new recruit starts and gets trained. His time will be paid for from the Development Reserve account.

(d) South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) Contract – Minute 2403(c)(vi)

It was confirmed that the SKDC Public Sector Cooperation Agreement is now in place.

(e) Highland Water Claim – Minute 2403(c)(vii)

The RFCC have agreed that they will pay the shortfall for the current financial year. It has also been assured at the Local Choices meeting that the full Highland Water claim will be paid next year.

(f) Flyswat – Boston Borough Council – Minute 2403(c)(viii)

The Flyswat meeting has now been held, with the current arrangement being that the Board have to go and remove any fly tips from the watercourse and leave on the side for collection from the council. It is currently being considered whether it would be better value for money to have a skip in the depot to recover the fly tip to, due to having to attend site to remove it from the watercourse anyway. The Board's Officer's will engage with the Flyswat team when considering this decision.

(g) Plant budget - 8" pump - Minute 2403(c)(ix)

The Board's second new 8" pump has now been delivered and used during the recent January 2025 event, in which it performed well.

(h) Period 06 Management Accounts - Minute 2405(a)

The repairs to the solar panels at Chain Bridge have now been repaired and are functioning as they should.

(i) Plant - Hooby – Minute 2408(a)

It was noted that the Projects Director is getting prices for a Hooby, Twiga and Herder One to compare value for money.

2426 To receive the unconfirmed minutes of the Executive Committee meeting - 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025 - Agenda Item 6

The Chairperson presented the Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025, copies of which had been circulated. The Board RESOLVED that the Minutes should be received.

Matters arising:

(a) Pumping Station Structural Review (Swineshead Pumping Station) - Minute 2415(a)

The Chief Executive confirmed that indicative funding has been achieved of £6.3million through Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA). The Chief Executive further noted that the FDGiA programme has been shortened from a six-year programme to a five-year programme. Therefore, for the schemes that can't be delivered in the new time scale, the funding has been relinquished into next year (2025/26).

The Board's Officer's have negotiated that the £970,000 allocated to Gosberton Pumping Station will instead be used to make a start on developing the replacement of Swineshead Pumping Station.

(b) IDB Recovery Funding – Minute 2415(b)

The Chief Executive confirmed the following in relation to the IDB Recovery Funding:

- Tranche 1: £25million available – Board achieved £2.7million. To be spent by 31 March 2025.
- Tranche 2: £31million available – Board achieved £500,000. To be spent by 31 March 2025.
- Tranche 2b: £19million available – Board applied for £4.9million (results due 28 February). To be spent by 31 March 2026.

The Chairperson noted how commendable it is that the Board has achieved this.

(c) 2024/25 Plant Budget - Minute 2415(e)

Additional funding (c£15,000) for a ramp to use over pipes across roads with the 8" mobile pumps was requested from the IDB Recovery Funding and approved which is now being manufactured by Mastenbroek.

(d) Review of HR Policies - Minute 2419

The Chief Executive highlighted to the committee that the Board doesn't have a detailed maternity policy, and so is currently producing one, in line with other IDB's and Boston Borough Council maternity policy, to be reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee at their next meeting. The Executive Committee have reviewed the pay element of this and agreed to an occupational maternity pay scheme in addition to the statutory maternity pay.

Cllr A Dorrian questioned if this new policy will entail parental leave? The Chief Executive noted that that is covered by statutory regulations within the White Book.

(e) Ignoring of Road Closures - Minute 2420(b)

Mr M Leggott raised his concern about this matter, it being noted that it has been added to the next agenda for the Health & Safety Committee to discuss.

Mr M Leggott noted that he wasn't impressed by the traffic management company, noting he has three of their signs that he has removed from watercourses. The Chief Executive responded that the signage should be as required, and the suggestion will be to set up a sterile area with heras fencing so there is no option for traffic to come through.

(f) Heavy Rainfall Event – January 2025 - Minute 2420(a)

This item should be read in conjunction with Minute 2431.

Cllr D Middleton noted the good work around the useful documents produced and discussions had around the January 2025 rainfall event, noting his concern that it needs to go forward and reach further afield to become meaningful.

The Chief Executive noted that the Board have engaged with the Environment Agency (EA) who have acknowledged that they will run scenarios (not re-doing the modelling) to compare with the 2018 modelling to see if the modelling outputs did happen in reality. However, it is already known that what the modelling showed didn't happen as more properties and more agricultural land was flooded than the 2018 modelling outlined.

