

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES

of the proceedings of a meeting of the Executive Committee

held at the Offices of the Board on
29th October 2014 at 2pm

Members

Chairman - * Mr M J Scott

* Cllr P Bedford	* Cllr M Brookes
* Mr R Leggott	* Mr K C Casswell
* Mr J R Wray	

* Member Present

In attendance: Mr I Warsap (Chief Executive)
Mr D Withnall (Finance Manager)

616 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

617 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

618 **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

Minutes of the last meeting held on 4th June 2014, copies of which had been circulated, were considered and it was agreed that they should be signed as a true record.

619 **MATTERS ARISING**

(a) **Sale of Carlton Road - Minute No 547(a)**

The Finance Manager informed the Committee that the sale of the Carlton Road offices had been completed on 1st September 2014 with proceeds of £200,000.

Estate Agents fees were £3,000 and Solicitor fees £750.

(b) **2014/15 Budget & 10 Year Estimates - Minute No 547(c)**

The Chief Executive informed the Committee that Mowbrays were in administration which is who the order had been placed with to build the secure storage area. New quotes have been sought using the Architect and Structural Engineering drawings previously sourced by Mowbrays.

The Chief Executive recommended to the Committee that the fee's for these drawings should be paid.

619 (b) Cont.....

The Committee RESOLVED that the Architect and Structural Engineer should be approached to ascertain if they were secured creditors with Mowbray's administrators and if not pay the fees due.

(c) Black Sluice Strategy following the Tidal Surge - Minute No 547(d)

In relation to the Culvert at Slippery Gowt the Chief Executive informed the Committee that he had met the FCC Environmental Company that run the site and we were close to agreeing works to protect the listed culvert.

The Board has also been contacted in relation to a scheme to increase the volume of the Wyberton Catchment which had previously been refused FDGiA by the Environment Agency. They have surplus funds for this type of work if it can be completed before the end of the current financial year. The Chief Executive has sent the report on the morning of the meeting and awaits their response.

(d) Rechargeable Works - Minute No 548(i)

The Chief Executive informed the Committee of an approach to the Board by Calders and Grandidge for the replacement of a private pipe which had been quoted as costing in the region of £150,000. There are no concerns as the Board has worked as a contractor to Calders and Grandidge in the past and the payment terms will ensure the costs incurred at any given time will have been paid for. We currently do not have a limit on rechargeable work that can be carried out without referring to the Board or Committee.

The Committee RESOLVED that any quotations accepted over the value of £40,000 should be referred to the Board or any Committee of the Board before work commences.

(e) Wages Oncost Reserve - Minute No 548(ii)

The Chairman enquired if the effectiveness of the reduction to 220% for internal works on the Wages On-Cost reserve as it seemed to have had little impact. The Finance Manager stated that in the four months since the adjustment the figures had been turned around so that £9,000 has been withdrawn from the reserve and this was expected to increase in the final 6 months of the year.

(f) Data Transparency Web Page - Minute No 549

The Finance Manager stated that the new Data Transparency page was to be constructed in the next week for it to be reviewed with the Internal Auditor when he visits next week.

(g) Solar Panels - Minute No 557

The Finance Manager informed the Committee that the Solar Panels on the head office roof were commissioned on 9th August 2014 and had been generating well with over 8,000kwh's generated to date at approximately 12p per kWh. In addition the electric bills appear to have reduced by about two thirds saving £400 per month.

The Committee requested that the other Pumping Station sites be investigated as to the viability of Solar panels being placed on the roofs.

620 TO RECEIVE THE EA ASSET TRANSFER REPORT - Agenda Item 4

The Chief Executive informed the Committee of an email received from Katharine Samms of the Environment Agency in response to an email sent requesting dates to be arranged for the joint discussions relating to the Black Sluice Catchment Study and the option of transferring assets to the Board's responsibility. The request has been forwarded to the new consultants, Mott MacDonald, and Katharine had enquired as to whether any further information was required to plug any data gaps.

The Officers and the Committee were both of the opinion that the data gaps were currently too extensive to be dealt with until the meetings had commenced as previously agreed and a strategy was agreed to work to going forward.

The Committee RESOLVED that the Chairman of the Board should write to the Chairman of the Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC), Mr Robert Caudwell, to seek his assistance in relation to the current stall from the EA that they state is due to the change in consultants.

621 TO RECEIVE THE PERIOD 6 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS & FORECAST - Agenda Item 5

The Finance Manager presented the Period 6 Management accounts and Forecast highlighting the following;

- Collection of drainage rates were £44,000 in advance of budget.
- £200,000 is included in Other Income for the sale of Carlton Road, This was expected in the previous financial year so is not reflected in the budget this year.
- Rechargeable Profit is not included in the budget as vast sums are not expected but can be realised if a fixed price job is completed more efficiently than quoted for.
- Overall Income is within £2,000 of Budget.
- Drain Maintenance is over spent compared to budget by almost £50,000 but this is a timing issue as Drain maintenance was completed in the early months of the year instead of the budgeted scheme works which will now be completed at the end of the year allowing Drain Maintenance to recover to budget levels.

