



Danvm Drainage Commissioners

MINUTES OF THE FULL BOARD MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11TH FEBRUARY 2025 AT MOSS & FENWICK VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT

Elected

Mr R Robinson
Mr D Platt

Mr W Platt

Mr N Welburn

Mr A Cooke

Mr S Lomas

Appointed

Mr C Crowe
Mrs G Ivey
Mr M Duckitt

Cllr D Nevett
Cllr R Tams

Mr T Grady

Mr R Campbell

Cllr M Jordan

Co-Opted

APOLOGIES

Elected

Mr R Thompson

Mr M Falkingham

Appointed

Mr J Gilliver

Cllr J McCartney

Cllr K Osborne

ABSENT

Elected

Appointed

IN ATTENDANCE

Officers

Mr A McLachlan – Chief Executive Officer
Mr R Towse – Director of Operations
Mrs A Larkin – Director of Policy & Finance
Miss L Smith – Board Secretary

Andrew McLachlan
Chief Executive Officer and Clerk to the Board
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331. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

- 331.1. The Chair welcomed Members and Officers to the Board noting apologies from, Mr J Gilliver, Mr R Thompson, Cllr J McCartney, Mr M Falkingham and Cllr K Osborne.
- 331.2. Mr R Campbell introduced himself as the newly appointed member from Doncaster Council, Flood Risk Management Team.

332. Declarations of Interest

- 332.1. None declared.

333. Additional Agenda Items

- 333.1. A request to discuss Board Membership was raised and it was agreed that this would be added after Item 17.

334. Health & Safety

- 334.1. No near misses or incidents reported.

335. Natural Environment

- 335.1. The CEO confirmed an ecologist has been employed to investigate works in relation to the capital programme.
- 335.2. Mrs G Ivey advised she had been requested to raise the matter off SSSIs on behalf of another member who had asked what the board's duties are in relation to these.
- 335.3. The CEO advised the Board must adhere to rules and regulations when working on or near SSSIs.

336. Minutes of the previous Full Board Meeting

- 336.1. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19th November 2024 were reviewed and comments were invited from members.
- 336.2. Mr A Cooke advised he had provided his apologies but arrived at the meeting and would like recording as attended. **Action Bd Sec.**
- 336.3. Mr S Lomas highlighted 327.9 in relation to Clay Dike and requested clarification. The CEO advised an amendment to the minute was required to accurately reflect the proposed scheme. **Action Bd Sec.**
- 336.4. It was PROPOSED by Cllr M Jordan and SECONDED by Mr A Cooke and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board approve these minutes as a true record of that meeting subject to the above amendments.

337. Matters Arising

- 337.1. Cllr M Jordan queried if there were any updates in relation to the culvert at Hensall. The DO explained the culverted watercourse backflowed due to mining subsidence and that the Mining Remediation Authority [MRA] has agreed to fund a feasibility study. The DO said it was likely a new pumping station would be required here.
- 337.2. Cllr M Jordan asked what the expected timescale would be to resolve this issue to which Mr Crow advised this was dependent upon the MRA's budget.
- 337.3. Mr D Platt queried if it would be possible to temporarily pump whilst using the existing culvert, to which the DO confirmed this could be an option if the rising main were installed in the existing culvert.
- 337.4. The CEO advised that in relation to minute 305.9, a site survey was conducted where it was found that the invasive plant is Giant Hogweed, not Japanese Knotweed as was reported at the previous meeting, and that contractors are currently on site dealing with this issue.

338. Minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee Meeting

- 338.1. The Board reviewed and noted the minutes of the Policy and Finance meeting held on 21st January 2025.

339. Joint Consortium Committee Meeting

- 339.1. The Joint Consortium Committee minutes held on 27th November 2024 were presented to the board, and it was noted that during that meeting, the Consortium Committee had agreed on a shared services budget which formed part of the Budget for approval by the Board.
- 339.2. The Chair advised that she and the Vice Chair were members of the JCC by default, however the Board should also appoint two other ordinary members. The current ordinary Members were Mr Maddison and Mr Welburn.
- 339.3. It was PROPOSED by Mr A Cooke and SECONDED by Cllr M Jordan and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that Mr N Welburn and Mr P Maddison be reappointed to the Joint Consortium Committee.

340. Budget & Rate Setting

- 340.1. The CEO referred to the latest financial position. He explained that, due to the Defra IDB Fund, some revenue activities had been effectively reimbursed due to the success of bids submitted for electricity costs and pump station repairs.
- 340.2. Cllr M Jordan highlighted "discretionary expenditure" in the financial charts, and queried why there was such a substantial difference in "planned" and "actual" expenditure. The CEO explained that it was due to the Board's decision to allocate £250k to the refurbishment of the Kirk Bramwith depot.
- 340.3. The CEO highlighted an underspend on staff expenditure due to long term staff absence.