The Chief Executive continued that following Storm Henk last year, the Board engaged with the EA asking them to revisit the 2018 modelling, which they didn't. The Chief Executive spoke with EA Local Officers, Regional Officers, the Chair of the EA to try and express that the modelling was not showing true of what was happening on the ground.

The Chief Executive continued that three senior EA employees met with the Board's Officer's last week and have been given all the information the Board have in relation to the recent event to feed into running the scenarios against the modelling.

It was further noted that Richard Tice MP has also been provided with the information, but the Chief Executive has not had any response. However, Richard Tice MP has engaged with the EA. Gareth Davies MP has also been in contact and expressed he will be following it up in parliament.

The Chairperson noted that due to it happening in reality, and it not just being based on theory, it will hopefully have some more weight and support. Further adding that the water level of the SFFD at Black Hole Drove has had the record level broken four times since the modelling was done in 2018.

Cllr D Middleton noted his dismay that there was no EA staff member on site overnight to manually operate the sluice door.

The Chief Executive noted his concern that the Board has been very proactive in working with the EA, who provide the Board with a lot of Public Sector Cooperation Agreement (PSCA) work and doesn't want it to feel like everybody is 'against the EA', noting that it is a partnership even though they are EA assets and EA responsibility.

2427 To adopt the Executive Committee Terms of Reference - Agenda Item 6

The Board RESOLVED that the Executive Committee Terms of Reference be adopted.

2428 To consider the financial reports from the Executive Committee meeting - Agenda Item 6

Special Levy

The Chief Executive highlighted that the Executive Committee are proposing that the penny rate be set at 19.59p in the £, which is an increase of 3.98% for 2025/26. Originally, it was expected that the increase would have to be in the order of 7.5%, however, due to the IDB Recovery Funding received, the Board have been able to reduce this accordingly.

The Chief Executive noted that the biggest concern in relation to this increase was with North Kesteven District Council (NKDC), due to them having large developments being moved from agricultural to special levy, resulting in a total increase for them of 41.49%. Board's Officers have engaged with NKDC who have confirmed that they are receiving income from the two large developments through business rates (solar park and holiday park). It being noted that in total, across the whole Board catchment, 134 acres have been developed and therefore transferred to special levy. The Chairperson referenced the apportionment of the rate, 47.62% being drainage rates and 52.38% being special levy, and how quickly the special levy apportionment is increasing, showing how much land is being developed.

#### Electricity

The Chief Executive highlighted that the amount included in the budget for electricity has been calculated using the October 2024 rates, £517,592, which is based on an average year's consumption.

The Chief Executive next referred to electricity costs noting that standing charges alone for 2025/26 are £152,000, comparing this to only 2020/21 where the total bill (standing charges and consumption) was only £121,000. There is currently an ongoing Ofgem consultation which will hopefully recognise the impact on IDBs and similar industries, known as "Peaky" users

#### Employers National Insurance increase

The Chief Executive next referred to the increase in Employers National Insurance contributions. For the office/admin-based employees, this is an increase 26.47%. For the workforce, this is an increase of 37%, totalling a c£40,000 increase in total.

#### Development Reserve

With an estimated closing balance of £623,643 at 31 March 2025, this is where the consultant's time completing Planning & Byelaw work will be funded from.

#### Plant Replacement

Mr V Barker raised his concern and questioned whether enough money is being allocated for the various plant items? The Chief Executive confirmed that the account allows for 5% annual compound inflation. The Chairperson also reminded the Board that it is a continually reviewed document, adding that if the value of plant increases, the trade-in value will also usually increase.

#### Electricity Analysis October 2024

The electricity figures of a dry year, average year and wet year were highlighted. It also being highlighted that the analysis included within the agenda it just a summary and it is a large piece of detailed work to be able to produce this analysis.

The Chairperson thanked the Chief Executive, Finance & Admin Director and team for their work on the budgets. Highlighting that it aids with transparency and explanation for the annual increase.

