

NORTH LEVEL DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
MINUTES OF GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING
3 June 2025

Present:	J W J Sly	Chairman
	A J N Gee	
	N J Harris	
	P T R Hurn	
	Cllr C J T H Brewis	
	Cllr S Clark	
In Attendance:	P D Sharman	Chief Executive
	J Stubley	Engineer to the Board
	S Drew	Finance Officer
	S Smith	Secretary

1 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

2 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 January 2025, copies of which having been circulated with the Agenda, be taken as read and being a correct record of the business of such meeting.

3 MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

4 TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING NEW POLICY

(a) Neonatal Care Leave and Pay Policy

This new policy has been prepared by the Boards HR Representative in response to new Government Employment Laws.

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

- (a) Approve and accept the Neonatal Care Leave and Pay Policy, to be reviewed in June 2030.

5 TO REVIEW THE FOLLOWING POLICIES

- (a) Health and Safety Policy;
- (b) Information Security Policy Certificate of Self Assessment;
- (c) Participating Employer Personal Data Retention Policy for Employers in the LGPS Scheme and Full Privacy Notice;
- (d) Planning Policy including Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Adoption Policy, Culverting and Development Levies;
- (e) Risk Register.

As part of the review of the above policies the Committee considered the review dates and amended them as they considered reasonable and in line with any statutory deadlines.

The Chairman and the Committee agreed that the policies would be discussed, accepted with any amendments and approved collectively following the discussion.

- (a) Health and Safety Policy: This policy has no changes and is in line with current legislation. It will be reviewed annually in line with statutory requirements, in June 2026;
- (b) Information Security Policy Certificate of Self Assessment: This policy is a requirement of Barclays and supports the Card Payment Machine as a stand-alone policy at their request. There have been no changes to the policy and in agreement with the Minutes of 4 June 2024 the annual certificate of self assessment was provided to prove the Boards compliance. The certificate of self assessment will be reviewed in June 2026, pending no further amendments to the Information Security Policy;
- (c) Participating Employer Personal Data Retention Policy for Employers in the LGPS Scheme and Full Privacy Notice: The Chief Executive explained that the Policy and Notice are LGPS documents which are a legal requirement. The policy and notice will be reviewed in June 2030;
- (d) Planning Policy including Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Adoption Policy, Culverting and Development Levies: The Chief Executive explained that there are minimal changes to this policy, being RPI annual inflationary increases to Commuted Maintenance Fees and Surface Water Development Contributions (SWDC). He explained that the £50 Application Fees are set in the Land Drainage Act and do not change. The policy will be reviewed in June 2028;
- (e) Risk Register: The register has no changes and is in line with current legislation. It will be reviewed annually in line with statutory requirements, in June 2026.

The following Policies were reviewed, amended and accepted by the Governance and Audit Committee:

- (a) Approve and accept the Health and Safety Policy, to be reviewed in June 2026;
- (b) Approve and accept the Information Security Policy Certificate of Self Assessment, to be reviewed in June 2026;
- (c) Approve and accept the Participating Employer Personal Data Retention Policy for Employers in the LGPS Scheme and Full Privacy Notice, to be reviewed in June 2030;
- (d) Approve and accept the Planning Policy including Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Adoption Policy, Culverting and Development Levies, to be reviewed in June 2028;
- (e) Approve and accept the Risk Register, to be reviewed in June 2026.

6 TO CONSIDER THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Chairman and Chief Executive advised the Committee that they were required to consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements.

The Finance Officer attended the meeting to explain the Board's compliance with the Annual Governance Statement, opening balances, income, investments, grants and expenditure and to aid understanding if required.

- (a) Annual Internal Audit Report;
- (b) Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25;
- (c) Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2024/25;

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2025, a copy of which having been included with the Agenda of the Meeting, was considered.

The Chief Executive explained that the Internal Auditor had identified one case where standard protocols had not been adhered to in relation to Internal Control Objective B for Expenditure and he explained the reasons. The Internal Auditor had provided an explanatory note within the Internal Audit Report and had provided actions for the Board should urgent works be required in the future and similar action be required, for details to be agreed with the Chairman and recorded in the minutes of the Board.

The Finance Officer explained that the Internal Auditor had identified issues in relation to Internal Control Objective H for Assets and Investments. She explained that the issues had been related to formulas on the spreadsheet as part of the Fixed Asset Register, these had been rectified and it was found that they are in line with Sage and were correctly reported.

Mr Harris commented that he considers the above to be minor amendments and that staff should be commended for their work in preparing for the Internal Audit.

