

MINUTES OF THE NORTH SOMERSET LEVELS FULL BOARD MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM ON 19 OCT 20

Attendance:			
Elected Members: Mr T Bush (Chair) Mr M Britten Mr B Gray Mr P Kingcott Mr A Mead Mr R Mitchell Mr G Plaister Mr C Redding	Appointed Members: Cllr S Bridger Mr P Burden Cllr J Cato Cllr C Cronnelly Mr R Garner Cllr R Westwood	Officers: Mr R Burge (Clerk) Mrs C-A Morgan Mr I Sturdy Mrs M Hammond Mr S Bunn Mr P Brewin Mr G Oliver Mr D Alsop Mr D Crossman	Public:
Approved Apologies:			
Mr N Cole	Cllr A Harley Cllr B Petty Cllr J Tonkin Cllr C Webb Mrs D Yamanaka		
Non-Approved Apologies:			
Mr E Adams Mr B Letts Mr R Parsons Mr C Pyke Mr R Triggol	Cllr M Crosby Mr D Dash Mr P Harris Cllr S Hogg		

Agenda Item:	Detail:	Action:
1. Attendance and Apologies	1.1. Apologies as per the above Attendance List.	
2. Items additional to the Agenda	2.1. The Clerk reported that the Agenda and invitation to the Meeting had been advertised on the Boards' website, however no members of the public had requested to join the Meeting. 2.2. Mr G Oliver, Engineer, reported a Tenders update would be provided at Item 8, <i>Engineering and Operational Report</i> .	
3. Declarations of Interest	3.1. Mr C Redding – landlord of Hewish office.	

Each Board is a statutory public body with responsibilities for flood protection, land drainage and the environment.
All are members of the Association of Drainage Authorities.

	3.2. Members were reminded to express declarations of interest as necessary through the Meeting.	
4. Approval of Minutes	4.1. The Full Board Minutes of 23 Jun 20 were accepted unanimously and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate reflection of the Meeting.	
5. Matters Arising	<p><u>Review of Actions</u></p> <p>6.1. <i>NSL/20200204-01: The Clerk took an Action to hold Officer and Member discussions in the formation of a Board Policy to standardize channel cleaning access and traversing of maize fields.</i> The Clerk reported that, following agreement with the Chairman, this Meeting would be extended to include with the Axe Brue and Parrett Boards to formulate a Joint Watercourse management Policy. This Action was closed.</p>	<p>Action: NSL/20200204-01: Closed</p>
6. Governance Updates	<p><u>Data Protection Officer</u></p> <p>6.1. The Clerk reported for compliance of Internal Audit Action (Finding 1.7 of Development & Control Audit) to enable improvement of compliance with GDPR, the Board are required to adopt a Data Protection Officer independent of the Boards.</p> <p>It was agreed the Clerk conduct further research and report at a future meeting.</p> <p><u>Code of Conduct</u></p> <p>6.2. The Clerk brought to the Boards attention the Members' Code of Conduct (including disclosure of personal interests), endorsed by the Board 22 Jun 20.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement Policy had been endorsed by the Board on 22 Jun 20 • The Clerk reported that there had been a number of occasions where Staff have felt pressurised by individual Board Members into conducting actions that may not necessarily be in the interest of the Board and therefore potentially against the Members Code of Conduct. This was an unacceptable situation for both Members and Staff who may compromise their position for the benefit of others • A number of Members had not submitted their Register of Interests which included a declaration to abide by the Boards' Members Code of Conduct. 	

CpB

- Failure to submit a Register of Members Interest should be seen as a failure to accept the Code of Conduct.