#### Winter Drain Maintenance and Bushing Works

Cllr D Middleton noted the winter drain maintenance and bushing works being deferred in order to concentrate on completing the IDB Recovery Fund works, noting his concern around the importance of these works and them not ever getting completed? The Chief Executive clarified that some money has been left in the budget for March and April (wouldn't usually complete desilting in April). Due to now

having a Site Engineer it will also be more accurate in prioritising watercourses requiring desilting due to the Engineer being able to take silt measurements.

### Board aims

The Chief Executive reminded the committee of the Board’s aims as below:

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 £1,747,814 which is achieved at £1,828,128 in the tenth year.
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 reports were considered and noted:

- Budget and Ten-Year Estimates Report
- Budget with Ten Year Estimates
- 2025/26 Summary budget by month
- 2025/26 Detailed budget by month
- 10 Years Schemes Budget
- 2024/25 Wages on cost reserve budget
- 10 Year Plant Replacement budget
- 2025/26 Cumulative Solar Panel Report
- Electricity analysis October 2024
- Bourne Fen Farm Rate Alleviation

## 2429 To receive the Quarter 3 forecast and Period 09 Management Accounts - Agenda Item 7

### Quarter 3 Forecast

The Finance and Admin Director highlighted the following:

- Grant income has been rephased to match when it is expected to receive the IDB Recovery Fund claims and scheme claims.
- Rechargeable income has been removed due to focusing on completion of the IDB Recovery Fund work.
- IDB Recovery Fund – Dunsby Fen PS refurbishment has had an additional £60,000 claimed to complete works.
- IDB Recovery Fund – Pinchbeck PS refurbishment has had a reduction of £31,000 claimed to complete works, as it was not required
- Electricity – the remaining balance from Pumping Station Maintenance has been used for the remainder of the year to allow for additional electricity costs expected

- Admin salary has been increased for Period 10 due to the discretionary payments for the CEO and Directors for the emergency working in January 2025.
- Summary – forecasting to gain an additional £1,137,795 for the reserves compared to budget at the end of the previous financial year, namely due to the IDB Recovery funding and reduced drain maintenance expenditure due to focusing on IDB Recovery works.

#### Period 09 Management Accounts

The Finance and Admin Director highlighted the following:

- 99.31% of Drainage Rates have now been collected, the remaining six accounts are currently with the Rossendales (bailiffs). These are, typically, repeat offenders and usually costs are successfully recovered.
- Solar income – repair works at Chain Bridge are now completed and fully functional again.
- IDB Recovery Fund - £1,226,113 has been spent to date, which is expected to significantly increase over the next few months.
- Electricity was £30,123 more than budgeted for the period, it is expected to be more than budgeted for again in January (Period 10).
- Drain maintenance is currently £102,386 underspent YTD due to focus being on IDB Recovery Fund works.
- The outstanding sales invoice from October 2024 has now been settled.

#### 2430 To receive the Anglian Water Consultation Summary and holding message - Agenda Item 8

The Chief Executive reminded the Board that the Board submitted a response to the most recent consultation. The response supported the South Lincolnshire Water Partnership (SLWP) with their aims from a leisure, ecology etc. point of view, but mainly focused on the elements that would most impact the Board. The Chief Executive explained that there has been no independent detailed feedback, but that the Board's response is obviously reflected within this feedback summary.

The Chief Executive referred the Board to the fourth page of the summary, and the references within this to the '*effects of reversing the natural flow of the South Forty Foot Drain (SFFD)*' and '*the potential impacts of the pumping stations on local communities*', which were items raised by the Board. The Chief Executive also referred to further in the document, with multiple references to flood risk, water levels, pumping stations etc., therefore noting that he is confident Anglian Water are taking into consideration the Board's feedback and will want to work with the Board in the future.

The element that still hasn't had a decision on is whether it is going to be an open or piped transfer, however, ultimately, this probably won't impact on the Board a great deal, the element of most interest and impact to the Board is water levels in the SFFD.

Mr R Needham noted that he knows of somebody that has been contacted about a pipe transfer who was of the opinion that it was a 'done deal' and the piped transfer will be going ahead. The Chief Executive noted that Anglian Water have always stated that a piped transfer would be their preferred option.

#### 2431 To receive an update on the January 2025 heavy rainfall event - Agenda Item 9

This item should be read in conjunction with Minute 2426(f).



The Chairperson noted the Board's thanks to the Chief Executive for producing this detailed report on the January 2025 high water level event.

