

**RIVER LUGG INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD**

**Held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at 10.30 a.m. at 7Y Business Centre, Leominster**

**PRESENT:**

**Board Members:**

Mr C Pudge – Chairman  
Mr J Smith – Vice Chairman  
Major J Hereford  
Mrs N Davies  
Mr J Lawrence  
Mr D Makin  
Mr K Mitcheson  
Mr G Sparey  
Cllr J Hardwick  
Cllr B Baker

**HOOPLE LTD OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Mrs Audrey Harris – Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)  
Ms Adrienne Davies – Clerk to the Board (CB)  
Mr L Harrison – Area Engineer  
Mrs L Chandler – Minute Taker (LC)

**APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE**

Apologies received from Board Members Lord Cawley, Mr M Davies, Mr N Helme, Mr R Corbett, Mr S Dale, Cllr P McCaull, Cllr F Norman, Cllr R Phillips, and Mr D Trumper of Hoople Ltd.

**16/030 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

A Board member declared an interest as a landowner and ratepayer within the Boards area. The Chairman advised that it was not necessary to declare, as it is a requirement in order to be a Board member.

#### **16/031 CHAIRMAN ANNOUNCEMENTS**

No announcements were made.

#### **16/032 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21<sup>st</sup> JULY 2016**

The minutes of the meeting were approved as an accurate recording of the meeting.

#### **16/033 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

- Audit Action Plan Update

The Clerk to the Board provided an update on the audit action plan confirming that all actions with the exception of the one outstanding action that is due to be completed in March.

- Board Members Absences

The Clerk advised the Chairman in relation to absences of Board members at meetings, the RLIDB Rules state that *'If an elected member of an internal drainage board is absent from meetings of the board for more than six months consecutively, he/she shall, unless his/her absence is due to illness or some other reason approved by the board, vacate his/her office at the end of that six months.'*

The Chairman thanked the Clerk and advised a degree of flexibility would be applied and requested the Clerk write to Sarah Olney regarding attendance at future meetings.

**Action: AD**

#### **16/034 REPORT OF THE AREA ENGINEER TO THE BOARD**

The Area Engineer reported his satisfaction with the work carried out by the contractor in completing the annual flail-mowing programme.

Expenditure was reported at just under £100k, to date, with the sum outstanding to be expended upon clearance of blockages and channel de-weeding, dependent upon favourable weather conditions.

#### **Public Sector Co-operation Agreement**

The Area Engineer confirmed that the agreement has been signed by both parties and took effect on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 for an operational period of five years. A total budget of £20k has been allocated and, initially, authorisation will be sought to remove blockages from the River Frome, upstream of the A417 at Stretton Grandison.

### **Wormbrook/Allensmore**

The demaining procedure for demaining these watercourses is now in progress but the Environment Agency has advised that approval is not expected until the end of next year.

### **River Lodon**

Although the Board had carried out management of the bankside vegetation earlier in the year, it was reported that without consent, the owner of Cowarne Court had straightened a section of the river and installed a new access bridge. As a result of a discussion between the Chairman, Area Engineer and landowner it was agreed that the Board would not take enforcement action providing that agreed works were undertaken and these were subsequently carried out.

### **Lugg Rhea**

The Area Engineer advised that several meetings had taken place with Natural England and Herefordshire Wildlife Trust regarding proposed management of dense bank-side vegetation on sections of Lugg Rhea adjoining Lugg Meadows SSSI. However, it was not possible to reach an agreement because they were not prepared to consent to any tree management works other than pollarding of certain willows, which they would identify in due course. It was pointed out that, unless the watercourse could be maintained in its entirety, there would be no benefit in carrying out partial maintenance. Following discussion, the Board resolved that it would not carry out any maintenance on the Lugg Rhea, whatsoever, with future maintenance on Lugg Meadows restricted to the Shelwick Watercourse outfalls.

Arrangements will be made for a site visit as part of the itinerary for the next Annual Inspection.

**Action: AD**

### **Rainfall Figures**

The Area Engineer handed out the rainfall data courtesy of Corbett Farms and the Environment Agency.

### **Land Drainage Consent**

### **Planning Matters**

The Board's interests were not adversely affected by any of the listed applications.

### **16/035 Finance Reports**

Audrey Harris, the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) reported the rates position as at 30<sup>th</sup> September as £72,294 collected, representing 83% of the total. Second reminder letters are due to be issued later this month.

The actual spend to date is in line with the expected budget position and currently indicated a surplus of £7k.

The RFO advised an invoice for engineering advice in relation to a land drainage consent application of £4.5k is currently being challenged. The Chair requested that the invoice is challenged and that an update is provided at the January meeting.

#### **Action: AH**

The Board members unanimously approved to the Chairman signing the schedule of bills.