- Pumping Station Maintenance is over spent by £19,000. £8,000 of this relates to electric which could be recovered if the volume of pumping over the winter months is not as excessive as it has been for the previous two years.
- Overall the Management Accounts and Forecast show that by the end of the financial year we expect to meet budget and may even be favourable as the electric expenditure has been budgeted based on the higher consumption of the past two winters.
- The Balance Sheet does not show any significant variances although the rate of Interest from Monmouthshire Building Society is set to be reduced 0.5% to 1.25%.

622 DRAINAGE RATES RECOVERY - Agenda Item 6

The Finance Manager presented the report and chart showing the collection rate of drainage rates over the past five years highlighted the change in profile and the fact that up to July this year we had collected £350,000 more than in 2010.

An amended timetable was proposed to the Executive Committee as the original proposal of the Committee had proven over ambitious.

	New Proposal for 2015/16
Rate Demand sent out	Early April
First Reminder (statement)	No later than end of June
First letter to chase payment	No later than end of July
Second letter to chase payment	Mid but not later than end of August
Request Summons from Court	End September but no less than 2 weeks prior to court date
Attend Court for Distress Warrants	Schedule mid October subject to changeable court booking rules

The Committee RESOLVED to accept the amended timetable above.

623 TO CONSIDER THE FIRST DRAFT OF THE 10 YEAR ESTIMATES - Agenda Item 7

The Finance Manager presented a first draft of the 10 year estimates and budget based on previously agreed rate increases and inflationary increases on other items of Income and Expenditure.

After discussion the Chairman stated that he was concerned about the level of balances at the end of 2015/16 and suggested a moratorium in the rate increases for two years. The Finance Manager explained this could result in more substantial increases being required in future years but would look at the possibility.

624 TO CONSIDER THE 8 YEAR PLANT ESTIMATES - Agenda Item 8

The Chief Executive presented the Eight Year plant estimates in a revised format which the Committee acknowledged was much easier to understand. Replacements for 2015/16 include a Twigga to replace the Claas Tractor and Herder Grenadier and 3 trucks to be replaced that are mostly used by the Operations Manager, Operations Supervisor and Pump Engineer.

The Committee requested the report be extended to include what was proposed to replace each vehicle.

The Committee RESOLVED that all Board vehicles are to include livery in future so they are easily identifiable, especially when on private property.

A question was raised as to whether the Jetter and Dump Trailer had been sold yet to which the Chief Executive responded he hoped they would be before the end of the financial year.

The Committee accepted the proposals and requested leasing options be investigated in relation to the replacement of the trucks.

625 TO CONSIDER THE BOARD'S OBJECTIVES, VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT - Agenda Item 9

The Chief Executive presented the draft Board Objectives and the Vision and Mission Statement.

The Committee RESOLVED that the Board's objectives be recommended to the Board.

The Committee requested the following adjustments to the Vision and Mission Statement and RESOLVED with the amendments they be recommended to the Board.

In the first paragraph "safer" be amended to "safe"

In the second paragraph delete "who know their specialist subject inside out"

In the third paragraph delete "With this in mind" and start with "Our mission....."

626 LONE WORKER DEVICES - Agenda Item 10

The Finance Manager presented the Lone Worker report and updated the Committee that Everything Everywhere had provided some quotes and because the line rental is substantially less on lone worker devices the overall cost of the contract, even with 10 new lines, is looking to be less than it is currently.

The Committee RESOLVED that the contract should be accepted immediately if these favourable terms are confirmed.

627 REVIEW OF SALARIES - 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 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

628 ANY OTHER BUSINESS - Agenda Item 12

(a) Board Members

The Chief Executive informed the Committee that Councillor Singleton-Maguire had not attended a meeting of the Board since 6th November 2013. The Land Drainage Act 1991 states;

“If an elected member of an Internal Drainage Board is absent from meetings of the board for more than six months consecutively, he shall, unless his absence is due to illness or some other reason approved by the board, vacate his office at the end of that six months.”

Councillor Bedford informed the Committee, in his role as a Councillor, that it is intended to replace Councillor Singleton-Maguire on the Board at the next full council meeting on 8th December 2014.

(b) The Quadrant Development - Wyberton

In response to a question posed from the Committee the Chief Executive explained that we had not done any further work in relation to the Quadrant Development but we had fed back that we still had concerns in relation to the straightening of the drain to run in line with the high voltage power cables.

(c) Welland & Deepings IDB - Board Members

At our Environmental tour Welland and Deeping's Board Members requested to be invited to the Works Committee tours to see how they operate with a view to implementing something similar with their Board. The Committee AGREED to this proposal.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4pm.