New Action NSL/20201019-01: The Clerk took an Action **to re-issue the Register of Members Interests to Members for return within 28 days.**

**New Action:
NSL/20201019-01: Clerk**

Cider House Paper

6.3. The Clerk reported that a paper had been provided to Members with the Calling Notice for deliberation and discussion. He highlighted:

- The Boards offices were now Bradbury House, Highbridge
- NSLIDB full Board Meetings were held in external buildings as Cider House was not adequate
- Cider House has been closed since Mar 20 due to COVID restrictions
- Administration Assistant working remotely
- Cider House, Hewish, is rented and not a Board Asset
- Best interest of public purse is to relinquish office space, saving (approx. total) £40k
- Administration Assistant could continue to be employed and operating remotely
- Shared services were being provided under the SDBC Consortium Agreement
- Under the Consortium Agreement, 15-months' notice was to be served if the Board wished to withdraw which would allow new offices and staff to be secured if that was necessary

The general consensus of Members was that, whilst still awaiting the conclusion of the Strategic Review, this was not the time to make this monumental decision.

The Clerk stated that the Board need to provide a clear rationale to their decision whatever the outcome.

Mr P Burden proposed, seconded by Mr P Kingcott to defer the decision of the future of the Cider House, Hewish until after the Extraordinary Board Meeting to be held 03 Nov 20 to endorse the Strategic Review

Vote: Unanimous

RESOLUTION 1

CPCB

	<p><u>Strategic Review of Plant, Machinery and Manpower:</u></p> <p>6.4The Clerk reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Axe Brue, Parrett & NSLIDB T&F Groups had met on 29, 30, 31 July respectively. • 3 x Board Chairmen had sat on 6 Aug to discuss outcomes. • Revised Strategic Review Paper reflecting T&F Group agreements sent to all T&F Group Members 30 Sep 20 for endorsement. • Strategic Review of Plant, Machinery & Manpower sent in hard-copy to all Axe Brue, Parrett and NSLIDB Board Members for review and deliberation • Extraordinary Board Meetings (Single Agenda Item) planned for 03 Nov 20. <p>Mr C Redding expressed concern for resilience of current NSLIDB Staff. The Clerk reported the intention was to provide resilience of the NSLIDB Rhyne Supervisor role under the Strategic Review of Manpower with a fully shared Expenditor/Rhyne Supervisor workforce that would include Water Environment Worker (Apprentice) resource.</p>	
<p>7. Finance Report</p>	<p>7.1. Director of Finance, as the Responsible Finance Office (RFO), confirmed that the quarterly accounts reconciliation was continuing, however, due to Covid-19 restrictions.</p> <p>7.2. Dir Fin confirmed the current total bank account balances as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1,319,828.05 <p><u>SDBC Accounts</u></p> <p>7.3. Dir Fin provided an overview of the SDBC accounts with the following points of note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year-End SDBC forecast was a favourable variance of approx. £47 primarily due to Staff gapping whist awaiting the Strategic Review to deliver. • Income forecast was an adverse variance, however and Expenditure favourable variance would off-set this. • I&E Report and Notes to Accounts were accepted 'as read'. 	

QPCB

	<p><u>NSLIDB Accounts</u></p> <p>7.4. The RFO provided an overview of the Balance Sheet reporting that she had no concern for the year-end forecast:</p> <p>I&E Report: Surplus £329k.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income favourable variance due to commuted sums and SDBC income. • Expenditure favourable variance due to less maintenance and Board Schemes expected to be delivered in-year and reduced property costs. • Year-End deficient £187,395 due to roll-over spend from previous years. It was noted that this rollover figure had significantly reduced from previous years. • I&E Report and Notes to Accounts were accepted 'as read'. <p><u>End of Year Report 2019/2020</u></p> <p>7.5. Dir Fin reported the External Auditor, PKF Littlejohn LLP, had reported no matters of concern and had closed the audit.</p>	
<p>8. Engineering & Operational Report</p>	<p>8.1. Mr G Oliver (Engineer South Area) asked for the Engineering & Operational Report to be taken as read.</p> <p>Questions and points of note as follows:</p> <p>8.2. Cllr S Bridger enquired about the water level of the tilting weir at Black Ditch, Wimberham Lane. Mr D Crossman (Rhyne Supervisor Contractor) reported that issues in this area were due to ongoing Environment Agency operations at Congresbury Yeo.</p> <p>8.3. Mr D Alsop (Engineer North Area) highlighted the Red, Amber, Green (RAG) status of schemes to be delivered in-year, and reported on the flexibility to bring forward schemes to maximise schemes delivered in-year. He recommended bringing forward elver pass schemes for completion in the current year.</p> <p>Members also agreed to not complete Bullock Farm and to reallocate funds as necessary.</p> <p><i>Mr M Britten proposed, seconded by Mr Cllr J Cato, that, in principal, schemes within the 3-Year Programme of Works are brought forward to maximise schemes delivered in-year.</i></p> <p>Vote: unanimous</p>	<p>RESOLUTION 2</p>

