

WITHAM FOURTH DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES

of the proceedings of the **Board** at a Meeting held at 47 Norfolk Street
on **Wednesday, 7 February 2024**

Present: -

Messrs: P. Bedford A. Harrison
C. Butler M. Leggott
C. Crunkhorn D. Middleton
(Vice-Chairman) P. Richardson (Chairman)
S. Evans A. Saul
C. Hardy D. Scoot
A. Hall K. Smith
R. Hall-Jones J. Ward
J. Woods

1 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting. The Chairman confirmed the advert for the Technical Officer vacancy was now live and being advertised in the Farmers Weekly. It was also on the Board's website and other social media and the Chairman urged Members to share the information amongst their contacts.

The Chairman confirmed that as the new financial year was approaching copies of the Members' Interest forms had been set out on the table and asked that the forms be reviewed and returned to the Ratings Officer. This information was required as part of our good governance audit requirement.

The Chairman advised the Lincolnshire Show was due to take place on 19-20 June 2024 and asked if anyone had anything they would like included in the Boards' stand there that they let him know.

The Storm Babet Statement of Claim had been discussed by the RFCC in January but the Board would have to wait for the new financial year for definite confirmation as to whether the claim for £180k would be settled.

The meeting with the East Fen landowners held on 30th January had been well received by the 30 or so landowners that had attended. The Chairman extended his thanks to the Board Members that had attended.

- A. Saul - wanted to thank the Chief Engineer and the team on an excellent presentation and believed that landowners had a much clearer understanding of the work the Board had carried out during the recent weather events and the part that the Environment Agency ("EA") had played.*
- K. Smith - agreed and said that it was now appreciated that the recent flooding was not a Witham Fourth issue.*
- D. Middleton - felt landowners were happy having had an opportunity to voice their concerns and the question-and-answer session had been particularly appreciated..*

The Chief Executive confirmed that he had received a number of enquiries regarding the vacancy on the Board following the meeting.

D. Scoot confirmed that he would like to be added to the Works Committee and the Chairman thanked him for his interest. S. Evans confirmed that he would be willing to join the Finance Committee.

2 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for non-attendance were received from: -

B. Bowles, T. Ashton and S. Welberry

No apologies were received from H. Staples or N. Jones

3. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST ON ANY GENERAL ITEM**

Outer Dowsing – A. Saul, J. Woods, C. Crunkhorn
Gaysford Road Development – A. Saul

4 **MINUTES**

4.1 **Board Meeting – Wednesday, 13th December 2023**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on 13th December 2022 were submitted and were agreed as accurate, pending one amendment, and signed by the Chairman.

J. Ward - asked if there was any update regarding the 2 landowners that were refusing to pay the drainage rates? The Chief Executive confirmed that the rates were still outstanding. One of the ratepayers had attended the East Fen meeting on 30th January so it was hoped he now had a better understanding of the issues faced. The other was a long-standing matter over a number of years where the Board was trying to assist with an EA issue de-silting the watercourse. The Chief Executive was confident that once the issues had been resolved payment of the rates would be received.

J. Ward - referred to page 28 of the Minutes and asked why no emergency had been declared? The Chief Executive confirmed that the Emergency Services would only declare an emergency if there was a danger of loss of life. This was a flooding emergency but was not declared as such.

5. **MINUTES OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – 17 January 2024**

5.1 **Matters arising:**

To approve the Adoption of Officer's Estimate

The Chief Executive confirmed that a copy of his Estimate Memorandum had been made available to all Board Members.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the figures had been discussed at the December Board meeting and he had subsequently been in contact with both councils to ensure that they were fully aware of the impending substantial increase to the rate.

The Chairman added that this was a massive increase, certainly the largest increase ever implemented by the Board and asked if there were any further questions and there were none.

K. Smith - declared that he was unable to support such a large rise in the rate and believed there would be a backlash. The Chief Executive agreed that it was a very steep increase but confirmed that, including this increase, the average rate increase over the past 10 years was 4.5% and both councils had an average rate increase of 3.6% over the same period so the two were not worlds apart. The only difference was that until now there had only been incremental increases and the bulk of the increase had been added in one hit.

