

Minutes of the 56th meeting of the Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board held at Great Carlton Village Hall on Tuesday, 31st March 2009, at 2.00 p.m.

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| * Messrs M. Clark (Chairman) | * | Cllrs H. Marfleet (Vice-Chairman) |
| * G. Billings | * | G. Allan |
| W. Cooper | * | D.G. Andrews |
| G. Crust | * | C.J. Davie |
| R.J. Epton | * | S.W. Eyre |
| * T.H. Heys | * | C. Finch |
| * J.M. Mowbray | * | G.M. Gooding |
| * R.H. Needham | * | D. Hornby |
| N. Pike | | A. Howard |
| * P.W. Pridgeon | | P. Leivers |
| * D.R. Tagg | | R.J. Palmer |
| * R.A.D. Unsworth | | N.L. Pimperton |
| vacancy | * | M. Preen |
| | * | R.B. Shields |
- * Present
- * Messrs C. Hinchcliffe (Clerk and Chief Executive)
- * D.J. Sisson (Engineer)
- * M. Mitchell (Principal Engineer)
- * R.P. Mitchell (Director of Operations)
- * S. Thackray (Director of Finance)
- * In attendance

A presentation on the implementation of the Pitt proposals and the role of the upper tier authority had been given by Mr R. Wills (Lincolnshire County Council) to members prior to the meeting. The presentation gave a clear indication of the challenges and opportunities that would be facing the Board in the next five years. Mr Wills made clear that there was an increased role for the Board working in partnership with Lincolnshire County Council.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs M. Clark, R.J. Epton and Cllr N.L. Pimperton. Cllr H. Marfleet chaired the meeting in the absence of Mr M. Clark.

2. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was agreed to discuss the following items under any other business:

- (a) Association of Drainage Authorities meetings, and
- (b) Shoreline Management Plan.

RECEIVED

3. BOARD MINUTES (Pages 637 to 652)

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 27th January 2009 be confirmed as a correct record subject to Cllrs D.G. Andrews initials being corrected in minute 17, page 652.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Officers presented the following update:

4:1 Minute 4:1, Page 638 - Bridge over Mablethorpe Cut, Thacker Bank, Theddlethorpe

The report received from Lincolnshire County Council concluded that no weight limit was required and that the bridge could carry 40 tonne vehicles, however, the report recommended:

(a) that within two years remedial works be carried out at a cost of £25,000 to slow down decay, and

(b) that Key Clamp style handrails be fitted at an estimated cost of £5,000 as the bridge currently had no handrails.

An identical replacement bridge would cost approximately £190,000. Further information on the life expectancy of the current bridge after remedial work had been requested and would be reported to a future Board meeting. There was no budget provision for work during the current financial year.

4:2 Minute 4:5, Page 638 - Environment Agency Water Framework Directive Workshop

The Vice-Chairman, Engineer and Principal Engineer had attended the above workshop at Peterborough on 19th March 2009 covering the River Basin Management Plan for the Anglian Region.

At the workshop Mr D. Whiles from the Environment Agency commented on action plans for waterbody areas. Maps and action plans covering each internal drainage board were handed out although these were incorrect for the Lindsey Marsh area. Correct plans had been requested so that a response could be made. The ongoing issue that the waterbodies did not reflect the drainage board catchments remained, i.e. they had been based on flood maps, not catchments and could not be changed for six years.

The Association of Drainage Authorities would be looking at the document in detail and prepare a response which would be circulated to all boards and landowners and could be used as a template should they wish to submit individual responses. The National Farmers' Union would also be submitting a response. It was essential that responses to the document were made to register the problems.

All except one waterbody under the control of Lindsey Marsh were designated "Artificial"; one was designated "Heavily Modified", (the Cross Drain/New Drain in the Beirgate West catchment).

4:3 Minute 4:7, Page 638 - Works Supervisor's Report

A visual inspection of the piles at Trusthorpe pumping station had been undertaken. Surface rust was present but did not affect the structural integrity of the piles.

Due to the health and safety implications attached to treating the piles, tenders would be sought from suitable contractors for the work to be undertaken in the Spring of 2010. The estimated cost of the work was £12,000. The condition would be monitored regularly during the ensuing year to ensure there was no significant deterioration that would require the works to be brought forward.

4:4 Minute 14, Page 648 - Government Response to the Pitt Report

The Clerk would check with the Chief Executive and Leader of East Lindsey District Council to ensure that they were fully aware of the implications of the Pitt Report.

