



Danvm

Drainage Commissioners

**Joint Meeting
Finance & WLM Committee**

**JBA Consulting
Epsom House, Doncaster**



Shire

Group of IDBs

Meeting

**Friday 6 October 2017
10.00am**

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Purpose

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1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declaration of Interest

3. Minutes of Joint Committee Meeting on 26 May 2017

Present: Andrew Cooke (AC) (Chairman)
Gillian Ivey (GI)
Richard Thompson (RT)
Catherine Anderson (CA)
David Atkinson (DA)
Martin Falkingham (MF)
Steve Lomas (SL)
Paul Maddison (PM)
Neil Welburn (NW)

Observer: Frank Jackson (FJ)

Officers: Craig Benson (CB)
Ian Benn (IB)
Paul Jones (PJ)
Martin Spoor (MS)

2017.1 Apologies - Received from Mike Jordan and Richard Ward.

2017.2 Declaration of Interest – AC declared an interest in item 6.5 and NW declared an interest in item 7.3.

2017.3 GI explained the reasoning behind holding a joint WLM and Finance Committee meeting. It was apparent that both committees had similar items on their Agendas and it was felt that a better decision-making process would be the outcome of his joint venture.

2017.4 Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on the 2 December 2016.

Proposed approved GI, seconded AC, all in Agreement.

SL enquired whether or not those in attendance could vote on all issues that were to be discussed. AC Confirmed that members could.

2017.5 Matters arising:

2016.50 Budget - GI asked if the Special Levy paying Councils were given a five year budget estimate of their Levy. CB confirmed that this had been included with the Section 48 Notice that had been issued to them in February.

AC enquired if the Board could use committed reserves and what if any interest payments would be made. CB confirmed that the Board can spend committed reserves with the proviso that they recognise that the “asset” the monies had been set aside for, would remain the responsibility of the Board and monies would have to be found in the future for its replacement. CB added that he was aware of an IDB that spent Commuted Sum monies and that he had raised this issue with the External Auditors who confirmed that no action would be taken as a result. He added that he would not recommend the Board to spend any commuted sum monies on anything other

than what they were designated for and that the funds received from the sale of the property should only be spent of capital items.

CA asked who updates the Risk Register and was it available on the Board's website. CB confirmed the register is posted on the website and that it was the Boards responsibility to review and update. The Register is currently circulated to members once a year for comment and review.

2017.6 WLM Committee – Matters Arising

2016.41 Canal & River Trust – MS confirmed that he was in discussion with CRT to organise a pre-start meeting. He confirmed good progress had been made with CRT so far. MF advised the doors were in need of desilting again; MS confirmed that this was in CRT's programme of works. MF advised the CRT have worked better however in the area of the Heck Basin, North and South Soak drains require works.

NW asked if the leak in the canal had been resolved. MS confirmed that he has left this with CRT to manage.

2015.52 Riparian Responsibilities Culverts – MS confirmed that the Board are still required to approve the letter that had been drafted to send out to the riparian owners. GI asked MS to explain the nature of the letter. MS confirmed that it related to Sykehouse Main Drain. This culverted system is a riparian owner responsibility if and when it fails. The letter was to notify all riparian owners of their responsibilities.

SL noted that the Board had only permissive powers to maintain watercourses. He circulated some photos dating back to 1988 when the Town Drain culvert was installed. PJ explained to members the common law rights. NW thought that not all riparian owners would accept their responsibilities and that it could get messy. SL declared an interest in this matter due to a bank slip on his land. RT enquired if the landowners were made aware of their responsibilities when the pipes were laid. MS reiterated that he was making the Board aware of their options re maintenance of culverts, if the Board chose to accept responsibility this would be inconsistent to the view taken with CRT, Highways England and others and could be at great financial expense. AC queried the scale of the problem to enable the Board to reach a decision. MS stated it was fundamentally riparian owner responsibility supported by documented legal case law.

IB noted for Sykehouse, an alternative solution had been proposed to divert the water from the culvert but this had been opposed by several landowners and residents. He suggested as a way forward to hold surgeries in the area to discuss this issue with the riparian owners but recommended the Board consider a policy on this issue moving forward.

Discussions followed over the Board's legal position. Noted; the Board has a "No Culverting Policy" and supports the "daylighting" of culverts. MS stated that information from the model could be used to identify the number of areas where culverts and responsibilities may be an issue.

RT declared an interest as he had a culvert on his land. In his opinion where the Board installed the pipeline (culverts) they should take responsibility. He added that he sits on another IDB and this discussion never takes place.

PJ reaffirmed the approach taken with CRT, Network Rail and Highways England as riparian owners.

PM stated they he could not support the Board taking responsibility for culverts that were clearly the responsibility of individual land owners/householders. This position was echoed by CA.

IB suggested that in light of discussions, the Board should consider revisiting the "riparian owner" training session that was delivered last year.

GI confirmed that the Board need to make a decision and added that more information was required before this could be done. Once the data had been run through the model and critical points identified the findings should be brought back to the Board. GI proposed that Officers should carry out work to identify the extent and bring the findings back to the Board. PM seconded this action and was approved by the Committee.

2017.7 Health and Safety – Accidents, Incidents and Near Misses IB confirmed that staff had completed training and were following new working practices as a result of the incident at Norton Common PS.

Training - MS confirmed that a number of training courses had been arranged for the workforce and added that they were in the adjoining room on a training course on safe working in the vicinity of overhead power lines.

