

# **BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

## **MINUTES**

of the proceedings of a Meeting of the Board

held at the Offices of the Board on  
Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2011 at 2:00pm

### **Members**

Chairman - \* Mr M J Scott

* Mr W Ash	* Cllr P Bedford
Mr J F Atkinson	* Cllr C Brotherton
* Mr V A Barker	* Cllr M Brookes
* Mr K C Casswell	Cllr D Dickinson
* Mr J Fowler	* Cllr Y Gunter
* Mr F W C Holmes	* Cllr A Puttick
* Mr R Leggott	* Cllr B Rush
* Mr P Robinson	* Cllr B Russell
Mr M Rollinson	* Cllr R Singleton-McGuire
* Mr J R Wray	* Cllr S Woodliffe

\* Member Present

In attendance: Mr S M Hemmings (Chief Executive)  
Mr D Withnall (Finance Officer)  
Mr I Warsap (Operations Manager)

The Chairman welcomed new Councillors from Boston Borough Council, who have been appointed to the Board, to their first meeting.

#### 970 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D R Dickinson and Mr M Rollinson.

#### 971 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Mr M J Scott declared an interest in Agenda Item 13(b). He also made members aware that a new declaration of interest form would be circulated in the near future.

#### 972 **MINUTES OF LAST BOARD MEETING**

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Board held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2011, copies of which had been circulated, were signed by the Chairman as a true record.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes should be received and adopted.

973 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Control of Badgers – Minute No 914(b)

The Chief Executive reported that he had spoken to Alistair Driver (EA) who accepted that badgers were now overprotected and that their numbers were not in danger. However it was unlikely that Defra would lower their level of protection and that no licences would be granted to cull.

The Chairman responded that progress needs to be made before watercourses are compromised due to badger damage.

(b) Dovehirm Drain – Minute No 914(c)

The Chief Executive reported that the soil has now been carted away and the scheme completed. The 6.0 metre wide strip adjacent to the drain is due to be grass seeded in the near future.

(c) Plant Replacement Fund – Minute 923(c)

The Chief Executive reported that the new Energreen machine has been delivered and was demonstrated to new members and guests on the recent Boston Area Tour. The Chief Executive presented a slide on the purchase amount which was agreed in February 2011.

The Chief Executive explained that the original price of £152,594 agreed in February had increased to £154,206 with the addition of Cruise Control, an Intelligent Float system and other items and the front mower being taken off the order.

The Operations Manager outlined that it is proposed to hire purchase a Votex front mower at a cost of £800 per month. The purchase will be completed in April 2012.

The Board confirmed their agreement to the increased price of the machine and the hire purchase of the Votex Mower.

974 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Chairman presented the minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2011 copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes should be received and adopted.

975 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Plant Purchases – Minute No 905

The Chief Executive reported that instead of the purchase of three Nissan Navara Accenta trucks which were approved in January 2011 two Isuzu trucks have been purchased for the Work Supervisors who preferred these in place of the Nissan and one Nissan truck for the Pump Engineer. The Isuzu trucks have been delivered and the Nissan truck is due next week.

The overall cost to change was £31,790. This was AGREED by the Board.

976 MINUTES OF THE NORTHERN WORKS COMMITTEE AND ENGINEERS REPORT

The Chairman of the Northern Works Committee Mr R Leggott presented the minutes of the last meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2011, copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes should be received and adopted.

977 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Frampton Towns Drain – Minute No 932(b)

The Chief Executive presented a slide showing the drain soon after the works had been completed and a recent picture which showed how the reeds were beginning to become established. The water flow through the centre of the drain is working well.

(b) Reconstruction of pipeline at Joy Paine Close – Minute No 933(c)

The Operations Manager reported that the reconstruction of this length of pipeline is complete.

Contributions had been received from Boston Borough Council, Mayflower and the landowner towards the cost of clearing the rubbish and cutting down the trees. Some extra works had been required to connect additional incoming pipes which had not been identified prior to the work commencing.