4:5 Minute 7, Page 640 - Cash Reserves and Investments

The Director of Finance had contacted East Lindsey District Council (Mr S. Larter) regarding early notification of banking problems and, unfortunately, it would not be possible to share information. The Director of Finance would be meeting with Mr Larter to discuss an alternative.

4:6 Minute 12:3, Page 644 - Flooding at Coppins Cottage, Habertoft

A full report would be presented to the May meeting for consideration.

4:7 Minute 12:8, Page 646 - Maltby le Marsh Flood Relief Scheme

An overview of the options would be reported to the May Board meeting.

RECEIVED

5. STAFFING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Clerk presented the attached minutes of the meeting held on 5th March 2009.

Mr P.W. Pridgeon reported that the Committee had discussed several options for the post of Chief Executive but had deferred a decision until further information could be provided. The possibility of joint working with North East Lindsey Drainage Board had been mentioned but this had not been discussed officially and there were still concerns about the legality of working arrangements with other boards. Mr D.R. Tagg had been unable to attend the meeting and requested a full update on the discussions at the meeting. The Clerk reported that the Board would need to start advertising for a Chief Executive in July 2009.

Mr T.H. Heys expressed concern about the increase in the employers' contribution to the superannuation fund and stated that the Board must have the full details before employing any staff. Mr D.R. Tagg agreed, stating that the Board had already made a decision to review this if contributions went above 25%.

Regarding the pay negotiations, Mr G. Crust reported that a 2.5% increase had been offered to staff.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the attached minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Resources Committee held on 5th March 2009 be approved,
- (b) that the Clerk approach North East Lindsey Drainage Board to discuss possible future joint working arrangements,
- (c) that a report on superannuation be prepared for consideration at the May Board meeting, and
- (d) that, if approved by the unions, the Board pay a 2.5% cost of living increase to all staff effective from 1st April 2009.

6. PLANT AND COMPENSATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Clerk presented the attached minutes of the meeting held on 9th February 2009.

The Director of Operations reported that the tractor had been shipped to Holland to be fitted with the new flail. In response to Cllr R.B. Shields, he confirmed that the cost of this was included in

the tender price.

Mr T.H. Heys thanked the Director of Operations for organising the site visit to view the works being undertaken by the Board and the Environment Agency on the Willoughby High Drain. A further visit to see the new machine working would be undertaken in July 2009.

Mr P.W. Pridgeon reported that the Environment Agency had estimated 18" of silt in the Willoughby High and this had turned out to be three feet. He stated that the Board would not have been able to successfully carry out the work on the upstream section if this had not been cleared. He stated that it was essential that the work was carried out on all the main drains.

Mr W. Cooper requested that the administration charge shown on the Board's invoices be included in the actual cost rather than shown separately. The Clerk agreed that this would be amended in the future.

Mr J.M. Mowbray enquired what additional capacity there was in the Willoughby High now that the silt had been removed. The Director of Operations reported that the water level at the upstream end had dropped by 18" and the Environment Agency had not broken through then. He stated that there would be a significant increase in capacity.

Mr R.A.D. Unsworth reported that a lot of mud had been taken out of the South Drain. Mr Needham reported that it had not yet made much difference at the Red Leas end, however, the Environment Agency was working at the other end at the moment. The Director of Operations reported that there should be a significant drop once the work had been completed.

Depot Alterations

The Clerk presented a breakdown of the cost of the alterations which totalled £93,500. In response to Mr T.H. Heys, the Clerk reported that £50,000 had been allowed in the estimates for the works, the remainder would be taken from balances. In response to Mr R.A.D. Unsworth, the Clerk confirmed that two containers would be provided for the storage of files etc and these would be sited on a concrete base and would be heated. Cllr C. Finch enquired whether the records could be electronically stored. The Clerk confirmed that current records were now electronically filed but it was still necessary to keep working papers and historical records. Mr W. Cooper enquired what effect the additional expenditure would have on the budget which the Board had agreed should be cash limited. The Clerk explained that the additional £43,500 would have to be taken from balances.