2017.8 Finance – Audit – CB confirmed that the internal audit was underway. Members noted the External Audit report that was emailed to them on 21 February 2017.

2017.9 Accounts for the Year Ending 31 March 2017 – CB reviewed the unaudited accounts and compared the figures with the budget. It was noted that the Board were in a healthy financial position at the year end and that the reserve levels were in keeping with the Board's Reserve Policy. GI queried the electricity costs at four of the pumping stations.

2017.10 Five Year Estimate – Members noted the forecasted income and expenditure of the next five years. CA made a formal request for electronic copies of the financial data produced by the FO. CB refused her request stating that the data was his intellectual property rights.

2017.11 Vehicle and Plant – Members discussed the options with regard to the maintenance plant requirements for the forthcoming year. NW suggested not replace the flail as the Board (Went IDB) never used to flail its watercourse, however it was conceded that for health and safety reasons the banks should be mown. It was proposed by GI, seconded by AC and approved that repairs would be undertaken to the excavator and tractor and flail unit at an estimated cost of £41k.

MS confirmed that there was no requirement at present to purchase any vehicles for the workforce.

2017.12 Coal Authority Pumping Station Schemes – Members noted the information contained in the meeting papers.

2017.13 Hydraulic Model – PJ gave a brief presentation and updated members on the current position.

2017.14 List of Payments – Members approved a list of cheque payments totalling £249,734.17 of which £875.00 were approved by the Officers. Members all approved a list of payments made direct from the Board's account totalling £1,353,821.71 of which £338,713.64 were approved by the Officers only.

2017.15 Watercourse Maintenance Statement.- It was agreed that the Maintenance Statement would be circulated to members with the minutes of this meeting for comment.

2017.16 Watercourse Maintenance 2017/18 – The workforce are currently carrying out drain inspections to help determine the extent of maintenance works that are required during 2017. It was suggested that the final proposal is presented to the Chairman and Vice Chairman to approve before publication. MS also discussed the possibility of the use of chemical applications.

2017.17 MEICA Team – Members noted the work undertaken by the Team on behalf of other IDBs. GI requested that a cost-benefit assessment of the team is carried out before the end of the apprenticeship.

2017.18 VFD – Board noted the VFD innovation and its operation at Blowell PS. MS also informed members of the possible Lease arrangements with Controlstar with respect to the provision of Telemetry at pumping stations. It was agreed to obtain costs for the Board and present at a future meeting.

2017.19 Norton Common Access – MS advised members of the access issues the Board has faced in removing and replacing a pump at this station. Access is currently being made via a convoluted route. An option would be to utilize Board owned land to create a new access. This would involve obtaining DMBC highways approval to open up a new access off the A19 and agreement with a landowner to cross part of their land. A meeting has been arranged with DMBC



to establish if the proposal is acceptable. Once details have been confirmed, the matter will be brought back to the Board.

2017.20 Bramwith Rands – PJ confirmed that the inlet structure must comply with Eel Regulations. It was necessary to take levels of the existing arrangements to introduce new control steps that would conform to Eel Regulations. Members agree for the Chairman to approve costs associated with survey and implementation of any minor works in line with the Financial Regulations.

2017.21 Network Rail – MS informed members that he has met with Network Rail and there is no longer a requirement to serve notice on them to carry out works. Network Rail would like the Board workforce to carry out the works. NW declared an interest in this item and added that he had undertaken work 2years ago and Network Rail had not yet paid him. MS stated that he would be requesting an upfront payment before any works are carried out.

2017.22 Canals & Rivers Trust – CRT have been in discussions with the Board to produce a maintenance regime. The likelihood is that they would be undertaking desilting works on the two aqueducts.

2017.23 Environment Agency – Members were informed that the Board are currently working closely with the EA and Coal Authority to enter in to a data sharing agreement.

2017.24 River Went – Information/ flood outlines have been requested from the EA to add to the model to understand the benefit of the River Went to the district. PM advised that WMDC have a scheme that is proposed at South Elmsall that might need adding to the model in July. PJ encouraged PM to pass on the details when they were available. NW, in relation to the cost benefit analysis, what value had been applied to agricultural land. PJ explained his thoughts on the issue based upon his experience over 15 years of economic assessment. MF stated that on the River Went the banks were in need of repair due to vermin damage. MS encouraged all landowners to report the matter to the EA and stated that he would also raise the issue on behalf of the Board.

2017.25 Any Other Business – MF requested an update on the Hensall Scheme. PJ stated that it currently sits with the Coal Authority and the Heck scheme would precede the Hensall scheme. PJ encouraged all landowners to submit damage notices if evidence of damage could be associated with mining. He added that levels had been taken and that an options report had been passed to the Coal Authority.

2017.26 GI asked members if they thought the joint meeting was beneficial and should it continue. NW agreed, DA stated that there was more knowledge in the room, SL added that Dun had similar committees and CA stated that you cannot separate costs from the activity. It was agreed to hold another joint meeting and check on the representation of such a group.

2017.27 It was agreed that a small tour of inspection should be undertaken to visit a couple of sites to enable new members to understand and see works on the ground. It was suggested that Kirk Bramwith PS and the Fishlake area would be visited. Officers to organize sometime in July.

2017.28 Date of Next Meeting – Friday 6 October 2017, commencing at 10am.

3.1 Matters arising