The Chief Executive stated by emphasising that only 45.4mm of rainfall was received which, ordinarily, would not cause the level of issue that it did. However, there was also snow melt (3 inches in highland area) to take into consideration and the ground being frozen for a prolonged period of time, leading to a quicker run off rate.

The Chief Executive next noted that the rain was expected the day before and wasn't expected when it came overnight on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> through to Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January. The Board activated the Emergency Response Plan at 8:32am on the morning of 6<sup>th</sup> January.

The Chief Executive noted the infrastructure challenge with the sluice gate at the Black Sluice Complex, explaining that the gearbox had broken meaning it could only be operated manually until a new gearbox could be fitted (lead time of four weeks). Unfortunately, there was nobody on site to operate it overnight on the 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> until between 6am and 7am that morning and so a lot of the discharge period (about 4 hours) had been missed. Therefore, the starting water levels of the SFFD were higher.

Mr M Leggott referred to the operating procedure for the Black Sluice Complex provided to the Board, questioning if it had been adhered to? The Chief Executive noted that it is a very summarised document, and their full operating plan is a very large document.

It was confirmed that if an Environment Agency (EA) operative had been there overnight to operate the sluice gate and discharge, the starting water levels would have been lower, however, the rain was not forecast or expected.

Cllr C Rylott noted that the Board visited the Black Sluice Complex site in 2018/19, and it had to be questioned then why the gates weren't open? It was confirmed that the gates have been automated since then. It was confirmed that the Black Sluice Complex is made up of the sluice gate, which is open partially at all times and then, usually, is raised automatically to discharge during low tides. The purpose of this gate is to limit flow out of the SFFD for EA environmental purposes. In addition, there are the pointing doors, which open themselves from water pressure. The Chief Executive highlighted that during this event, the doors opened against a high tide as the pressure of the SFFD was so high.

Cllr A Dorrian highlighted her concern around the EA gearbox malfunction and questioned if this has been discussed between Board Officer's and EA Officer's at all?

referring to the log from the 18/12/2024 about the broken gearbox, questioning what was done at this point? It was confirmed that at this point, they managed to locate a refurbished gearbox to be able to operate it manually, as opposed to not at all.

Mr R Needham therefore questioned how long it has been completely inoperable for? The Chief Executive confirmed that it had been inoperable for three days prior to be the Board being informed on 18/12/2024 (the Board were only informed at this point because heavy rainfall was forecast) and a further three days until the refurbished gearbox was fitted, so six days in total.

Cllr T Ashton questioned if this was the same gearbox that failed in 2017? It was confirmed that this was a separate issue with the nav lock and had to manually open the pointing gates, this has been upgraded now and the Nav lock pointing doors operate automatically when in free flow mode in the winter months, when navigation is not required.

Cllr T Ashton continued that with Storm Henk and this January 2025 event, there are two clear incidences where having the Black Sluice Pumping Station (Boston) operational would have made a significant difference to the amount of water that could have been discharged from the system and significant benefit to those properties and land flooded.

Cllr T Ashton added that the Board has got to deal with the EA as it is, rather than the ideal EA that the Board would like to see. Continuing that the EA is limited financially, and finance will therefore govern every decision the EA makes. The EA has no way of generating extra funding.

Cllr T Ashton continued that the EA has a major reputational challenge in light of the decommissioning of the pumping station, with the history of the station making it clear why it was required in the first instance.

Cllr T Ashton noted that he hopes the EA listen to and consider the evidence being shown, but that he is deeply sceptical that they will operate the Black Sluice Pumping Station (BSPS) again. Culturally, he believes it would be too big of a step to admit they (EA) were wrong to decommission it and will, financially, struggle to justify the cost of recommissioning and continuing operation. Cllr T Ashton therefore suggested it may be worthwhile to revisit the options the Board has in relation to the running of the Black Sluice Pumping Station (Boston)? Perhaps in collaboration with the EA and other partners?

The Chairperson acknowledged the point of Cllr T Ashton but argued that if the EA can't find the funding, how will the Board find that funding. Cllr T Ashton noted that the EA are not in a position to raise money, the Chairperson responded that the Board would have to borrow the money, adding the cost of the maintenance of the building alone, before even considering the pumps.