Cllr G. Allan queried the cost per square foot for additional office space. The Director of Operations explained that there were a lot of factors to take into consideration such as the space that would be made available in the hanger for the storage of equipment. Cllr Allan agreed that this was good value for money and an ideal storage solution. The Vice-Chairman stated that the Plant and Compensation Committee had viewed the office building at Strubby and agreed that the building was in a very poor state of repair. He further stated that the site was of strategic importance as it was outside the flood plain. The Clerk agreed, stating that during the receive emergency exercise, all emergency services had pulled back to Strubby. In response to Mr D.R. Tagg, the Clerk confirmed that a new build had been considered but it had been agreed that alterations would be easier and cheaper. In response to Mr R.H. Needham, the Clerk reported that a price had not yet been negotiated with the Environment Agency for the hire of space at Strubby.

Compensation Rates

Cllr G. Crust enquired what compensation rates were paid by other drainage boards. The Director of Operations reported that Witham Fourth District Internal Drainage Board did not pay compensation for reforming works, nor for going through standing crops for summer maintenance, however, the Board did own strips of land alongside all its major watercourses. If the Witham Fourth

board was undertaking a capital scheme, compensation would be negotiated with the landowner.

Mr P.W. Pridgeon reported that a review of whether or not to pay compensation had been undertaken by the Alford, Louth and Skegness boards when the consortium was formed as they all had difference practices. It was agreed then that it would be better to pay compensation to enable the Board to go through standing crops whenever necessary. This gave the Board more flexibility and proved more cost effective than leaving sections of watercourse and going back at a later date.

The Clerk was asked to prepare a paper on the cost of administering the payment of compensation.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the minutes of the meeting of the Plant and Compensation Committee held on 9th February 2009 be approved,
- (b) that administration charges be included in the cost of any works and not shown separately on invoices,
- (c) that the Board proceed with the alterations at Strubby depot at a cost of £93,500 (£50,000 allowed in the estimates, the remainder to be taken from balances),
- (d) that the attached rates of compensation be approved, effective from 1st April 2009, and
- (e) that the Clerk prepare a paper on the cost of administering the payment of compensation for consideration by the Committee.

7. DRAINAGE RATES AND SPECIAL LEVIES

(a) Rate Collection

The Clerk reported that rates and special levies outstanding at 19th March 2009 totalled £48.80.

RECEIVED

(b) Land Drainage Act 1991, Section 42 - Amendments to Valuation List

The Clerk presented the attached schedule of revised and amended assessments for consideration.

RESOLVED

that the attached revised and amended assessments be approved and signed by the Chairman.

8. CASH RESERVES AND INVESTMENTS

8:1 Investment of Surplus Monies

The Director of Finance reported that balances were invested as follows:

Barclays Current	£238,841.00	at 0.10%
Barclays Tracker	£2,303.80	at 0.10%

Barclays Treasury	£350,000.00	at 0.32%
Abbey	£350,000.00	at 2.62%
Alliance and Leicester	£4,126.64	at 0.25%
TOTAL INVESTED	£945,271.44	

The attached minutes of a meeting held on 23d February 2009 were circulated for information.

RESOLVED

that the attached minutes and the actions taken be approved.

8:2 External Borrowing

The Director of Finance reported that the following loans were outstanding with the Public Works Loan Board:

<i>Date Commenced</i>	<i>Amount Borrowed</i>	<i>Period of Loan</i>	<i>Interest Rate</i>	<i>Balance Outstanding</i>
13th April 1994	£400,000.00	20 years	8.125%	£178,092.84
28th July 1997	£500,000.00	15 years	7.25%	£168,056.52
1st September 2005	£240,000.00	15 years	4.3%	£196,847.71
8th September 2005	£250,000.00	15 years	4.25%	£204,906.00
		TOTAL OUTSTANDING		£747,903.07

He further reported that the following loan was outstanding with Caterpillar Finance:

<i>Date Commenced</i>	<i>Amount Borrowed</i>	<i>Period of Loan</i>	<i>Interest Rate</i>	<i>Balance Outstanding</i>
31st July 2008	£54,300.00	one year	0%	£31,675.00

Consideration had been given to paying back loans early but this would not prove cost effective.

RECEIVED

8:3 Internal Borrowing

The Director of Finance reported that the Loans Pool balance outstanding at 31st March 2008 was £1,305,807.39. This included Public Works Loan Board balance outstanding.

RECEIVED

9. COMPENSATION CLAIMS

(a) Claims Paid in Accordance with the Board's Rates

The Engineer reported that six compensation payments totalling £832.15 had been paid since