C. Butler - added the large rate increase would help the councils fight against the unfairness of the special levies.

A. Saul - asked if the electric costs reduced would the rate come down? The Chief Executive confirmed that the increase was always limited to what was required for the Board to meet its' obligations.

The Chairman confirmed that he could not see the rate reducing looking at the long-term plans for the District. The recent weather event had cost the Board £290k and whilst the staff were dealing with weather events, no routine maintenance work was being carried out in the District. The costs of dealing with the slips were between £500k and £1 million. Dredging required a £4.5 million investment.

The Chief Executive added that the new pumping stations would be much more efficient than the current ones and the Chairman believed that electricity usage would be significantly reduced.

The Vice-Chairman confirmed that the 20% rate increase was not only in respect of the increase in electricity costs but also in relation to the hit on the General Reserve by Storm Babet. The General Reserve needs to be ready for the next big weather event so he did not believe a reduction would happen.

5.2 To approve the proposed rate increase

A vote was taken, and the majority were in favour with 1 objection. So it was:

- RESOLVED**
- i) The Chief Executive's Estimates be adopted with an 20% increase in the rate.
 - ii) that the resultant rate be levied in the Sub District 1 (*the former Borough Area of Boston*) to be one half of the full rate:
11.418 pence
 - iii) that the resultant rate be levied in Sub District 2 (*the remainder of the Internal District*) be the full rate:
22.836 pence
 - iv) that the Special Levies on Local Charging Authorities be set as follows:

Boston Borough Council	£1,507,823.97
East Lindsey District Council	£ 531,647.20

The Rate was duly sealed at the meeting and would be published on the Board's website.

Finally, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 17 January 2024 were submitted and agreed as accurate and signed by the Committee's Chairman.

6. MEETINGS WITH OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

The Chief Executive confirmed there were a few points to bring to the Board's attention:-

- At the Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Level Management it was confirmed that 818 properties had been flooded which was more than the total number of properties flooded for the period 2012 to 2022 combined.
- The Flood Minister had visited the areas of flooding around Lincoln and Sleaford and the Partnership would be putting a list of things that could help with a recovery fund and the Chief Executive would show the Board Members a draft of the same once he received it. He believed this was a very positive step.

The Engineering Manager had attended the meeting on 16th January 2024 for the Boston and South Holland Flood Risk and Drainage Group where it was confirmed that LCC had obtained £4m funding to deal with the Section 19 notices which were being dealt with by 3 external consultants. The Engineering Manager confirmed he was happy to co-operate with this.

7. STRATEGIC PLAN

The Chief Executive referred Board Members to the Strategic Plan and confirmed the document encapsulates everything the Board has done, is doing and wants to do in the future. A review of the Board's objectives had taken place and the completed ones had been replaced by new objectives. Page 6 onwards shows the changes and include a number of things, some which the Board hoped to achieve and others that needed to happen.

A. Saul - questioned whether the Board deserved 10/10 when referring to the *Catchwater Drain*? The Chief Executive agreed as it had not been de-silted and proposed 5/10 was more appropriate.

The Chief Executive confirmed that Social Media presence had improved in the past year and the Chief Engineer confirmed that lots of information had been posted at the time of the recent weather events detailing the work being done by the Board. The Chief Executive added that the website now included links to additional support available during flood events which was very useful.

The Board has a Bio-diversity Action Plan ("BAP") which is regularly updated to keep Board Members fully up to date with environmental issues. L3.2 shows the District Staff now have a field map app on

their tablets which allows them to record anything of interest.

An Occupational Health Therapist had now been engaged to survey the staff's mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Page 8 shows that the Board is seeking to recruit a Technical Engineer to support the team. The New Lone Worker app was now ready to be rolled out.

Page 9 shows new objectives. The details of the East Fen meeting will be included in the annual newsletter that will be sent out in early May. De-silting is another long-term objective.

Page 10 briefly sets out staff restructuring in the wake of Storm Babet. The Pump Engineer has moved into to a managerial role (Pumping Operations Manager) so that he can be responsible for shift rotas etc during weather events. The Board has one part-time employee who is on standby for weather events. The Pumping Operations Manager will also be able to drop into a pumping role as and when required.