The Chief Executive noted that the Board would require an extensive capital amount of money to be able to convert the current diesel pumps to electric, which wouldn't attract much grant funding. There may be some local levy funding available from the RFCC, but the Board would have to look at borrowing the majority from the Public Works Loan Board. The Chief Executive added that Swineshead Pumping Station is estimated at £20million (9 cumecs), compared to Black Sluice Pumping Station (Boston) being a minimum of 30 cumecs to make it worthwhile. The Chief Executive concluded that this would put a large financial pressure on the Board.

Mr M Leggott added the cost of a neighbouring IDB's replacement pumping station, which is costing £90million.

Mr V Barker referenced the two newer pumps, suggesting it may be an option to take those pumps out and give a clear channel, increasing discharge when the tide is out. The Chairperson acknowledged this but noted that to make a difference pumping is required during high tides.

The Chairperson added that when the EA generated their modelling, the recovery time of the SFFD was good, noting that at that time, flash flooding wasn't being seen like it is now and it is the immediate recovery of the SFFD that is the concern, not the long term.

Mr V Barker noted that he believes where the barrier is located, there is a neck on the discharge.

It was confirmed that the 2018 EA modelling shows that by decommissioning the Black Sluice Pumping Station (Boston) flooding could occur to small amounts of agricultural land and five properties. This January, 36 properties flooded and c700-800 acres of agricultural land. They have now agreed to run a new scenario with the information now available and compare to the model.

Cllr A Dorrian noted that when the EA modelling was carried out, it was noted within the report about remedial flood defence works to the five properties, questioning if that work was carried out? It was confirmed that the Board's Officer's were not aware if it was completed.

The Chief Executive also added that the Board were not informed of the detail of the EA modelling was not known, e.g., siltation levels, bushes holding water up, it being allowed for the Board reducing pumping etc. For this event, they (EA) have been given all the data and information to use in the running of the scenario which will hopefully therefore give accurate results.

Mr R Needham noted that he attended a farmer's meeting with the EA yesterday, at which the EA emphasised that the decision to decommission the Black Sluice Pumping Station (Boston) was a joint decision between the EA and the Board. The Chief Executive confirmed that this is factually incorrect and has informed EA Officer's of this, with them (EA) stating that it was a joint decision between themselves, the Board, Boston Borough Council and Lincolnshire County Council. The Chief Executive acknowledged that the Board were involved but were opposed to it being decommissioned but had to accept it due to there being no other financially viable option, which is within the Board's meeting minutes. Concluding that the Board, and no other body, has the power to make a decision on an EA asset.

The Chairperson questioned if Boston Borough Council would have any meeting minutes with their discussion about the decommissioning from 2018? Cllr A Dorrian responded that, yes, she will look into it, agreeing with the Chief Executive that Boston Borough Council were merely a stakeholder with no power to decommission another organisation's asset.

Cllr D Middleton questioned the 'next steps' in relation to this? The Chief Executive referred to the recommendations at the end of the Executive Summary document, as listed below:

- Repairs to Black Sluice Complex Sluice Gates
- Dunsby Bank repairs
- Quadring Bank repairs (The EA have given notification to access to complete repairs at Quadring).
- Hodge Dyke Bank repairs (Ewerby Fen PS)
- Head Dyke Bank repairs (South Kyme PS)
- Trinity College Bank repair

- Damford PS Bank repair (This has been separated out as a standalone scheme, a quote has been received from a contractor (Balfour Beatty) through the government framework, they quoted c£600,000. The Board has also gone out to market independently (without the government framework) and have received quotes to be able to complete the work for £102,000. This has been included in Tranche 2b. The Chief Executive noted that this is contributing to the reasoning as to why the EA can't find enough funding, because they are having to pay more than normal by having to use the government framework and comply with treasury rules.

It was confirmed that these documents and information within is public.

The Chairperson noted the Board's consideration to turning off Cooks Lock and Chain Bridge Pumping Station and the decision not to, noting that it was a difficult decision to make, knowing it would either cause flooding in those areas or cause further issues upstream.

Mr C Wray questioned whether it may be worthwhile discussing with National Grid due to their significant amount of infrastructure located near the SFFD. The Chief Executive explained that anything built after 2012 must build their own flood resilience into it.

The Chairperson concluded by highlighting the levels and calculations displayed on the final page of the report, emphasising that if the SFFD had not started at the higher level it did, the impacts could have been less, and property not flooded, inviting final questions or comments.