It was agreed that the Board be **RECOMMENDED** to:

- (a) Approve and accept the Annual Internal Audit Report;
- (b) Approve and accept the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25;
- (c) Approve and accept the Accounting Statements 2024/25.

7 TO RECEIVE THE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Chief Executive briefly explained the background to the Management Accounts. He explained the figures in the Management Accounts that made up the Accounting Statements on the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2025, a copy of which having been included with the Agenda.

The Chief Executive and the Finance Officer further explained the Net Operating surplus for the year of £862,694 which takes into account the work done by the Board including all income and expenditure. He explained that £510,547 had been reimbursement for costs from 2024 and savings had been made during the winter months where only £521,000 had been spent on the pumping operating costs.

The Chief Executive explained that reimbursement and savings had boosted balances to £1.2m and would help to keep drainage rate increases at a steady level in future years.

Mr Brewis suggested that the reasons for the balance had been explained adequately and suggested that the Board should ensure that this is properly evidenced in the minutes.

The Chief Executive confirmed that he would be discussing balances with the Internal Auditors to ensure that they were at a 'comfortable' level for the Board at £1.2m.

Mr Harris commented that he was satisfied that the Board has a surplus as he appreciates that works may not always be fully funded in the future.

The Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee thanked the team for their hard work in preparing the Management Accounts.

The committee agreed that they were happy with the AGAR and Management Accounts as presented at this meeting and

It was agreed that the Board be **RECOMMENDED** to approve:

- (a) Management Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Committee were advised of a tabled document regarding Cyber Security plans for the Board.

The Chief Executive explained that another IDB had recently been targeted by a ransomware cyber attack. As a result the affected IDB worked with Defra and ADA and have prepared a guidance note to assist improvement plans.

The Chief Executive explained he had already moved all office computers to Microsoft 365 premium at an additional cost of £7.00/month per device being £670.00 per year. The DRS drainage rate package is held on the South Holland Server and is accessed using a vpn link and text message and is very secure. The current server was replaced in 2018 and would benefit from a change to a cloud based server at a one-off cost of £1,800.00, to manage this move.

The Chief Executive explained that he proposed the ‘Silver’ level of security package for 8 computers in the office, plus laptops, being 12 in total costing £3,600.00 per year. Bit Defender for all mobiles at £2.50 per device, per month would be £570.00 per year. The total cost per year would be an additional £6,600.00.

A one-off payment of £1,050.00 per year would be required for Cyber Crime Insurance.

It was agreed that the Board be **RECOMMENDED** to approve:

- A ‘Silver’ Cyber Security package to protect the Boards software and network management.

P Hurn questioned whether the Committee would consider the Boards Pay Policy as discussed at the Board Meeting on 30 April 2025. The Chief Executive explained that as the Boards pay is in line with other Boards there are a number of other attractions in addition to pay to ensure staff retention i.e. LGPS pension.

The Committee discussed the future of the dragline as the Board currently have no trained driver for it due to the recent resignation of our driver, and as there are currently no public sector works for it to be used, sale of the dragline was an option. The Chief Executive agreed that this required further discussion.

The Engineer to the Board confirmed that 20 applications had been received for the advertised Excavator Driver position, 3 had been interviewed and 1 employed and he further confirmed that he had been tested on his driving skills on the Long Reach Excavator as part of the interview process.

There was no other business for consideration.

.....
Chairman

..... Date

CYBER SECURITY PACKAGES

Bronze - £15

Microsoft 365 Advanced Threat Protection
Microsoft 365 SaaS Backup
Dark Web Monitoring
SaaS Alerts
User Awareness
Bitdefender GravityZone Anti-Virus
Bitdefender GravityZone Patch Management

Silver (includes Bronze) - £25

Bitdefender GravityZone Endpoint Detection and Response
Bitdefender GravityZone Advanced Threat Defence
Bitdefender GravityZone Full Disk Encryption
Keeper Password Manager
DNS Filter
Exclaimer Standard

Gold (includes Bronze and Silver) - £39 (minimum 10 users)

Bitdefender GravityZone Managed Detection and Response
Vulnerability Scanner (excludes required hardware)

In addition the following is available

Managed IT Support - £22 per user (max 2 devices e.g. office device and laptop)
Monitored IT Support – £5 per device
Microsoft 365 – POA depending on requirements
Bitdefender for mobile devices - £2.50
Endpoint Backup per 250GB - £9.95
Endpoint Backup w/ Disaster Recovery - £69
Penetration Testing – POA

All packages are priced per user/mailbox/device per month on an annual commitment.

Excludes onboarding and VAT.