The Chief Engineer confirmed that there had been welfare issues as a result of the pumping shifts worked during the recent storms. The extra member of staff will assist in rotation of the shifts. Some of the staff had worked 21 days continuously without a break and some had suffered as a result.

M. Leggott - questioned that surely employees knew that they would be required to work like this when there was a weather event? The Chief Engineer said that it had not come as a shock but it could not be held against employees for suffering ill health with issues such as high blood pressure. The Chief Executive added that it was not a clean work environment with diesel pumps running continuously. The Chairman added this was not just routine pumping but emergency pumping which could happen at any time.

The Chief Executive referred Board Members to the appendices.

1. New ADA Policy statement - DEFRA Standard
2. The Board have attended Parish council meetings to discuss the work the Board does. The ADA Gazette is another opportunity to highlight the Board, as is our presence at the Lincs show together with the increased social media platforms now used.
3. Summary of projects and the capital funding obtained by the Board to date which stood at almost £10m for 2024.

The Board had already spent £4.6m against a total future spend of around £77 million.

The total investment by the Board in the Capital Investment fund totalled £1.285 million of a total spend of £77 million.

D. Middleton - asked how well the Board had performed on major projects over the past 5 years? The Chief Executive confirmed that the risk for Wrangle Pumping Station project was £1.5 million of which £1.4 million was still available.

The Chief Engineer added that the biggest risk was inflation although he was hoping that these projects would not be susceptible to such big inflation figures as had been seen recently. The Chief Executive confirmed that Wrangle Pumping Station was the biggest project undertaken so far and before that it was the Wrangle Sea Banks project which had totalled approximately £2 million.

The Chief Executive confirmed that of all the projects listed, only 3 were not fully funded. The Chief Engineer confirmed that he was mindful of the Board's exposure and he and the Chief Executive were in constant dialogue. The Chief Executive confirmed that the Board has £1.6 million of EA money held on account of projects.

- An update was handed out to Board Members in relation to Appendix 4 which showed a list of projects for which there was no funding available but which the Board would like to achieve. The ones highlighted in green have been completed.

The Engineering Manager confirmed that at present the issues were being dealt with on a priority basis as and when they arose. Together with the Operations Manager, he was reviewing the defects in the district to prepare a programme of works.

The Chairman asked if the Board were prepared to approve the Strategic Plan.

P. Bedford proposed that the Strategic Plan be approved. This was seconded by D. Scoot. There was unanimous approval and it was therefore:

RESOLVED That the Strategic Plan be approved.

8. **OFFICE ACCOMMODATION**

The Chief Executive confirmed that he had prepared a paper regarding the state of the building at 47 Norfolk Street. The building currently costs £36k per year to run for approximately 8 staff. Discussions had been had with a local agent who confirmed the current value as circa £400k.

Other options had been considered such as renting office space, buying a new ready to move into Building however whilst these were costly the main issue was there was little suitable office accommodation available within the Board's district.

However, another option available to the Board was to utilise some of the space at the new Hobhole Pumping Station to include office space and a boardroom. The Chief Engineer showed the Board Members a slide with the proposed layout of the Pumping Station together with space for offices. This was a window of opportunity for the Board. The project is currently in the design stage and the project is fully funded so the Board would only need to pay the additional sums required for the office space. If the Board were prepared to agree to this proposal then the Chief Engineer could ask for it to be included in the design and obtain an estimate of the costs.

- P. Bedford* - said in his opinion it was an absolute no-brainer to be able to build your own modern office.
- S. Evans* - added £36k annual running costs was a significant amount of money and the new office would require no/minimal maintenance.
- M. Leggott* - agreed the Board needed to future proof it's investments.

The Chief Engineer said that his idea was to have a "satellite" office at Lade Bank Pumping Station so that the Engineering Manager and the Operations Manager could work from there when necessary and then the administration office at Hobhole Pumping Station along with a Boardroom.

The Chief Executive believed that a single storey building would cost between £100k-£200k.

The Chief Engineer confirmed that if the idea was acceptable to the Board he could work on the planning design.

- J. Woods* - confirmed that the building at Norfolk Street was a lovely building with some great history this is a good opportunity to move forward and it shows ratepayers great value for money.
- M. Leggott* - agreed with J. Woods and asked what the running costs for the new offices would be? The Chairman said there were no firm details at present as this was only an idea at this time.