Mr V Barker noted the vital point that it wasn't a great amount of rainfall received, and it flooded, noting the concern if a lot of rainfall had been received. The Chief Executive suggested that the scenario being run should perhaps look at the outcome if more rainfall had been received or if the Board couldn't stop pumping because the system was full etc.

Cllr Z Lane questioned if the Board will see this modelling? The Chief Executive noted that the Board were not shown the detail of the first modelling in 2018.

Cllr T Ashton added that change in weather patterns and sea level rise will mean this sort of event becomes more frequent. Adding that the pumping station is already there, it hasn't got to be built, it just needs to be fuelled and ready to go when needed.

Cllr D Middleton questioned if those properties that were flooded could sue the EA for negligence because of the failure of the gearbox and therefore lack of discharge of water? The Chief Executive explained that the EA have the same permissive powers that the Board have; they can do something if they want to, but they have no legal obligation to do anything. Giving a Board example, the Board could perhaps be found negligent if a dam was left in place and flooding was caused, for instance.

#### 2432 To review the Risk Register - Agenda Item 10

The following risks, with a risk score of 6, were discussed:

##### *1.1(b) – Fluvial flooding from failure of overtopping of defences*

The Chief Executive felt this can't be considered for lowering currently, due to Quadding and Dunsby banks not yet repaired.

Mr M Leggott noted that the EA have recognised that there are issues with the River Slea and Lower Witham that could also impact on the Board.

*1.1(c) Flooding from failure of IDB pumping stations or excess rainfall*

The Chief Executive felt that due to the compromise of some of the Board's pumping stations this risk can't yet be reduced.

*1.9 Insufficient finance to carry out works*

Despite the aid from the IDB Recovery Fund, the Chief Executive suggested this shouldn't be reduced yet due to the high electricity costs and standing charges, insurance costs and the frequency of rainfall events.

Mr M Leggott added that a neighbouring IDB have been subject to a cyber-attack last week and so the Board's cyber security measures will be looked at in detail at the next Audit & Risk Committee meeting.

2433 Reports on the following: - Agenda Item 11

(a) Monthly Accounts: (November 2024 - January 2025)

The Board's monthly accounts, inclusive of November 2024 - January 2025, were circulated.

The Board RESOLVED that this report be noted.

(b) Monthly Accounts: Woldmarsh

The Board's monthly Woldmarsh invoices, inclusive of October 2024 - December 2024, were circulated.

The Board RESOLVED that this report be noted.

(c) Schedule of Consents (November 2024 - January 2025)

The Chief Executive presented the Schedule of Consents, consisting of November 2024 - January 2025, copies of which had been circulated. Viking Link consents being in red.

The Board RESOLVED that this report be noted.

(d) Rainfall

The rainfall figures at Swineshead and Black Hole Drove were presented, copies of which had been circulated.

Mr V Barker noted that this report doesn't give detail of high volumes in short periods, i.e. daily amounts. The Chairperson acknowledged this, noting that the Board holds this information but would make the documents too lengthy to be included within the agenda.

The Board RESOLVED that this report be noted.

2434 Receive the draft minutes of the Joint ADA Lincs / Welland and Nene Branch Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024 - Agenda Item 12

The draft minutes of the Joint ADA Lincs / Welland and Nene Branch Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024 were noted.

2435 To authorise the Chairperson and Chief Executive to seal the Rate for 2025/26 - Agenda Item 13

It was RESOLVED that the Chairperson and Chief Executive be authorised to seal the Drainage Rate and Special Levies for the year 2025/26 as follows:

(a) Drainage Rates

	<u>Rate in the £</u>	<u>Estimated Amount of Drainage Rates Payable</u>
<b>Sub-District No 1</b> – Being so much of the said Internal Drainage District as comprises the area of the Borough of Boston as constituted and in existence immediately before 1 <sup>st</sup> April 1974.	<b>9.80p</b>	
<b>Sub-District No 2</b> – Being the remainder of the Internal Drainage District.	<b>19.59p</b>	
		<b>£1,618,556</b>

(b) Special Levies

Boston Borough Council	£ 1,293,006.22
South Holland District Council	£ 243,669.44
North Kesteven District Council	£ 148,316.10
South Kesteven District Council	£ 95,128.26
	<b>£ 1,780,120.02</b>

There being no further business the meeting closed at 15:37.