



RIVER LUGG INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING

HELD ON 16 JANUARY 2020 at 10.30AM AT THE 7Y BUSINESS CENTRE, LEOMINSTER HR6 ONX

PRESENT:

Board Members:

Mr Charles Pudge
Ms Zita Chilman
Mr Richard Corbett
Major James Hereford
Mr James Makin
Mr Kenneth Mitcheson
Mr Malcolm Davies
Mrs Noorissa Davies
Lord Cawley
Mr Nic Eynon
Cllr Sebastian Bowen
Cllr Roger Phillips
Cllr John Stone

IN ATTENDANCE

Ms Adrienne Davies – Clerk to the Board (AD)
Ms Audrey Clements – Responsible Finance Officer (AC)
Mr Les Harrison – Area Engineer (AE)
Ms Kerry Lawrence – Minutes (KL)

ELECTION OF CHAIR

Major James Hereford as the ADA representative opened the meeting with the Board's agreement as Charles Pudge (CP) had completed his term of office of 10 years or 2 terms as Chairman under the Governments regulations IBD's conform to as advised by Defra.

Major James Hereford explained that due to the upcoming tendering process and to mitigate any possible risks, ADA was approached and Defra agreed CP could be re-elected as Chairman for a further 12 monthly only.

Major James Hereford proposed that CP continue as Chairman for the forthcoming 12 months, this was seconded by Cllr Bowen. There were no other nominations received. The Board unanimously agreed to reappoint CP as Chairman.

CP chaired the meeting from this point.

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

No nominations were forthcoming at the meeting and the chairman suggested the item is deferred until the next meeting.

Action: AD

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The Chairman welcomed Nic Eynon from the Lower Wye area to the Board.

APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

Apologies for absence were noted from Cllr Hardwick, Cllr Fagan, Cllr Andrews, Cllr Summers, Cllr Bolderston and Cllr Swinglehurst.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman declared an interest in Wellington Brook as a beneficial owner of land above Wellington, however, it was noted that the land was not within the Board's remit.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman expressed his thanks to the Board, Area Engineer and Hoople staff for their support and commitment over the past four years.

19/034 CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17TH OCT 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on the 17th October 2019 were agreed as an accurate record.

19/035 UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM MINUTES OF LAST MEETING, IF NOT AN AGENDA ITEM

New member training

Following the previous meeting the Clerk advised that she has contacted ADA to check what new member training was available and had circulated a link to an online module for good governance, similar to that of the IDB good governance guide.

Action: AD to share information with Nic Eynon.

19/036 AREA ENGINEER REPORTS

Report of the Area Engineer to the Board including rainfall data

The AE reported that the Black Poplars illegally planted adjacent to Wellington Brook had been relocated and thanked Dick Makin for his assistance.

Tony Norman had provided the AE with 50 Black Poplar cuttings and the AE sought the assistance of members in potting them on or planting them directly in the ground in a suitable location where they would receive care until established.

The AE reported maintenance work had been restricted due to poor weather and high water levels. However some dry spells had allowed clearance of blockages and flood-washed debris from Hutt Back Brook working on adjoining stubble ground. Photographs were displayed showing work undertaken during the period.

Major James Hereford explained that following an e-mail from ADA asking for comments as the Chairman and Chief Executive were due to meet the new minister, he emphasised the importance of the EA clearing the river channels.

Members discussed ways in which the Board could publicise and raise the profile of the essential work undertaken in reducing the risk of flooding. Various options were considered and the Clerk proposed using Hoople's own marketing team who have experience in writing and promoting case studies for local and national media outlets. It was also suggested communications are shared with parish councils as they are thought to be reasonable well attended. The Chairman stated there was an upcoming meeting and would raise the idea there.

Action: CP

Expenditure as at 31 December 2019 : £104,519

Annual budget: £150k.

Annual Maintenance Programme

Board members approved the proposed for year 2020-21.

Floods

The AE reported that the only property flooded was at Ivington Green, but this was as a result of run-off from the highway rather than the nearby Honeylake Brook.

There was also main river flooding at Ewyas Harold and a business park at Pontrilas; it is understood that the owner of this site is consulting the EA about possible modifications to the Pontrilas Flood Alleviation Scheme.

The AE referred to a letter received from Luston Parish Council regarding flooding on the road at Eyton which is located upstream of Board's scheduled watercourse. Whilst within the Board's district, it is understood that the problem is caused by a blocked culvert and a matter for the highway authority. Cllr Bowen stated that he had reported the issue to Balfour Beatty.

Biodiversity Action Plan

The AE explained that the Board's Environmental Advisor had been in touch with various bodies asking if they wished to meet to discuss any aspects of the proposed Annual Maintenance Programme but there had not been any response up to the time of writing.

Illegal Works

The AE reported on tipping by Pontrilas Sawmills on the Board's maintenance access alongside Pontrilas Side-streams. This had been reported to the company and he had received an assurance that the material would be removed without delay.

Natural Flood Management Meeting – 14th November 2019

The AE attended the meeting and provided an update to the Board.

Land Drainage Consents

No applications have been received for land drainage consents for the period under review.

Rainfall Figures

The rainfall figures were appended for information. The AE thanked Richard Corbett and the Environmental Agency for submitting the latest data.