The Chief Engineer added the Board had not incurred any costs at this stage and he would obtain the price of the offices separately but would arrange a feasibility study to see whether the office could be run on solar power. This would not be an option for the pumps but could be a possibility for the offices.

The Chairman added that T. Ashton had e-mailed his support for the relocation of the offices but

questioned whether the location would prove to be a bit remote. The Chairman added that it was essential to retain the history of the Board if and when the offices were relocated.

- D. Middleton* - asked if there would be a cost element for staff relocating to a new place of employment? The Chief Executive confirmed that the location was an additional 5 miles from the office so there may be a need to contribute towards staff costs. The Chief Engineer confirmed the project would not be completed until 2029 although the Lade Bank project would be completed before then.
- C. Hardy* - asked if there would still be a reception area for visitors? The Chief Engineer confirmed there would be.
- M. Leggott* - asked where the funds would come from to cover the Lade Bank satellite office? The Chief Executive confirmed that the Pumping Station Reserves would cover this and an additional benefit was that new fast broadband had just been installed at Lade Bank

The Chairman added that there was lots of issues “up in the air” at present and asked if the Board were prepared to approve the relocation of the offices to Hobhole Pumping Station and the installation of a satellite office at Lade Bank Pumping Station.

M. Leggott proposed that the relocation of the office and the creation of a satellite office at Lade Bank Pumping Station be approved. This was seconded by S. Evans. There was unanimous approval and it was therefore:

RESOLVED That when appropriate the office be relocated to Hobhole Pumping Station and a satellite office be created at Lade Bank Pumping Station.

9 **CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND FINANCE MANAGERS REPORT**

9.1 **Bank Balance**

The Chief Executive confirmed that the bank balances were looking healthy. The £500k held on Lloyds deposit account had recently matured providing interest of £14k. These funds would now be deposited with CCLA where interest of £4,500 per month will accrue. The bank balance include £1.6 million of grant money which cannot be invested.

9.2 **Payments Made**

The Chief Executive confirmed that payments totalling £117k had been made to DRAX in November and December in respect of electricity costs incurred dealing with the weather event.

9.3 **Rating Income**

The Chief Executive confirmed the rate arrears shown in his report had since reduced by £16k. Reminders had just recently been sent out which had led to an increase in credit card activity.

9.4 **Solar Panel Performance**

The Chief Executive apologised that the Solar Panel report was not included in the papers and that these would be e-mailed to Board Members tomorrow.

10. **CHIEF ENGINEER'S REPORT**

The Chief Engineer read through his report, which he would take as read and highlighted areas of importance for Board Members. The Chief Engineer was happy to answer any questions as he ran through the report.

10.1 **Pumping Station Operations**

The Chief Engineer confirmed the graph showed the total number of pumping hours completed. January had got off to a wet start as a result of Storm Henk. 3,972 hours of pumping had been completed including 750 hours of diesel pumping.

10.2 **Sluice Hours**

The Chief Engineer confirmed the sluice hours at Hobhole Pumping Station and that free discharge had been maximised where possible to reduce costs. However, this had been very limited in November and December.

10.3 **Hobhole Pumping Station and Lade Bank Pumping Station**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that these both had ongoing maintenance issues.

10.4 **Coastal Stations, Boston East and Littlemoor Lane Pumping Stations**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that there had been an electric motor failure at the Benington Pumping Station which had now been repaired and re-installed.

10.5 **Lade Bank Annual Average Rainfall**

Page 7 of the Chief Engineer's report showed the average rainfall at Lade Bank Pumping Station over the last 100 years. There had been 41mm of rainfall within the first 4 days of January this year. His report showed the average rainfall at Lade Bank Pumping Station over the last 100 years as 583mm. Last year the rainfall at Lade Bank had been 866mm being an increase of 148%. The records at Lade Bank date back to 1852.

10.6 **Water Transfer**

The Chief Engineer confirmed there had been some issues at Crows Bridge where unknown persons had been opening the penstock through the high rainfall periods which allowed water into the lower area. To rectify this, the Board have modified the structure's lock and it is only able to be unlocked by the Board. This has caused a bit of upset locally but the closure will not apply permanently, only when the Board is in pumping mode.

