



## **RIVER LUGG INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

### **MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING**

**HELD ON 18 JULY 2019 at 10.30AM AT THE 7Y BUSINESS CENTRE, LEOMINSTER HR6 0NX**

#### **PRESENT:**

##### **Board Members:**

Mr Charles Pudge – Chairman  
Mr John Smith – Vice Chairman  
Ms Zita Chilman  
Mr Richard Corbett  
Mr Stephen Dale  
Major James Hereford  
Mr James Makin  
Cllr Sebastian Bowen  
Cllr Toni Fagan  
Cllr Elissa Swinglehurst  
Cllr Paul Andrews  
Cllr Felicity Norman  
Lord John Crawley  
Mr Malcolm Davies  
Mrs Noorissa Davies (late arrival)

##### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Cllr David Summers  
Ms Audrey Clements – Responsible Finance Officer (AC)  
Mr Les Harrison – Area Engineer (AE)  
Ms Kerry Lawrence – Minutes (KL)

*The Chairman requested a change of order to the agenda, item 12 River Wye and Lugg Natural Flood Management Project presentation to take place after agenda item 13, Chairman's announcement. All members were in favour.*

##### **APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE**

Apologies were noted from Board Members; Mr Nick Helme, Mr Kenneth Mitcheson and Ms Sarah Olney, Cllr John Hardwick, Cllr Roger Phillips, Cllr John Harrington and Ms. Adrienne Davies.

##### **19/013 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There we no declaration of interests.

## **19/014 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Toni Fagan, Cllr Elissa Swinglehurst and Cllr Paul Andrews to the Board (appointed members of Herefordshire Council) and introductions were made.

## **19/015 RIVER WYE AND LUGG NATURAL FLOOD MANAGEMENT PROJECT PRESENTATION**

The Chairman welcomed Kate Speke-Adams, Wye and Usk Foundation and Beth Lewis, Herefordshire Council to give a presentation on the River Wye and Lugg Natural Flood Management project. Beth explained the aim of the project was to work with landowners and communities to look at ways to reduce the risk of flooding by slowing the flow or store of water and to improve the soil in the ground to increase the water capacity. An initiative Defra initiated investing £15m nationally, of which £13.4m for catchment scale projects (e.g. River Wye and Lugg project) and £1.6m for community led projects. It was noted that seven different catchment areas have had been selected across Herefordshire; and were selected based on the number of properties at risk and suitably to have natural flood management within them. There is funding available until March 2021, Herefordshire Council are leading the project in partnership with a variety of different organisations.

The Chairman explained that the Board was approached 12 months ago, however it was difficult to see how the Board could influence areas outside its catchment and therefore it was decided not to participate in the project at that time.

Kate emphasised the value of the Board's input into the project and explained that the catchments are linked and what happens on the higher ground influences what happens on the lower ground and knowledge on those areas would be valuable to the project.

The Chairman thanked Kate and Beth for their presentation and the Board would review its decision to participate in the project later in the meeting.

More information about the project available at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/nfm](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/nfm)

## **19/016 CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 18<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2019**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 18th April 2019 were approved as an accurate record subject to the following amendments:

- Under finance statement – should read “Land Drainage” consents...
- Under annual report – should read “passed away”.

## **19/017 UPDATE ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

### **Maintenance contract extension letter**

The RFO reported that the contractor had been notified of the Boards agreement to the increase in costs which will be built into the budget. The contract extension letter was signed and a copy was sent to contractor.

### **Annual Report**

In relation to a query raised regarding VAT movements. The RFO confirmed that this was a timing issue, a £25k VAT claim was received in the bank on 1st April 19 thus missed the 18/19 accounts.

The difference between the amounts that is reported in the annual accounts compared to the Engineer's report in relation to the Engineer's costs, is the reserve amount added which allows for the difference in the Lower Wye and River Lugg drainage rate amount absorbed over 10 years.

## **Insurance**

Despite reminders, only one company provided a quotation to for insurance for the Board for 2019/20 (the existing provider), following consultation with the Chairman the insurance was renewed.

## **19/018 AREA ENGINEERS REPORT**

The Area Engineer reported that the annual spraying programme had been completed in mid-May, however due to the weather it had been less successful than in previous years and it had been more effective in some areas than others.

Further work carried out included management of bank-side vegetation and blockage removal at the following watercourses:

- Little Lugg (Kymin Section) and Laterals 1&2
- Broad Brook Lateral No. 1 at Eyton (also desilted)
- Ashgrove Wood Ditch, Bodenham
- Withington Lakes
- Moor Brook (Monkland) and Lateral No.1

It was acknowledged that the gentleman at Broad Brook expressed his gratitude for the excellent work completed to reduce water levels.