(c) Flood Risk at Wyberton Marsh & Kirton Marsh Pumping Station - Minute No 933(f)

The Chief Executive explained that an initial report had been made to the Northern Works Committee on the proposal to carry out works to reduce the risk that during a very high tide water could flow back through the discharge pipes and flood water could damage control panels and electric motors. The estimated cost of these works is approximately £50,000.

977 (c) Cont.....

It was AGREED that an application should be made to EA for grant aid towards the cost of these works, and a full report should be presented to the next meeting of the Northern Works Committee.

978 MINUTES OF THE SOUTHERN WORKS COMMITTEE AND ENGINEERS REPORT

The Chairman of the Southern Works Committee Mr K C Casswell presented the minutes of the last meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2011, copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes should be received and adopted.

979 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Purchase of Land at Six House Bank - Minute No 938(a)

The Chief Executive reported he had negotiated with the tenant who is now happy to proceed. Therefore the process of purchasing the land from the Lincolnshire County Council will now go ahead.

(b) Rookfield Farms - Minute No 939(j)

The Chief Executive reported that the agreed overflow which is to be constructed to allow water to overflow from the highland carrier into the Board's drain 18/4 (Horbling New Cut) when water levels were high, instead of flooding into Mr Coy's farm buildings has not yet been started. The EA are due to carry out the works in the next couple of months.

(c) Carr Dyke, Bourne - Minute No 941

The Chief Executive reported that he could confirm that 75 metres of the Carr Dyke south of Dyke is filled, so that all of the flow north of this discharges through Rippingale Running Dyke into the South Forty Foot Drain.

980 MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

The Chairman of the Environment Committee Mr J R Wray presented the minutes of the last meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2011, copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes should be received and adopted.

981 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Frampton Town Drain - Minute No 946(a)

The Chief Executive reported that the EA has not provided any dissolved oxygen level measurements as yet.

981 Cont.....

(b) Tom Tom - Minute No 946(d)

The Chief Executive reported that the new Tom Tom units have now been fitted.

(c) Wildlife Conservation Partnership - Minute No 948(e)

The Chairman referred to the Committee's recommendation that the Board should pay for three further pole mounted owl boxes at a total cost of £1,300. These would be placed adjacent to Board's drains at locations recommended by the Partnership.

The Board AGREED to the funding of three pole boxes.

982 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

The Chairman presented the minutes of the last meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2011 copies of which had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes should be received and adopted.

983 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Total Environment - Minute No 954(b)

The Chief Executive reported since the brief presentation he gave at the last meeting there have been no further developments.

(b) 2010/11 Accounts and Balance Sheet - Minute No 955

The Chairman informed the Board Members that the new audit regulations state that the Board are no longer subject to a full external audit which is a major change for this year. This does mean that the importance of the internal audit is greater.

(c) 2010/11 Internal Audit Report - Minute No 956

The Chairman stated that the Internal Audit Report had raised a number of issues, all of which had been answered by the management team. A number of these highlighted that internal controls were not rigorous enough due to the limited number of staff. This could only be rectified by employing additional staff, which would not be cost effective.

(d) Bonus Payments to Workforce - Minute No 959

The Operations Manager reported that after the proposals for bonus payments had been approved by the Executive Committee a pre season cutting brief meeting was held with the workforce. The bonus system was generally taken onboard and they agreed to this subject to the board approval.

983 (d) Cont.....

A question was raised on the bonus paid on SKDC contract; the Operations Manager explained that these drains had outfalls from sewers, and septic tanks.

(e) Compensation Claim – [REDACTED] – Minute No 960

The Chief Executive reported that following the decision by the Northern Works Committee to offer £200 compensation to [REDACTED], a formal complaint with a substantial claim of £3,500 had been received from Pygott and Crone on behalf of [REDACTED].

He stated that he had followed the complaints procedure and made a formal response to Pygott and Crone. He had found areas where the Board should pay additional compensation. After a number of discussions and with the agreement of the Executive Committee, an offer of £2,200 had been agreed, which included payment of expenses to Pygott & Crone which has been accepted.

(f) Renewable Energy – Minute No 961

The Chief Executive reported that the Executive Committee had considered the possibilities and merits of solar panels and wind turbines at Gosberton and Swineshead Pumping Stations.