- 340.4. It was highlighted that electricity expenditure was under budget; however, the presented charts did not include January's costs.
- 340.5. The CEO referred to the Defra IDB fund, whereby successful bids were submitted and £155k was received for "sunk" costs already expended through Board revenue for electricity, watercourse maintenance, and pump repairs due to poor weather events.
- 340.6. Members were reminded that the Board subscribes to the ADA Lincolnshire White Book which provides fair market representation of staff salaries. This year an agreement was reached between staff and unions for a 5.1% pay increase across all pay scales.
- 340.7. The CEO advised that due to the government's recent tax changes, the extra over increase to Employers' National Insurance contributions would be c£8.5k for operational staff and c£15.5k for shared services staff.
- 340.8. Mr A Cooke queried the 3.95% increase in special levy payments to which the CEO confirmed this was due to changes in land use from agricultural to non-agricultural.
- 340.9. Mr A Cooke then highlighted a 28% increase in NI contributions whilst noting that staff costs remained low. The CEO explained that overtime costs had been overestimated in the previous budget.
- 340.10. Mr A Cooke queried why the asset survey costs completed by the contracted ecologist were so small to which it was explained that most of these surveys are funded directly from capital schemes rather than the P&L [Revenue Account].
- 340.11. Cllr D Nevett highlighted an increase in payments for telemetry, to which the CEO explained that this had been underestimated for 2023/24 as the system had required software and license upgrades. It was anticipated that most of these costs would be reclaimed through a capital scheme, however, must be included in the budget in case they cannot.
- 340.12. The Board discussed developer funds, and commuted sums and the benefit of vesting SuDS lagoons with IDBs rather than management companies to ensure appropriate maintenance.
- 340.13. Cllr M Jordan noted a recent flood defence funding announcement of £2.5billion. The CEO acknowledged this and other Defra workstreams such as water level management for peat soils and a review of the national flood defence fund [FDGiA] appraisal system.
- 340.14. It was PROPOSED by Cllr M Jordan and SECONDED by Cllr D Nevett and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board set a rate of 17.5p£ to meet an estimated budget of £3,122,630.

341. Invoices Paid and Accounts Settled

- 341.1. The invoices paid and accounts settled for the third quarter of 2024/25 were reviewed by the Board.

341.2. The Chair noted that there were seventeen items of motor fleet insurance and queried if these were attributed to each item of machinery. The DO advised that anything which is self-driven which may encounter another vehicle must be classed as a motor vehicle.

341.3. It was PROPOSED by Mrs G Ivey and SECONDED by Mr C Crowe and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board approve the invoices paid and accounts settled, totalling £594,429.79 (net), as a true record.

342. Internal Audit

342.1. The DPF highlighted the latest internal audit reports for 2024/25, in which no concerns had been raised.

343. Capital Programme

343.1. The CEO provided the capital programme for the Board's approval and ratification. Although all works had been discussed at the previous Board meeting and with the Policy and Finance committee, some detailed work was pending in relation to the Tranche 2 funding.

343.2. The CEO explained that as part of the Clay Dike scheme, the top section of Clay Dike would be diverted to the upstream side of the Stoney Lane pumping station to avoid the situation where 2 catchments were competing for discharge capacity.

343.3. New pumps and telemetry would be installed in Blackshaw Clough and Towns Clough. The capacity would remain as before, as this is determined by the power supply and outlet, but will run more efficiently.

343.4. Mr C Crowe queried if the new pumps were eel friendly, to which the DO advised these had been specified in consultation with the EA fisheries team.

343.5. Detailed drawings have been completed for Beal Lane and it is expected this project will be tendered to contractors.

343.6. The DO confirmed that pumps and a control panel had been ordered for Whitley Pump station, all funded by government grant and a contribution from National Highways.

343.7. It was confirmed that works on the Board's depot would commence in May/June.

343.8. In relation to the Tranche 2 fund, Members were reminded that the Defra IDB fund monies have to be claimed on an expenditure basis before 31st March 2025 and that officers were working to extremely challenging deadlines.

343.9. For Taining drain, the CEO explained that the basic solution would be to create an open cut. He confirmed that notice had been served on the landowner/occupier, and that no feedback had been received.

