

RIVER LUGG INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE BOARD

Held on Thursday 12th March 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
Ms Z Chilman (Minute 14/038 onwards)
Mr M Davies
Mr N Helme
Major J Hereford
Mr J Lawrence
Mr K Mitcheson
Mr C Pritchard
Mr G Sparey
Cllr J Hardwick
Cllr J Hope MBE
Cllr F Norman

In Attendance

Hoople Ltd Officers in Attendance

Mr G Evans – Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)
Mr L Harrison – Area Engineer
Miss K Allen – Clerk to the Board
Mrs L Chandler – Minute Taker
Miss E Kann – Head of Marketing and Business Development

APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

Apologies had been received from Board Members Mr R Corbett, Mr J Makin, Cllr J Millar, and Mr D Trumper of Hoople Ltd.

14/037 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

As a ratepayer, Mr J Lawrence declared an interest in item 3, and the Chairman declared a potential interest in item 4.

14/038 TO AGREE THE PENNY RATE FOR FORMER LOWER WYE IDB RATEPAYERS
RL/14/0000/13

The Welsh Government has funded a contribution of £30,000 which will enable the penny rate for Lower Wye to be gradually increased to the required level to harmonise with the River Lugg rate over a ten year period. There is no facility to extend beyond the ten years. Lower Wye ratepayers had received a formal letter confirming their rates would not increase this year.

The Welsh Government has provided an additional £30,000 that will cover specific jobs in the area, including the Pontrilas culvert on which work had commenced this week.

(Ms Z Chilman then joined the meeting.)

The RFO confirmed that the invoice for a total of £59,372 has been submitted to the Welsh Government and the funds are expected shortly.

The application for the Differential Rate Order (DRO) had been advertised locally and also by DEFRA. No representations had been received and it was therefore being signed off today, which empowered the Board to set the rate. All costs incurred in the process of taking on the Lower Wye have been paid for by the Welsh Government.

A Board Member congratulated and thanked the Officers involved for their determination during the process, and another Board Member added his congratulations to the Hoople Officers for their negotiation skills.

The RFO informed the Board that a share of the Lower Wye reserves had also been received and this £7,000 will be kept separately to cover any unforeseen works.

A Board member requested details of the works being undertaken at Pontrilas and was advised that, because there was no maintenance access to a flood channel, an integral part of Pontrilas FAS, it was necessary to install a 100m long 600mm diameter culvert to the flood water from the developed area.

In relation to a question from a Board Member, the RFO confirmed that the DRO is a one-off and will not have to be repeated every year; it permits two sub-districts.

A Board Member asked if there is a statutory requirement to have a revaluation and, if so, would the Lower Wye come in line with the rest of the RLIDB? The RFO replied that he was not aware but would investigate and report back to the Board.

Action: RFO

The rate of 1.9p was proposed by Major Hereford and seconded by Mr John Smith and all Board Members voted in favour. It was noted that Mr Lawrence is unable to vote until formally elected.

14/039 ADOPTION OF THE RIVER FROME

The Chairman suggested to the Board that RLIDB adopts the River Frome in order to maintain this watercourse.

The Board Members entered into discussions.

Confirmation of funding for adopting the river would need to be sought as part of negotiations with the Environment Agency (EA). However, it was thought unlikely that any money would be forthcoming. It was considered that lobbying MPs to require the EA to maintain rivers might result in some action.

It was suggested that other main rivers might be considered especially the Worm Brook.

It was advised that we are not legally obliged to do anything if we take the rivers over but we would be able to carry out limited works i.e. if there was a blockage then we would be able to remove it.

The Chairman outlined that the options to consider were to do nothing, or to enter into discussions with the EA on taking over some or all of rivers.

The Area Engineer suggested speaking to Anne Wheeler, Chair of the English Severn and Wye Regional Flood Committee, when she attends the annual inspection in May, for an indication of whether it would be worth pursuing the application. The Board Members agreed to this approach.

14/040 UNIDENTIFIED PARCELS OF LAND

RL/14/0000/14

The RFO tabled a report 'Outstanding Rates and Unidentified Land Parcels'.

It was reported that as of 31st March 2014, at contract handover from C&W, 23 separate ratepayers' accounts with queries were outstanding, totalling £4,927.69. A number of queries have since been resolved and the current balance is £2,307.79.

There are eight parcels of unidentified land with a cumulative total of £977.24. There is minimal information available relating to these, however GIS mapping analysis can be done to help identify.

A number of small arrears relating to current year rates remain outstanding and reminders have been issued.

The Chairman requested that maps are presented for the areas in question at the next Board meeting. **Action: RFO**

14/041 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

ADA

The Chairman advised that ADA is holding a conference on Thursday 19th March. The event is thought to be aimed more at government employees than Board Members.



Major Hereford confirmed to the Chairman that he did not wish to attend the conference and would like to see if another Board Member wished to take on future responsibility for ADA.

No expressions of interest were received on either matter.

Single Farm Payment Scheme

It has been confirmed that IDB's, as statutory bodies, can continue to use their permissive powers to carry out essential tree and hedge cutting works during the period 1st March – 30th September.

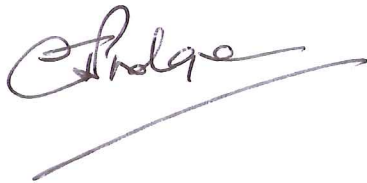
The Chairman asked the Area Engineer to maintain a photographic record of the work being carried out.

River Lugg Restoration Plan

The Chairman has passed copies of this consultation document, produced by Wye and Usk Foundation and commissioned by the Environment Agency, to the Area Engineer and RFO.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 11.30 am.

Chairman



Clerk