### **16/036 Insurance**

At the last meeting, the Clerk to the Board was asked to research alternative insurance companies that would provide personal accident cover with no restriction on age or up to the age of 90. The Clerk advised that the insurance brokers contacted various insurance companies however, they have not been able to identify anyone who will provide cover with no age restriction.

Aviva insurance company was identified of providing cover with benefits of up to £50,000 with an age restriction of 85. The cost would increase by £30.00.

The Clerk also advised that insurance could not be provided for one off days i.e the May inspection.

It was proposed by Cllr Hardick and seconded by Mr Makin to move personal accident cover to Aviva. All Board members agreed.

### **16/037 Risk Register**

The Clerk presented the risk register to the Board for consideration. It was noted that risk RLIDB013 will be reduced following the change of insurance.

#### **Action: AD to update the risk register**

The Clerk advised in relation to the new risk RLIDB014 data issues have been identified and options are being explored to improve information with the GIS data.

#### **Action: AD to provide an update at the next board meeting of data options**

#### **16/038 Health and Safety**

- Update on progress including updated H&S Policy for approval

The Clerk and Area Engineer met with the Health and Safety Officer for Hoople, Phil Chandler, regarding the Boards Health and Safety policy and have since updated the policy and the Clerk presented to the Board for approval.

The Area Engineer and Health and Safety Officer have agreed to meet with the subcontractors to discuss and run through their responsibilities. It was also suggested by the Health and Safety Officer that the Board should have a designated H&S Board member. The Chairman asked the Board for any volunteers. Nick Helme was nominated in his absence, all agreed.

**Action: AD to contact Nick Helme to see if he is willing to be the Board's designated H&S member and arrange meeting with contractors.**

#### **16/039 Policies for approval**

The following policies were reviewed and updated by the Clerk for the Board to approve.

##### **Anti-Bribery Policy**

The Board approved.

##### **Freedom of Information**

The Board approved.

#### **16/040 UNIDENTIFIED LAND AND MAPS**

The Clerk advised of 10 assessments that are unidentified and is expected to reduce again for the next meeting.

A question was raised whether the rates can be paid by bacs payment, the Clerk will investigate.

**Action: AD**

#### **16/041 ADA Board Meeting 12<sup>th</sup> October and ADA Branch Director**

The Chairman thanked Major James Hereford for attending the ADA Board meeting as a representative of the RLIDB.

James provided an update on the two key areas of the meetings, Partnership Agreements and ADA Director.

### **Partnership Agreement**

The EA Rep said that these must be 2 way with IDB's giving the EA work in return. It was not clear why this was necessary. The EA Rep said that it was essential, that the Assets should also be transferred where applicable. The DEFRA rep said that there was to be increased funding for river maintenance.

### **ADA Director**

It has been previously highlighted that we have no representation on the ADA Board. There are currently 9 Directors, one each from the 9 Branches of ADA. One of these Branches is the Severn & Wales Branch and although the Severn & Wales Branch still exists with RLIDB as the only member, it has not met since 2012. It has no elected Director as a result.

The Chief Executive of ADA has proposed, subject to approval by ADA and RLIDB that the name of the Severn & Wales Branch should be changed to the Wye and Lugg Branch (WLB) or any other name that RLIDB might wish to propose. The Branch would be reactivated with RLIDB as the only Member Board. The WLB would have to elect a Chairman, a Vice Chairman, a Clerk and a Director to ADA. It would be required to have a Constitution and hold meetings, however these meetings could be held in conjunction with RLIDB Meetings.

It was proposed by Major James Hereford and seconded by Mr John Smith that the ADA Director, Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Secretary is appointed in the first instance for two years at the January Board meeting and these appointments should co-occur with the RLIDB elections.

It was also agreed to appoint a sub-committee to work on the detail. James Hereford, Zita Chilman, John Smith and Charles Pudge were nominated by the Board and agreed to meet before the next Board meeting in January.

**Action: AD to arrange**

### **016/042 Any Other Business**

- Authorisation Letter

The Clerk has updated the letter to represent the persons authorised to service demands and other notices in representing the RLIDB in Magistrates and County Court. The Board approved and the Chairman signed the authorisation letter.

- ADA Technical & Environment / Policy & Finance Committee nominations

The ADA Committee has come to the end of a three year term and requesting applications for nominations. The Clerk had copies of the terms of reference for these committees and invited anyone who was interested to let them know and they would provide further details. No one present at the meeting expressed an interest.

The Clerk offered to attend the Annual ADA conference in November which was agreed by the Board.

- Area Engineer

The Chairman indicated that while the Area Engineer had not expressed a desire to slow down at the moment that it would be necessary at some point to appoint someone who could start picking up the role. The Chairman asked the Board to give consideration and to put forward any names, failing that the post would be advertised.

#### **16/043 Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting will take place on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

**Chairman**



**Clerk**