343.10. The DO reported a collapsed culvert on Ings Drain between the flood cells which will be repaired by contractors.

Ref	Scheme Name	Previously Approved Value	Requested Approved Value	Funding Status
DNv02	Clay Dike (New Cut)	£351k	No Change	Funded by Defra.
DN 03	Beal Lane PS	£58k	£206k	Feasibility Funded by National Highways £33k and TCA £25k – Further grant awards for detailed design and tender docs
DN 04	Gowdall PS Refurb	£25k	No Change	Paused in programme
DN 5	Whitley PS	£25k	£150k	Funded by Defra and DfT
DN 07	Town Drain PS	£25k	No Change	Paused
DN 12	Stubbs Bridge	£80k	No Change	Awaiting PDR Confirmation
DN 16	Hensall Village Culvert	£19k	No Change	TCA have agreed to fund feasibility work
DN 28	Kirk Bramwith Depot Refurbishment	£250k	£0	Approved by full Board funded from base revenue
DN 30	IDB Fund – Tranche 1	£972	£0	Approval delegated to P&F Committee. Funded by Defra
TBC	IDB Fund -Tranche 2	£0	£671k	Defra funded various works including Taining Drain, Blackshaw PS, Towns Clough PS and Ings Drain

343.11. It was PROPOSED by Mr C Crowe and SECONDED by Cllr D Nevett and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board ratify and approve the capital programme.

344. Public Sector Agreements

344.1. Regarding the Went, the DO reported that work has commenced from Topham ferry to the viaduct. Trees were removed at the base and from the banks to improve conveyance of water. It is hoped that Phase 2 will be agreed this year, which will be from Topham ferry to the east coast mainline.

344.2. The EA were investigating replacement of the outfall doors.

344.3. Mr N Welburn queried if there were additional issues with the Went, as the dikes at Balne had filled up rapidly with the recent weather. He asked if Fleet Drain was blocked, to which the DO advised he would investigate this. **Action DO.**

344.4. It was also reported that willows had blown into the river, off Low Gate, close to the proposed solar farms.

345. Plant and Vehicles

- 345.1. It was reported that the purchase of the low loader and 13-tonne excavator had made operations much more efficient.
- 345.2. The CEO advised that next year's budget holds an opportunity for an extra eight tonne machine, though this could be afforded before April.

346. Maintenance

- 346.1. The DO highlighted previous concerns in relation to Bulling Dyke and confirmed that contractors were working on this closely with Barnsley Council, who are facilitating access to the watercourse.
- 346.2. Tree works were being completed around Womersley, to which Mr W Platt highlighted that whilst this had been a positive operation, arisings from the works required dealing with. The DO advised that landowners were informed prior to this work being completed.
- 346.3. Mr S Lomas queried who was responsible for removing blockages within a watercourse, to which the CEO advised this would always be the responsibility of the adjacent landowner, however the Board may be able to offer support in relation to these matters.
- 346.4. The DO advised that it was expected the operational team would be up to full capacity and was creating a programme of planned operational works. He confirmed the maintenance plan would be discussed at the summer meeting.
- 346.5. Mr A Cooke asked if officers had assessed watercourses which require annual and alternate maintenance. The DO advised that this had not yet been completed as the main priority was to complete agreed capital scheme works.
- 346.6. The Chair requested that the maintenance plan be discussed at the next meeting. **Action DO.**
- 346.7. Mr N Welburn highlighted silt in culverts at Balne. The DO responded, advising that around 8-10km of culverts across the network were MRA's responsibility and that officers would liaise regarding a cleaning regime for these watercourses.

347. Development Control & Planning

- 347.1. The DO advised that a site visit had been held with the developers at Thorpe Marsh battery storage development. Drainage principles had been agreed. As there was no part of the development near to a watercourse, there would only be normal surface water runoff into Reedholme. Survey work had been planned to confirm that the levels were viable.
- 347.2. The Board discussed their concerns with battery storage in the area and potential pollution. Officers advised that such matters fell outside of their regulatory purview.

348. Board Membership

- 348.1. It was PROPOSED by Mr S Lomas and SECONDED by Mr T Grady and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that Mr M Duckitt be co-opted to the Board.
- 348.2. Mr M Duckitt accepted the nomination and was duly co-opted.

349. Future Meetings

2025/26 Dates

Tuesday 20th May 2025 – Policy & Finance Committee
Wednesday 4th June 2025 – Full Board Meeting
Wednesday 16th July 2025 – Drifffield Show
Tuesday 29th July 2025 – Policy & Finance Committee
Tuesday 14th October 2025 – Policy & Finance Committee
Tuesday 4th November 2025 – Full Board Meeting
Tuesday 25th November 2025 – ADA Flood & Water Conference (London)
Thursday 27th November 2025 – Joint Consortium Committee
Tuesday 2nd December 2025 – ADA Annual General Meeting (Online)
Tuesday 20th January 2026 – Policy & Finance Committee
Tuesday 10th February 2026 – Full Board Meeting