

NORTH LEVEL DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
MINUTES OF GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING
11th January 2022

Present:	J W J Sly	Chairman
	J A Clarke	
	A J Gee	
	N J Harris	
	J Holdich OBE	
	Councillor C J T H Brewis	
In Attendance:	P D Sharman	Chief Executive
	J Stuble	Operations Engineer
	Mrs S Drew	Finance Officer
	Miss S Smith	Secretary

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that J W J Sly be appointed as Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee for a 3 year term.

2 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs K Mayor.

3 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on the 8th June 2021, copies of which having been circulated with the Agenda, be taken as read and being a correct record of the business of such meeting.

4 MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

5 REVIEW OF THE BOARD'S STRATEGY PLAN 2022-2027

The Chief Executive took the Committee through the Strategy Plan and pointed out the updated activities which have taken place.

The Committee considered the suggested amendments to the Strategy Plan for 2022-2027.

The Committee noted that there is a National Internal Drainage Board Annual Biometrics Survey and it was reported that the Board are recording their biodiversity and conservation work through ADA. This has been completed for 2021.

It was agreed to review the Strategy Plan annually, accepting there may be few changes. The Strategy Plan was Approved and accepted by the Governance and Audit Committee.

6 TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING NEW POLICY

(a) Compassionate Leave Policy

The Chief Executive explained the reason behind this policy being based on ACAS Guidance.

Following a brief discussion it was
Agreed that the Board be **RECOMMENDED** to:

- (a) Approve and accept the Compassionate Leave Policy, to be reviewed in January 2027.

7 TO REVIEW THE FOLLOWING POLICIES

- (a) Anti-Bribery Policy

The following Policy was reviewed and adopted by the Governance and Audit Committee to:

Approve and accept the Anti-Bribery Policy, to be reviewed in January 2027.

- (b) Lone Working Policy

The Chief Executive explained that there is an initial cost for devices and SIM card charges on a monthly basis, however this is the best service for Lone Working, being an automatic system and works well. It was explained that the Operatives are provided with battery chargers for the tablets.

In answer to a question it was agreed that the 'alerts will go' to section will be changed to job titles and not named people, being changed to Operations Engineer, Works Supervisor and Junior Engineer.

The following Policy was reviewed, amended and adopted by the Governance and Audit Committee, subject to the above amendments:

Approve and accept the Lone Working Policy, to be reviewed in January 2027.

- (c) Pay Policy

In answer to a question the Chief Executive explained that overtime is being used to calculate holiday pay, being an average of previous 52 weeks earnings.

The following Policy was reviewed and adopted by the Governance and Audit Committee to:

Approve and accept the Pay Policy, to be reviewed in January 2027.

8 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2022

The Chief Executive explained that the works to be undertaken equate to two days in total. The Auditors request the relevant policies up to three days before, to address Covid guidelines and then come into the office to carry out the audit. The dates they will visit are 24th and 25th January 2022.

He explained that he would like to add other items to broaden the audit, this will be done at a later date when Covid is no longer an issue.

Following a brief discussion the Committee accepted and noted the contents.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that:

The Board approve and accept the Internal Audit Plan 2022.

9 GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2021/2022.

The Chairman provided information regarding the Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/2022 which were highlighted in red.

Following a brief discussion it was **RECOMMENDED** that:

The Board approve and accept the Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/2022 as amended.

10 FINANCIAL ESTIMATES FOR 2022/23

The Chief Executive referred to his estimates of the financial requirements of the Board for the twelve months ending 31st March 2023, a copy of which being included with the Agenda of the meeting.

The Chief Executive gave a detailed explanation of the estimated items and the requirement for a rise in Drainage Rates of 8.0%, with changes to diesel alone equating to 8%, pay rise at 2.5% and increases in National Insurance.

He explained that energy costs had risen, however the effect of this would not impact until 2023 as contracts were fixed up to this point.

The Chief Executive and Finance Officer answered questions in relation to refurbishments to pumps, the reason behind combined estimates, electric pumps, building resilience into the system, reserves taken from balances and the proportion of this that is ring-fenced for other purposes which can only be spent within that area.

It was agreed that ring-fencing affects monies that can be accessed quickly and the Committee feels that it is very important that this is made clear to the Board, with clear notes of explanation of the balances and making it very visible as to where monies are spent.

The Chief Executive explained that he had discussed the estimates with Councillor Mayor due to her absence from the meeting and the Committee agreed that if a Councillor could not attend on the day another representative from that particular Council should be invited to attend to represent their views. It was reported that Councillor Mayor had been supportive of the Financial Estimates.

There was a general consensus that future FDGiA and refurbishment works should consider climate change and changes to pumps to support greener energy to improve resilience going forward.

The Committee recommended that an explanatory note be included in the estimates stressing that a considerable proportion of reserves are ring-fenced.

After a full discussion with the Chief Executive answering member's questions in connection with his estimates

It was proposed by Councillor Brewis and seconded by Mr Harris and agreed that the Board be **RECOMMENDED** to:

To increase the rate for all three drainage districts by an average of 8.0%.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chief Executive asked the Committee on views regarding whether the Board Meeting on 2nd February 2022 should be held in person or virtual bearing in mind that current guidelines to safeguard staff is to work from home and this should be considered as an employer.

The Chairman suggested and it was agreed that the Chief Executive should send an email to Board Members to gauge opinion on a live, virtual or hybrid meeting.

There was no other business.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date