CFCB

8.4. Yatton Tenders: Mr Oliver reported:

- 3x Contractors invited to Tender
- 2x Tenders received
 - Spratt Plant Hire
 - Parrett Gardens

Officer recommendation: Spratt's Plant Hire with reallocated funds i.e. Bullock Farm scheme

Mr B Mitchell proposed, seconded by Mr R Westwood that the Tender for work at Yatton is awarded to Spratt's Plant Hire (Costs iaw Tender) with additional funds reallocated from Bullock Farm.

Vote: Unanimous

1550: Mr B Garner and Cllr Cronnelly left the Meeting

8.5. Mr S Bunn (Development Control Officer) reported the following points of note:

- National Grid: Gordano Valley was experiencing issues with high ground water
- Super Pond: Unresolved issues with Persimmon, who were currently re-modelling
- Enforcement: investigations continued into the ditch at Willow Close
- Bypass: Constraints with the area and model discussions had been conducted

8.6. Stowey Rhyne, Yatton Mr Oliver reported that Notice had been served on landowners and works were due to commence in the near future. The Land Drainage Act 1991 permitted the Board to enter land under formal Notice. The Clerk reported resident inference was expected as last year and that 'Implied Rights of Entry' had been removed. He commented that Legal advice had been sought to confirm that the Board had 'Statutory Powers of Entry' and not 'Implied Rights of Access' and therefore the Board had powers to conduct the maintenance activities on Stowey Rhyne in accordance with the required Notice of Entry which was issued.

The Clerk reported that Powers of Entry were to be followed and the police to be called if considered absolutely necessary in order to gain entry to conduct the works.

RESOLUTION 3

C12B

9. Risk Review	9.1. The Clerk had distributed the updated Risk Register Dashboard with the Calling notice and took members through the Top 10 Risks.	
10. Any Other Business	<p>10.1. Mr A Mead reported that a good job had been carried out to remove weeds from grills in culverts at St. Georges. Mr Oliver reported that he was to discuss this matter with North Somerset Council as these structures were their responsibility.</p> <p>10.2. Mr P Kingcott expressed concern for a tidal flap on an Environment Agency structure at Mill Lease. Mr Crossman reported that the issue had been reported to the Environment Agency who had confirmed it is within their Work Programme.</p> <p>10.3. Mr Oliver reported that a Meeting with the Environment Agency was due to be held in the near future.</p>	
11. Date of Next Meeting	<p>11.1. The date of the next Full Board meeting was reported as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extraordinary Full Board – 03 Nov 20 • Finance & Works – 19 Jan 21 • Full Board – 02 Feb 20 <p>There being no other business the Meeting was closed at 1610.</p>	

Annex:

A. North Somerset Levels Board – Table of Outstanding Actions

CHAIR Oliver Burt DATE 02 02 2020

**ANNEX A TO
NSLIDB BOARD MINUTES
DATED 19 OCT 2020**

NORTH SOMERSET LEVELS BOARD – TABLE OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Action Number:	Action:	Actionee:
NSL/20201019-01	To re-issue the Register of Members Interests to Members for return within 28 days.	Clerk