It was agreed to enlarge the rainfall figures for future reports.

Action: LH/ KL

Planning Applications

The following applications were noted:

- PR2019-017 – development at Cholstrey Road, Leominster. Land drainage consent required.
- PR2019-018 - Wellington Quarry, Haywood Lane, Wellington. Land drainage consent required if discharging storm water to board's watercourse.
- PR2019-019 - The Farm Moreton Jeffries, Moreton Jeffries. Further information has been requested to ensure the plans don't impact the board.
- PR2019-020 & PR2019-021 - Land at Highway Farm, Lodge Farm and land at Haycroft Farm Ocle Pychard. Land drainage consent required if discharging storm water to board's watercourse.

It was acknowledged that there was a meeting due to take place on 28th January regarding the phosphate issue and expected a further update then.

19/037 FINANCE REPORTS

Covering Report

The RFO reported a healthy budget position and forecasted a year end positive variance of £22k due to spending less than anticipated on maintenance because of poor weather.

Schedule of Bills

The Board unanimously agreed to the Chairman signing the schedule of bills.

19/038 2020/21 BUDGET AND PENNY RATE

The RFO presented a supplementary paper as a result of the budget underspend outlining various options in setting the penny rate for the Lower Wye and River Lugg.

The RFO recommended holding the penny rate for River Lugg at 9.5p and increasing Lower Wye by 1p to 6.5p.

During a discussion it was suggested increasing the Lower Wye penny rate further to 7.5p and the RFO supported this proposal. All board members were in favour and subsequently agreed for the River Lugg penny rate to remain at 9.5p and increase the Lower Wye to 7.5p.

The AE acknowledged that the contractor's rates are to rise by 10% from 1st April 2020 and the RFO confirmed that this was accounted for in the budget.

19/039 RLIDB MANAGEMENT SERVICES FROM 1ST APRIL 2021

The Clerk explained that following the last meeting and the concerns Herefordshire Council are visibly too close to Hoople to run the tender process. Herefordshire Council's procurement team are running a tender process for local authority procurement teams to run the tender on behalf of RLIDB for the management services from 1st April 2021.

The Clerk recommended and seconded by the Chairman, that a sub-committee be formed to oversee the tender process and agree a timeline of events. It was proposed that the Chairman be involved having had previous experience in the tendering process, as with Major James Hereford and Cllr Bowen, and Tony Mitcheson was also put forward.

Action: KL to arrange a meeting

19/040 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk Register

The Clerk presented the updated risk register to include how risks are linked in with ward's objectives following a previous request.

It was also acknowledged that the risk around phosphate had been added, reference RLIB19 however the risk should read 'band' as opposed to 'banded.'

Action AD

19/041 HEALTH AND SAFETY

Minutes of H&S meeting 6th Jan 2020

The Clerk included a copy of the Health and Safety meeting minutes for information, and reported that there were no areas of concern.

H&S Reports Since Last Board Meeting

The Clerk advised the H&S reports and risk assessments have been included for information.

ADA HSW Advice Notice

The Clerk included the results of a health and safety survey conducted by ADA as discussed at the health and safety meeting, no concerns were raised and were happy with the recommendation proposed.

The principle contractor was approached to request a copy of their risk register which they did not have and agreed to think about it. It was noted that this may be requested as part of the tendering process.

19/042 ADA BRANCH MEETING

Notes of ADA Marches Branch meeting

The Clerk attended the ADA branch meeting in November and was pleased to announce that Major James Hereford was re-appointed to ADA Branch Director for a further 3 years, and Charles to continue as ADA Chairman for the next 12 months.

The minutes of the meeting were appended for members information.

Precept and Foreign Water Contributions Letter

The Clerk shared the proposal put forward to the ADA meeting to increase the precept and foreign water contributions by 2%. The increase causes no impact on RLIDB and therefore the clerk agreed to the 2% rise.

The Clerk acknowledged she had asked for the information to be provided much sooner in advance of future River Lugg Board meetings to allow the matter to be discussed by members.

19/043 POLICIES FOR REVIEW / APPROVAL

The Clerk presented a number of policies due for renewal. It had been previously agreed that policies were to be reviewed every 3 years, following elections. The only changes made were in relation to updating regulations and dates.

Financial regulations

The Clerk requested clarity around ratepayer's yearly bills of less than £5 whether they should be written off. After some discussion it was agreed that the Clerk would bring some stats back to the next meeting how many ratepayer bills this affects so an informed decision could be reached.

Action: AD

Board approved the following polices apart from the financial regulations for reasons stated above.

- Schedule of Reserved matters
- Division of Responsibilities
- Whistleblowing policy
- Anti-Bribery policy
- Vision and Objectives
- Risk management Strategy
- Billing and Recover procedure

19/044 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Outstanding Members Forms

The Clerk reminded board members to complete any outstanding member forms and return to her at their earliest convenience.

The Chair would like to write to retiring members of the Board to thank them for their service and asked the Clerk to draft a letter for his approval.

Action AD

It was agreed the annual inspection will take place on the 7th May 2020.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on 16th April 2020 at 10.30am - 7Y Business Centre, Leominster, HR6 0NX