

**FLOOD AND DRAINAGE
MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
1 MAY 2014**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR C L STRANGE (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors Mrs V C Ayling (Vice-Chairman), A M Austin, C J T H Brewis, M Brookes, R G Fairman, J R Marriott, C Pain, R A Renshaw and Mrs J M Renshaw

District Councillors I G Fleetwood (West Lindsey District Council), D Jackson (City of Lincoln Council), Mrs F M Martin MBE (East Lindsey District Council), J Money (North Kesteven District Council), B Russell (South Kesteven District Council) and M D Seymour (South Holland District Council)

External Agencies – Deborah Campbell (Environment Agency), Robert Caudwell ((Anglian North Regional Flood and Coastal Committee)), Sam Markillie, Stephen Langlois (Anglian Water) and Peter Bateson (Association of Drainage Authorities)

Councillors J P Churchill, C J Davie and Mrs A E Reynolds, attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Sean Kent (Head of Environmental Services), Steve Blagg (Democratic Services Officer), Louise Tyers (Scrutiny Officer) and Steve Willis (Assistant Director, