

Lower Severn IDB

Full Board Meeting

Draft Minutes of the Main Board meeting and AGM of the

Lower Severn (2005) Internal Drainage Board

Held at Thornbury Golf Centre, BS35 3XL

Wednesday 1st November 2023 at 2pm

Board Members:

Mr. Mike Barnes (Chairman)

Cllr Matthew Riddle (Vice Chairman)

Mrs. Fiona Collins

Mr. Geoff Simms

Mr. John Hore

Mr. Jimmy Nichols

Mr. John Cornock

Mr. Roger Godwin/

Mr. Robert Hyslop

Cllr. Nikki Barton

Mr. Matthew Sugden

Cllr. John Jones

Cllr. Tony Williams

James North

Sue Milestone

Officers:

Dr Manjit Pope – CEO

James Thomas– Business Development Manager

Glenn Taute– Chief Financial Officer

Joanna Mathews– Programme and Governance Officer

Victoria Bailey– Communications and PR Officer

Bianca Taute– Administrator

Daniela Winchcomb – Business Support Officer

Guest Attendees:

Innes Thomson (ADA)

Rebecca Horsington (SWADA)

Mr. Tom Cullimore

Cllr. Liz Harvey

Cllr. Simon Phelps

Cllr. Lisa Stone

Cllr. Simon Johnson

Minutes taken by Victoria Bailey

Agenda Item		Minute Reference
1.	Election of Chairman for 2023/2024 MR welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Innes Thomson, Chairman of ADA, for attending LSIDB AGM as the guest speaker. MP explained the election process. MR proposed MB as LSIDB Chairman; seconded by RG. All in favour: Mike Barnes elected as LSIDB Chairman 2023/2024. MB accepted with thanks.	3557
2.	Election of Vice Chairman for 2023/2024 FC proposed MR as LSIDB Vice Chairman; seconded RG. All in favour; Matthew Riddle elected as Vice Chairman. MR accepted the role of LSIDB Vice-Chairman with thanks.	3558
3.	Apologies/ Welcome Apologies: Cllr Keith Withers, Cllr Paul Toleman, Charles Daniell and Ald. Mary Sykes.	3559
4.	Chairman's Announcements – Cllr Matthew Riddle	3560

	<p>MR updated all on the upcoming industry events, which a selection of Board Members and Officers will be attending including the ADA conference 21/11/2023 and FLOODDEX on 22/11/2023, both in London.</p> <p>MR reminded all that LSIDB are a part of SWADA and that the SWADA AGM will be held in Bridgwater on 29/11/2023 and encouraged all Board Members to attend.</p> <p>Keith Withers has resigned and MR thanked him on behalf of the Board. There is now a vacancy for a land owner. Action – MR to write to thank KW from LSIDB.</p> <p>MR noted that there are still Council vacancies to be filled. Action – all Board Members to consider and suggest potential new members by the next Main Board meeting.</p>	
5.	<p>Declaration of Members Interest</p> <p>None received.</p>	3561
6.	<p>Minutes of Previous Meetings</p> <p>It was resolved that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minutes of the Full Board meeting held on 20/09/2023 were approved– all in favour of approval subject to the change of ‘of’ for ‘for’ on page 7: Action VB • Actions to Note from the Executive Committee held 27/09/2023 – noted • Actions to Note from the Operation Service Committee held 18/10/2023 – noted • Actions to Note from the Executive Committee held 25/10/2023 – noted <p>Action – before next AGM MP to conduct a review on how the new committees are working.</p>	3562
7.	<p>Appointment of Committee’s for 2023/24</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Committee (3 x Members) • Business Services Committee (2 x Members) • Operation Service Committee (1 x Member) • Business Development & Growth Committee (1 x Member) 	3562

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Committee <p>It was agreed that the Chairmen would be as follows:</p> <p>Finance Committee – John Hore Business Services Committee – Fiona Collins Operation Service Committee – Mike Barnes Business Development & Growth Committee – Geoff Simms Executive Committee – Dr Manjit Pope</p> <p>MR, MB and GS could attend any committee as 'ex officio.'</p> <p>All agreed that the additional vacancies would be filled at the first meeting of each committee.</p> <p>MB asked the new members TW, LH, SP, LS and SJ to introduce themselves and he welcomed them to LSIDB.</p>	
8.	<p>Dates of Future Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was noted that the schedule of Board and Committee Meetings dates are in the meeting pack Links to Future Events are within the Comms Calendar on the LSIDB website 	3563
9.	<p>CEO Briefing – Dr Manjit Pope</p> <p>MP provided an overview of her experience of over 30 years of transforming businesses. She highlighted the changes and advancements LSIDB has undergone in the past 12 months, with the support and direction of the Board, and the hard work of the officers and operators. MP noted the importance of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Futureproof Operational Service Support Facility Design: Stressed the imperative of designing a futureproof operational service, positioning LSIDB as an industry benchmark in this regard. Cultural Change and Adaptation: Underlined the significance of cultural change and the continuous learning of new methodologies and 	3564

	<p>approaches to enhance organisational effectiveness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonious Collaboration of Board Members: Commended the positive collaboration between elected and non-elected Board Members, recognising its potential to fortify and advance our Board. • Analogy of Collaboration: Utilised the analogy of a car, where Operators and Officers act as the delivery engine and Board Members as the strategic steering wheel, highlighting the necessity for collaborative, respectful and operationally delivery focus efforts to propel LSIDB forward. • Internal SWOT Analysis: Announced the completion of an internal SWOT analysis: Action MP to share with Board Members. • Communication with Key Stakeholders: Emphasised the crucial need for effective communication with key stakeholders to foster transparency and collaborative partnerships. • Committee Restructuring: Notified the Board of the vast restructuring of committees currently underway. • Revenue Generation and Reinvestment: Advocated for the importance of making money and reinvesting it in the Boards work. As a strategic approach for futureproofing LSIDB, with specific mention of the New Business Development and Growth Committee's role. <p>The CEO summarised that these key points underscore the transformative journey of LSIDB over the past year and reinforce our commitment to innovation, collaboration, and sustained growth.</p> <p>Questions from the Floor:</p> <p>SJ: How do IDB's and the EA work together?</p> <p>MP: The sector is very disjointed but LSIDB are committed to working in partnership with the EA.</p>	
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	<p>IT: ADA have engagement with RFCC and encouraged Board Members to engage with the RFCC.</p> <p>SJ is a member and will feedback to LSIDB. Action SJ.</p> <p>MP updated all that the Executive Committee had completed a SWOT and annual plan for next year, of which MP will put forward their proposal at the next Full Board meeting.</p>	
10.	<p>Finance Highlight Report: Highlight Report to Note from CFO</p> <p>JH praised GT for the amount of work he had covered in his six months of being CFO.</p> <p>JH urged members to keep an eye on expenditure and that all expenses over £500 were listed.</p> <p>GT gave his report stating that the income statement was close to the budget and that there are just under £3,000 in rates outstanding, which need to be collected by LSIDB. Reserves had been built by £1.2 million. The investment portfolio has grown by £8,000 in the past 6 months. £75,000 has been spent so far this year on payroll, consultant cost is £106,000 and there has been a net reduction of £48,000.</p> <p>A new excavator has been received and paid for.</p> <p>LH asked for further information on the Capital Programme; GT updated LH on the plans to renew four Pumping Stations over the next 5 years and renew the Service Centre. Costs are expected to be in the region of £10m, most of which is likely to come from a PWL (Public Works Loan) and rate increases. Rates are likely to rise by somewhere in the region of 9% to 10% per year over the next five years, with loans taken out over that same period of around £1m-£2m per year. GT gave a brief overview of the need to replace the Pumping Stations including the Eel Regulations and the numerous issues with the 1970's technology and capability. Action JM to send LH a direct link to the section of the website listing finance information.</p>	3565

