

RIVER LUGG INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD

Held on Thursday 9th April 2015 at 10.30 a.m. at 7Y Business Centre, Leominster

PRESENT:

Board Members:

Mr C Pudge – Chairman
Mr J Smith – Vice Chairman
Lord J Cawley
Mrs Z Chilman
Major J Hereford
Mr J Makin
Mr K Mitcheson
Mr C Pritchard
Mr G Sparey
Cllr J Hardwick
Cllr P McCaull
Cllr J Millar

In Attendance

Mr J Lawrence

Hoople Ltd Officers in Attendance

Mr G Evans – Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)
Mr L Harrison – Area Engineer
Mrs L Chandler – Minute Taker
Kate Speke-Adams – Wye and Usk Foundation

APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

Apologies had been received from Board Members Mr N Helme, Cllr F Norman and Mr D Trumper of Hoople Ltd.

15/001 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Mitcheson declared an interest in item 6 and 8.

15/002 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised the finance papers relating to items 7 on the agenda are to be tabled due to the closeness of the meeting and the financial year end.

The Chairman welcomed Kate Speke-Adams from Wye and Usk Foundation to the meeting.

15/003 CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15th JANUARY 2015 AND 12th MARCH 2015

It was agreed the title of Councillor should be removed from Mr Pritchard's name in both sets of the minutes.

Subject to this amendment being made, the minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2015 and 12th March were approved as a true and accurate record.

15/004 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

15th JANUARY 2015

The Area Engineer advised that the decision to construct an Irish bridge at Monkland has been deferred.

12th MARCH 2015

No matters arising.

15/005 REPORT OF THE AREA ENGINEER/ENGINEER TO THE BOARD (INCLUDING RAINFALL DATA (RL/15/0000/15a-b)

The Area Engineer presented his report detailing works carried, backed up by a number of photographs. He reported that another machine had been hired to help with all the desilting work. The main project during the period was the management of bankside vegetation on the River Lodon. Photograph of a dilapidated access bridge over the Lodon, on land owned by Whitwick Manor, which had since been removed on the recommendation of the Farm Manager. However, the adjoining land owner has claimed a right of way over the structure and would be consulting his solicitor for possible redress.

A Board Member advised that the farmer would need to provide proof that he had used it regularly as a right of way for twelve years. The Area Engineer advised the farmer did have an alternative access that he could use.

Expenditure as of 31st March was reported at £133,864, 3% under budget.

Herbicides

The Area Engineer had been advised by the former Director of the Aquatic Weed Research Centre that Roundup Biactive 360 should be used, rather than 450 formulation together with TopFilm which is a sticking agent. It has recently been reported that glyphosate could be carcinogenic and, if proved, could lead to its withdrawal.

Pontrilas Side-Streams Culvert

The installation of the culvert on Pontrilas side streams cost an additional £900.00 bringing the total to £21,860.00.

Unconsented Culvert at Lower Eggleton

It was reported that the owner of a derelict property had installed a culvert on the access to the property at too a high level. He was advised that it should be removed and Land Drainage Consent obtained before re-installation, however, recent inspection has shown that it has now been installed at the recommended level, albeit without approval. In view of the doubtful ownership of the land, the Area Engineer sought Member's view on whether enforcement action should be taken and it was decided to defer any action for the time being.

Land Drainage Consent

Unable to determine until further information is received.

Rain Data

The Area Engineer tabled the report.

Planning Applications

The Board Members reviewed the planning applications as listed below;

- PR2015-001 – The Abattoir, Whitehill Park Industrial Estate, Weobley, Hereford
- PR2015-002 – Kingcup Cottage, Wellington, Herefordshire, HR4 8DT
- PR2015-003 – Land to the South of Chapel Lane, Bodenham Moor, Herefordshire
- PR2015-004 – Land opposite Brook Farm, Marden, Herefordshire, HR1 3ET

Reference to the standard set of requirements the Board Members agreed to strengthen the Board's response. The Area Engineer and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) agreed to review with Duncan Trumper.

Action: Greg Evans and Les Harrison

15/006 FINANCE REPORT

(RL/15/0000/16a-fg)

The RFO apologised for tabling the finance papers explaining that this is due to the closeness of the meeting to the end of the financial year. Future meetings will take place later in the month which would allow for the reports to be produced in a timely manner and circulated in advance of the meetings.

It was noted that paper (RL/12/0000/15b) had been duplicated in the tabled pack and an updated pack would be sent out to all Board Members.

Action: Liz Chandler

A surplus of £810.00 for year ending 31st March has increased the general reserves to £156,531.

The reserves include £7,129 received from the Lower Wye and £28,761 from the Welsh Government for the Lower Wye rate increases.

The level of rates payment received totalled £73,721. Outstanding accounts have recently been reviewed and it is anticipated that the majority of queries can be resolved. Legal action is already in place for one of the larger outstanding accounts and the RFO is hoping to be able to report the final outcome at the July Board meeting.

The main variances to the budget relate to the transfer of the income received and expenditure incurred in relation to Lower Wye, this includes fees payable to Hoople for additional administration and engineering services in respect of the maintenance contract and the Lower Wye.

Board Members unanimously approved signing of the Schedule of Bills.

The RFO suggested to the Board that going forward the money for the Lower Wye could be identified separately. A discussion took place and it was agreed to keep all reserves as one account as long as it was easily identifiable.

The Chairman advised to add Mr Lawrence with 100% attendance to page 3 of the Statement of Accounts.

Action: Greg Evans

The RFO explained that following the Boards approval of the Statement of Accounts an internal audit review would be required and an annual return would be submitted to the Audit Commission. An intermediate audit will be necessary because the profit has increased this year to over £200,000. This type of audit is more in-depth and will cost more money.

For future meetings it will be necessary to add risk register to the Board agenda and the RFO will draft one in readiness for the next Board meeting.

Action: Greg Evans

The Board unanimously approved the Statement of Accounts and the Chairman signed the annual return for the Audit Commission.

The Chairman thanked the RFO.

15/007 UPDATE ON UNIDENTIFIED PARCELS OF LAND

Maps have been produced and the Area Engineer and RFO will meet to determine the course of action necessary and will seek the assistance of Members if it is not possible to resolve all of

the outstanding issues.

Action: Greg Evans and Les Harrison

15/008 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Wye and Usk Foundation

The Chairman welcomed Kate Speke-Adams to the meeting who attended to provide an update on the Wye and Usk Foundation activities in the area.

Kate tabled a leaflet called 'Wye and Usk Foundation 2015 update' and gave a verbal update of some of the recent projects. The Chairman thanked Kate for attending and for the positive work of the Wye and Usk Foundation.

Kate informed the Board that Sarah Olney would like to return to the Board but would be living in the Cotswolds. The Chairman is meeting with the National England Officer to discuss what to do in the event that Sarah Olney does not return.

Vacancies currently exist for an Environmental Advisor and Conservation Officer and Kate offered to share some contacts with the Chairman. Due to a conflict of interest it was decided that the Conservation Officer would not be a member of the Board but someone who could be called upon to advise the Board.

Annual Inspection 14th May 2015

The itinerary and menu for the annual inspection day was tabled and it was requested that the Board members completed and hand to the Clerk of the Board.

The Chairman wished all Herefordshire Council Councillors good luck with the up and coming May election and thanked them for all their support over the last three years.

The Chairman also thanked the Hoople staff for the work involved with the annual accounts and the Area Engineer for all his hard work and good advice.

15/009 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

The next meetings will take place on Thursday 16th July, Thursday 15th October and 21st January 2016.

Chairman



Clerk