It was AGREED that the Chief Executive should obtain at least three quotations for the installation of solar panels at Swineshead Pumping Station, and the Executive Committee should be delegated powers to approve the best quotation.

The Chief Executive was asked whether vandalism had been considered due to the remoteness of the station, and he stated that this would be discussed with NFU Mutual, our current insurers.

(g) Fly Tipping – Minute No 963(b)

Cllr Brookes informed the Board that a meeting was due to take place to further discuss how prisoners from North Sea Camp could help with the collection of rubbish from Board's drains, in addition to other areas of the Borough. It was AGREED that the Board should contribute approximately £2,000 towards the cost of the scheme.

(h) Maintenance of EA Watercourses

The Operations Manager informed the Board that an order has been received from the EA to undertake mechanical roding on a number of EA watercourses. This will provide £17,000 of income and will commence on 1 July 2011.

984 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS YEAR ENDING 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2011 – Agenda Item 6

The Finance Officer presented the 2010/11 Accounts to the Board. He highlighted the following points:

- (a) The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 came into force on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 and the Board are no longer subject to a full external audit and are only subject to a limited insurance audit.
- (b) On page 8 of the Statement of Accounts the accounting policies have been changed and the Board AGREED that pumping stations should be revalued every 10 years and other buildings every 5 years.
- (c) The Income & Expenditure Account: page 10 of the Statement of Accounts
  - The sundry income is £6,000 less than last year due to the highland water contributions being low.
  - The expenditure on drain maintenance is £27,000 less due to efficiency savings.
  - The expenditure on pumping stations is £43,000 less than last year due to savings following the fitting of smart meters which have lead to more accurate electric billing and the reclaiming of previous amounts overpaid.
  - The administration charges are £54,000 higher than last year due to the appointment of the Operations Manager and the implementation of the more extensive IT contract.
  - The miscellaneous charges are £19,000 higher than last year due to the purchase of the new server.
  - Overall the surplus on the general reserve is £63,000.
- (d) The Balance Sheet: page 11 of the Statement of Accounts - the depreciation has been removed from pumping stations and land & buildings.
- (e) The pension liability had been reduced by £1.3 million to £1,659,000. The employer contributions had been kept at 26.5% for 2011/12 but would increase to 28.5% in 2012/13 and 30.5% in 2013/14.
- (f) The Revenue Reserve has increased from £553,408 to £616,231, which was £74,000 more than had been budgeted. The Chairman considered that balances at this level were higher than were required.

It was RESOLVED that the Accounts should be approved and that the Chairman and Chief Executive should sign the Balance Sheet and Annual Governance Statement.

985 ANNUAL RETURN FOR YEAR ENDING 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2011 – Agenda Item 7

The Chairman presented the annual return to the Board.

It was RESOLVED that the report should be received and adopted and that the Chairman and Chief Executive should sign the Annual Return.

986 PERIOD 3 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AND FORECAST – Agenda Item 8

The Finance Officer presented the Period 3 Management accounts to the Board highlighting the following points:

The Period 3 Management Accounts were tabled and reviewed by the Committee with the following items being highlighted by the Finance Officer:

- (a) With the implementation of the new collection procedures in relation to drainage rates the board were two months ahead compared to previous years with £105,000 more being collected than in 2010/11. A graph was presented to illustrate this.
- (b) All other income is as expected.
- (c) Drain Improvement Schemes are overspent by £9,264 compared to budget. The Operations Manager reported that this was due to additional unexpected pipes being found on the Joy Paine Close scheme and new methods of constructing headwalls on the Hacconby Fen culvert reconstruction scheme.
- (d) Pumping Station Maintenance continues to show favourable compared to budget.
- (e) Drain Maintenance is adverse to budget and the Operations Manager attributes this to the intensive work undertaken in the Bourne Fen Catchment. It is expected this will improve in the cutting season.
- (f) Overall the Board's expenditure is £18,000 over budget.

Cllr Singleton-McGuire raised the issue of the investment with Santander in light of the amount of Euro based investment in Greece. The Chairman shared these concerns and pointed out that we are guided by the FSA recommendations for authorised depositors. The sum is due for review on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2011.