10.7 **The East Fen Catchment**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that the landowner who had registered a complaint against the Board had attended the East Fen Presentation. The landowner wanted to know why the Board could not lower the water levels at the end of August. The Chief Engineer said that he did not have an issue doing this but there was a risk of a dry August/September and there would then be no water in the drain. The Board is pro-active and monitors the levels so that action can be taken when necessary but the Chief Engineer asked the Board if they wanted to consider trialling this course of action.

J. Ward - asked if the levels were below winter level before Storm Babet hit what would be the benefit of lowering them earlier? The Chief Engineer said that he could not answer that question.

A. Harrison - supported a flexible approach.

R. Hall-Jones - added it would be dependent upon the soil moisture deficit. The Chief Engineer added if the soil moisture deficit were high in August it could be dropped by an inch at a time. However, this request had been made by only 1 landowner out of 700 in the area.

K. Smith - added this should be considered on a year-by-year basis as there were a number of influencing factors but he agreed the Board needed to be flexible.

R. Hall-Jones - suggested that the direction of the maintenance work should be reversed to start at the top end and work back towards Lade Bank Pumping Station. The Chief Engineer confirmed the issue was when there were weather events early in the year and the vegetation could cause issues. This was certainly something that he would discuss with the workforce.

The Chief Executive confirmed that when people make complaints they have the benefit of hindsight which the Board does not have when making the decisions at the time of the weather event.

A. Harrison - added that irrigation was often required in September. The Vice-Chairman agreed with this statement.

A. Saul - asked how long it would take to reduce the water levels? The Chief Engineer confirmed it could be done in 3-4 days but this would cause damage to the banks. The Chief Engineer said that he is happy with the way the Board currently proceeds.

- K. Smith* - said that he was not an engineer but was there any reason why the level could not be reduced earlier and slower than presently done?
- R. Hall-Jones* - said he would agree with this.

The Chief Engineer said that he was happy to give this a try and the idea was definitely worth consideration. He would look at some dates and would present them at the June Board meeting but the ground conditions and weather would also need to be considered.

- J. Ward* - added there was the danger of the Board being dictated to by one ratepayer.

The Chairman confirmed that if the Chief Engineer carries out the trials the results would be brought to the Works Committee in November and a decision would be made thereafter. The Chief Engineer added that the land drainage installed on the land-owners land was also a factor in this.

10.8 **Water Level Trends**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that page 8 of his report showed a graph of the telemetry information obtained so Board Members can see where the electric pumps stop and start. The diesel pumps are shown at the bottom of the diagram.

- K. Smith* - asked if Board Members and members of the public could view this information? The Chief Engineer said that this was not available to the general public but he could see no reason why Board Members could not have access to view the information, subject to the costs involved.

10.9 **Channel Maintenance Operations**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that there had been a slight tweak to the information contained in 4.1. Target meterage and percent completed had been added for ease of reference.

10.10 **Planning**

The Engineering Manager confirmed that the layout for planning and consenting had also been reviewed to make the report easier to comprehend. The Standard Comments had been listed and any additional comments made by the Board had been added to the individual application.

During the current period, 20 applications had been received from Boston Borough Council and 27 from East Lindsey District Council. On page 16 of the report there was a graph showing the Planning Summary for 2023 and there has been a slight decrease from previous years.

10.11 **2023 Consenting Summary**

The Engineering Manager confirmed that 7 consent applications had been received during the current reporting period.

10.12 **Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind**

As per paragraph 6.7 of his report, the Engineering Manager confirmed that legal advice had been sought and the response was awaited.

The Engineering Manager also wanted to add that the recent storms in the past few months have resulted in a significant increase in the volume of telephone calls received. A log has been created detailing each call and the issues raised. The Board is then going through each log to try and resolve issues where possible. Storm Babet resulted in 70 incidents being reported and approximately 10% of those are outstanding. Storm Henk resulted in 20 incidents being reported and at present 5 of those are outstanding.

The public has very high expectations of what they believe drainage boards can do and some have contacted their MP, which results in more work for the staff. There are a number of LCC investigations under way. The events may have passed but their effects are long-lasting.