	<p>Robert Hyslop disagreed with the statement that rates were historically low for LSIDB; GT countered that the work of replacing the Pumping Stations should have been completed a number of years ago.</p> <p>GS added that the difficulty lies within the fact there were no provisions within the reserves for replacing the Pumping Stations; if there were provisions the rates would have risen before this point in time.</p> <p>RG asked the ADA representative IT how the proposed LSIDB rate rises compare to other IDB's; IT responded that most boards rates are rising around 10% to 20% although quite a few exceed 20%. One IDB looking at a 50% rise due to too many years of the rates being kept artificially low. GT added that with the new investment the depreciation charges would naturally produce cash for future renewals. There is also a Reserves Policy.</p> <p>IT stated that IDB's, unlike many other Public Bodies, are allowed to carry money over financial years – this legislation is contained within the Land Drainage Act; GT said this means LSIDB can borrow money over 25 years, and through financial management of consequent cash generated from the depreciation charges, there would be funds available towards the renewal of assets when due in the future.</p> <p>GS added that as LSIDB have already been given two deadline extensions due to the 2009 Eel Regulations it is important we work with the EA to complete the stations on time. MP added that 12 months ago the EA had lost all confidence in LSIDB to deliver; now all the correct processes are in place and we must stand by these deadlines.</p> <p>GT was asked about rate differences; GT reported that LSIDB rates are 11.5p per £1k of land value and there are IDBs with lower and higher rates. Action GT to report the comparable rate difference between IDB's at the next Main Board.</p> <p>MR queried the average IDB's income; LSIDB is funded 91% by local councils and 9% by rate payers. IT responded that</p>	
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	<p>the average IDB is funded 30% by rate payers and 70% through local council levies.</p> <p>JN asked for an itemised breakdown of the financial proposals; GT cannot provide this as not all the project costings have been received; as soon as this is done GT will present it to the Main Board.</p> <p>JC asked whether the Service Centre could be completed after the Pumping Stations; GT responded that once all the figures are back, we can look at this in more detail. RH also concerned by the lack of detailed figures presented.</p> <p>IT advised that three other IDB's had been through the process LSIDB is currently going through; offered GT help should they cross the Limited Audit threshold.</p>	
11.	<p>Operations Service Committee: Highlight Report to Note from Head of Operational Services</p> <p>Mike Barnes read through James Druett's Operations Report; stated that there were no Health and Safety issues aside from a minor back strain a member of the office staff had due to helping with a delivery.</p> <p>Mowing is continuing and the new Izusu truck is in the workshop having additional work done to it.</p> <p>Insurance claim has been made due to damage to a pin issue on the tractor.</p> <p>Storm Babet did not cause significant issues to the area.</p> <p>MB recommended all read JD's report.</p> <p>LH asked whether the pin failed due to incorrect use and whether lessons were learnt – should the pins be replaced every few years? MB responded that a new machine which doesn't use pins has been ordered and that they are dispensing with this type of equipment. GT interjected that he worked alongside JD on this issue and it came down to a design fault. GS agreed with LH that it is important to learn from these incidences. Action JD to feedback to Main Board at the next meeting on the tractor pin failure.</p>	3566

<p>12.</p>	<p>Business Services Committee: Highlight Report to Note from CEO</p> <p>FC reported that the Business Services Committee combines governance, HR and Legal.</p> <p>Workplace Strategy has been revamped and implemented. HR has been looking into succession planning which has been prompted by the demographic of the ground team. There is a review of workforce retention and recruitment; an audit is underway looking at all aspects of LSIDB governance and is being developed as a priority.</p> <p>There is new SLA (Service Level Agreement) with a legal firm for LSIDB.</p> <p>The Policy Schedule will be developed and updated throughout 2024.</p> <p>FC invited questions; none received.</p>	<p>3567</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Business Development Committee: Paper to note from CEO</p> <p>GS introduced the new BD&G committee which is set to meet for the first time on 22/11/2023. Terms of Reference have been issued. BD&G is about looking forward and updating things. GS believes it'll be a productive committee; JT is the assigned SLT (Senior Leadership Team) member. JT's current main task is the SLT for the Capital Programme; 25% of the reserve will be spent on BD&G. The committee will find out the key deliverables within the first few meetings. RG asked after the Water Quality Report; GS said this has now been removed.</p> <p>MR noted that during the LSIDB tour this morning they saw a structure (outside The Anchor, Oldbury) which had undetermined ownership with an LSIDB watercourse flowing through it; MR suggested a policy be developed over which assets are LSIDB's to maintain. GS felt this was a historical asset and part of the LSIDB area and adds value and benefit the region; MP added that funds are available for ready baked projects. LH said that clarity was needed over ownership as it poses a possible long-term</p>	<p>3568</p>