The AE reported that the mowing of watercourses is currently underway and regrettably, the operative that previously undertook the work to a high standard had left and had been replaced by two individuals.

Expenditure up to 30 June - £29,926.58.

## **Environmental Advisor (EA)**

The AE advised that the newly appointed EA, Mr. Watson had made a number of site visits and provided positive feedback of the work carried out in respect of environmental matters.

It was noted that Mr. Watson had been in contact with Herefordshire Wildlife Trust to discuss the maintenance programme, however this has been delayed by the Trust due to staffing problems.

Mr. Watson will represent the Board at Wye Catchment Partnership Group meetings where they discuss matters that affect the River Wye in general.

## **Rainfall data**

Rainfall figures were provided for information. The AE thanked Mr. Richard Corbett and the Environmental Agency for submitting the latest data.

## **Land Drainage Consents**

No applications have been received for Land Drainage consent for the period under review.

The AE reported that one application had been implemented in respect of the timber-yard, north of Leominster. The work had been completed to specification, however, the AE advised more needed to be done around the access and this would be subject to further discussion.

## **Planning Applications**

The following planning applications were noted:-

- PR2019-008 – Haywood Industrial Estate, Wellington, Hereford HR4 8DZ
- PR2019-009 – Land fronting Mill Street, The Hop Pole, Leominster HR6 8DY
- PR2019-010 – Luntley Court Farm, Pembridge, Leominster HR6 9EH

The Chair wanted to record his congratulations to the AE in receiving a commendation.

## **19/019 FINANCE REPORTS**

### **Covering Report**

The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) reported that there were no financial concerns. Collection rates were further ahead at this stage than in the previous two years.

The debt position is £35,355.29 over 258 accounts and reminders are due to be issued shortly.

### **Budget Monitoring Report**

A revised report was tabled. The RFO confirmed the HC levy figure as £68,971.

### **Schedule of Bills**

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

### **Internal Audit Report**

The RFO presented the internal audit report carried out by SWAP with one recommendation in relation to the approval of expenses to ensure official signatures are obtained prior to payment.

## **19/020 RISK MANAGEMENT**

### **Risk Register**

The risk register was presented to the Board for information; there had been no significant changes since the last meeting.

## **19/021 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

There were no health and safety matters of concern. The RFO explained the health and safety meeting due to take place in July was to be rescheduled.

## **19/022 2019 ELECTIONS INCLUDING TIMETABLE**

### **Election timetable**

The Board unanimously approved the election timetable.

### **Condensed electoral register**

The Board noted the electoral register of rate payers.

## **Public notice of election**

A discussion took place around the various options available were considered. The Bard agreed that the best cost-effective option would be to publish the notice of election via parish councils and to include the website address. Cllr Summers suggested in addition, approaching community groups who may be happy to publicise the election through their social media platforms.

### **Action: AD**

The RFO advised that an election would only proceed on the basis that more than ten people were nominated.

Following the reconstitution of the Board in 2018 and on Defra's advice, it was agreed that the Board would consist of 10 elected members and thus council could appoint up to 11 members. However historically the council have appointed no more than 7 members and have worked with the board to elect the remaining 4 places. It was acknowledged that the council have increased the number of appointed members and so the Board has asked for clarity on numbers. The RFO confirmed she had spoken a legal representative in the council who was going to investigate what had been agreed previously.

### **Action: AC**

In response to a member's question, the RFO confirmed that nominations would take place before the next meeting (17 October) and the election if needed, would be completed after the next meeting, and so there would be time to reconsider options in terms of publishing notices.

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Notes ADA Board meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2019**

Notes of the ADA Board meeting of 3rd July 2019 were presented for information. It was noted that Major James Hereford's three-year term of office as the Marches Branch representative comes to an end in November 19.

## **RIVER WYE AND LUGG NATURAL FLOOD MANAGEMENT PROJECT PRESENTATION.**

A discussion took place regarding the Board's participation in the project, it was agreed that the Clerk would write to express the Board's thanks for the presentation and its interest in the project and whether the Board could be included on the mailing list to be kept up to date with progress. However, in terms of participation more clarity was required in what that involves, to enable the Board to make an informed decision.

### **Action AD**

A member asked, constitutionally, is the Board permitted to donate to schemes like this. The RFO would check the financial regulations.

### **Action: AC**

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

17 October 2019 at 10.30am – 7Y Business Centre, Leominster HR6 0NX

Future meeting dates: - 16th January, 16th April, 16th July, 15th October at 10.30am.