11 **Plant and Equipment**

Plant Replacement 2024/25

The Chief Engineer confirmed there were no further updates available.

12. **Technical Matters**
Catchment Survey

The Chief Engineer confirmed the sewer survey was ongoing.

12.1 **Wrangle Pumping Station**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that work was ongoing although there had been a few issues with the work quality which were currently being rectified. The Chief Engineer was adamant that nothing less than the specifications would be accepted.

J. Woods - declared an interest here because of a landowner's complaint. J. Woods supplies the landowner with plants.

The Chief Engineer acknowledged that one landowner, from whom the Board had purchased the land, was unhappy with the Wrangle Pumping Station outfall and the detrimental effect it may have on the banks.

The Chief Engineer showed Board Members a diagram of the option chosen which was basically that the water would be held in a chamber and would then flow down the bank and out into the wash. The landowner would have preferred for the water to be taken away in the existing channels there. Unfortunately, Natural England would not allow the Board to continue in this way.

The Chief Engineer said he had discussed this with the landowner on a number of occasions. The Chief Engineer confirmed that the Board would be proceeding with the outfall arrangement as detailed to Board Members but he was open to revisit this, if and when it caused any issues.

The main point being that there would be a new £7 million pumping station there that would benefit everyone.

12.2 **Hobhole Pumping Station**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that Board Members would be aware that this project started in 2022. Since then there have been various phases of feasibility studies to ensure that the funding could be secured. Last September, the Board was aware that there were sufficient benefits in the catchment area and the Environment agency agreed the funding in principle.

From there, the project proceeded to the outline design as the Board were eager to get the project underway. The Board then received notification that no funding would be paid in this 6-year period. The Chief Executive and the Chief Engineer sent a letter to the Secretary of State challenging this and an allocation of £52 million was then made to refurbish the pumping station. Unfortunately, the allocation was conditional upon the funds being spent by March 2027.

The Board is looking at commencing works in December 2025 and would not therefore be able to meet the condition set. However, it is not a total loss as the Chief Engineer was confident a business case could be pushed through by November confirming dates of when he believes the Board would be able to deliver. Basically, the project would be constructed in 2 halves, one completing May 2028 and the other September the same year. The Chief Engineer will be looking to submit a funding profile confirming that the Board could not spend all the money by the specified date and confirming the amount they would be able to spend by that time.

It looks likely that Stantec will be leading the design and Balfour Beatty, as main contractor, will be able to get the scheme on the ground. Balfour Beatty are part of the Scape Framework for public sector bodies which will reduce the amount of work involved in tendering etc.

The new pumping station will provide a 20% increase on current pumping capacity in a watertight building. The Chief Engineer confirmed that solar panels were being considered for the 7-acre field purchased to offset the Board's carbon footprint. The Chief Engineer was hopeful that by the end of March the outline programme for the build would be received together with the worst-case scenario for costs.

- J. Ward* - asked if the diesel engines would last until 2029? The Chief Engineer confirmed that we would manage them through till then. The old pumping station would not be demolished until the new one was built.
- J. Ward* - asked about construction traffic and questioned whether the road would need widening? The Chief Engineer confirmed that he was looking into access options as there would be 50,000 HGV movements over the course of the project. He was considering varying the access route to avoid Fishtoft.
- M. Leggott* - asked if the EA were funding the purchase of 5 pumps might it be prudent to purchase another? The Chief Engineer confirmed that he would hopefully have all the figures collated by the end of March but he would be trying to get the Board as much as he possibly could.

The Chief Engineer confirmed that the new Hobhole Pumping Station would be the second largest pumping station in the country and the most expensive to date.

13. **HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICER'S REPORT**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that due to the short turnaround period since the December Board Meeting there was nothing further to report aside from a slight incident with the teleporter.

The Minutes of the Health and Safety Committee Meeting were attached and there was only one point the Chief Engineer wished to raise with regard to mink control. A contact at the Wildlife Recovery East had suggested 16 new sites for traps. The Board currently has 5 so this will help with the BAP. Quarterly meetings were held with the Ecologist and a full report will be provided at the June 2024 Board meeting.

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman thanked Members for their time today and confirmed there was no other business and the meeting concluded at 4.15pm

Chairman