	<p>risk. LH felt this was not so applicable to BD&G as this committee should look at selling the IDB's core services. MP said that the Terms of Reference as these can change and agreed with LH that committees shouldn't overlap; water resources can be seen as assets.</p> <p>Action – BD&G committee to consider what to do regarding unclaimed structures/ assets in the Boards area.</p> <p>Action – Committees Terms of Reference to be reviewed regularly.</p>	
14.	<p>Highlight Report to Note from Programme Manager</p> <p>GS updated all on where the Programme Board, now running for over a year, is at present. GS is the Chairman, and has a background in the nuclear sector and project management. The Programme Board is responsible for managing the renewal of the four Pumping Stations and the Service Centre. Two Pumping Stations have already been completed. Lapperditch and Marshfield are due to be completed at the end of 2024. Biggest challenge has been seeking funding. Funding is affected by the BCR (benefit-cost-ratio) as funding is given based on housing and LSIDB, covering mainly agricultural land, is not seen as a priority to fund.</p> <p>LSIDB and Humberside IDB are working in partnership to change funding criteria to ensure agricultural land is given the same value; they will take the case to the Secretary of State to sign off.</p> <p>There is an expectation that Defra will approve a PWL for LSIDB for £6,000,000. As interest rates are linked to the gilt markets it is likely to slightly drop which is to our benefit; we would only borrow when needed.</p> <p>Arup has delivered a Feasibility Study. Action JT to distribute the Feasibility Study to interested members.</p> <p>Arup are currently working with the Programme Board to develop a Business Case which will help get a clearer idea of the financial figures. We will communicate this as much as possible.</p>	3569

	<p>GS invited individuals to comment whenever they wished; the Programme Board is focussed on delivery. GS noted the telemetry, screen cleaning, data, improved health and safety for the public and operators are real non fiscal benefits. NB asked if she could join a Programme Board meeting; GS welcomed the idea.</p> <p><i>Lisa Stone left 3.10pm</i></p> <p>LH asked if the renewal of the Pumping Stations would future-proof them against climate change and sea level rises; JT replied that the new pumps have a 20% allowance for climate change factors and a variable speed drive from 10% to 100% capacity. JT added that the pumps are not going to pump sea water and are not designed for that purpose; they are to primarily aid agricultural productivity.</p> <p>JT stated that the EA have permissive powers to maintain flood defences. IT added that the EA are big on adaptability and resilience, such as banks over topping and failures of embankments.</p> <p>GS concluded with the news that the new Microsoft Projects software will contain a live Risk Register, provide feedback on Lapperditch and Marshfield and help the newly improved change management process.</p>	
16.	<p>Guest Speaker – Innes Thompson, CEO of ADA</p> <p>MP introduced ADA’s Chairman Innes Thomson and SWADA Director, Rebecca Horsington, thanking them both for attending.</p> <p><i>3.25pm Tony Williams left</i></p> <p>IT gave the following updates of ADA and the sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Duke of Gloucester is the new ADA patron • There is a new committee structure within ADA • Changes to DRS system will impact all IDB’s • GDPR rules mean physical permission is required by Board Members. Action JM to collect 	3570

	<p>permission from Board members who wish to receive ADA information directly and pass on to IT.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The upcoming ADA Conference in London includes Emma Hardy MP, Alan Lovell MP and the CEO of the EA, Philip Duffy. <p>IT presented a PPT to LSIDB, covering the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasised the need for public sector co-operation and strong partnership working. Discussed the Flexistowe Hydrocycle and multifunctional water management. Sustainable Water Management. Suds approval bodies provide a potential role for IDB's as they are likely to be the local authorities approved body. Managing water levels in lowland peat. Energy net zero plan; progress in this sector can lead to IDB's having hydrogen tractors, electric vehicles, utilising battery packs for larger machinery. Climate resilience; ADA have written to the Secretary of State regarding the quality of water. <p>Action MP to circulate ADA's letter regarding Storm Babet to Board Members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced ADA's six point plan. <p>IT thanked MR for his services as LSIDB Chairman and presented him with a memento glass plaque from LSIDB.</p>	
17.	<p>Review of Actions agreed at the Board</p> <p>DW read through the actions; no comments received.</p>	3571
18.	<p>Any other Item which the Chairman Decides is Urgent</p> <p>This was accidentally omitted from the meeting.</p>	3572
19.	<p>Date of next the Meeting is 7th February 2024</p> <p><i>Venue TBC</i></p>	3573

20.	Meeting closed 5.25pm	
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