987 REVIEW OF BOARD POLICIES – Agenda Item 9

(a) Financial Regulations

The Finance Officer outlined the following amendments to the Financial Regulations:

- 9.2 – the addition of fixed term investments
- 10.4 – the annual financial statement should be approved by a meeting of the full Board in future years by 30<sup>th</sup> June.

987 Cont.....

(b) Risk Register Table

The Chief Executive presented the Risk Register Table which is to be reviewed at every Board Meeting. He highlighted the increase Risk level of “loss of telecoms” in the aftermath of loss of internet communication in May 2011 which caused considerable disruption. This register will be reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee at their next meeting.

(c) Emergency Flood Response Plan

The Chief Executive stated that the plan had been amended following Exercise Watermark, the national emergency exercise that had taken place in March.

Members commented that the “labour and machinery” on Page 21 looked to be out of date and needed revision.

A general discussion took place on emergency communication arrangements, and it was agreed that a review of the two way radio equipment should be carried out.

(d) Biodiversity Action Plan

The Chief Executive reported that the revised Biodiversity Action Plan had been reviewed by the Environment Committee and since then Chris Manning has rewritten the section on birds and invasive species.

It was RESOLVED that these policies should be received and adopted.

988 OFFICE MOVE TO SWINESHEAD DEPOT – Agenda Item 10

The Chief Executive presented the report which recommended that the Board should proceed with the relocation of the Board’s offices to the depot site at Swineshead.

The Operations Manager explained that further discussions had taken place with H H Adkins who were now able to offer an extension 5.0 metres deep for the same price if the existing toilets were not relocated.

The Chief Executive stated that the total estimated price of £281,470 would be financed by reducing pumping station improvements in 2012/13 and by lowering balances. Ultimately the Carlton Road site would be sold to restore balances.

Discussion took place on the recent valuation of £200,000 for Carlton Road, and the Chairman stated that the Board would expect to sell the site and building for more than this.

The Board unanimously AGREED to proceed with the project to move the office to Swineshead and construct an extension to the existing depot building.

989 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE – Agenda Item 11

The Chairman stated that it had been agreed at the last meeting to elect additional members onto the Audit & Risk Committee to ensure there was always a quorum.

It was AGREED that in future the membership of the Committee should consist of:

Two elected Members from the Northern Works Committee  
Two elected Members from the Southern Works Committee  
Three Appointed Members

It was also AGREED that the membership of the Committee should be:

Mr R Leggott, Mr J Fowler, Mr W Ash, Mr V Barker, Cllr R Singleton-McGuire, Cllr B Russell and Cllr M Brookes.

990 ADA LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH MEETINGS – Agenda Item 12

The Chief Executive presented the Branch Meeting Minute and Notes of the meetings held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2011 and 9<sup>th</sup> June 2011.

He highlighted the jointly organised stand at this year's Lincolnshire Show which by all accounts was a very successful event.

991 REPORTS – Agenda Item 13

(a) Monthly Accounts – Agenda Item 13(a)

The Board's monthly accounts which included January 2011 to May 2011, copies of which had been circulated, were AGREED.

(b) Schedule of Consents – Agenda Item 13(b)

The Chairman declared an interest in this item and the motion was passed to the Vice Chairman Mr K C Casswell to present to the Board.

Schedule of consents for Bye-Law Relaxations, Culvert Consents, Development Contributions and Tile Drainage Consents issued from January 2011 to June 2011 were presented, copies of which had been circulated, were AGREED.

(c) Rainfall – Agenda Item 12(c)

The rainfall figures at Swineshead and Black Hole Drove were presented, copies of which had been circulated. The Chief Executive reported that the daily rainfall amounts were now available on the Black Sluice website.

992 ANY OTHER BUSINESS – Agenda Item 14

(a) Water Retention

Cllr Russell raised the point that the Board should look into the concept of saving water in the means of storage rather than concentrate on pumping it away.

The Chief Executive responded by stating that the Board does raise water levels during the summer months, and makes every effort to help farmers and other ratepayers with schemes to abstract water for storage reservoirs.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 3:55pm.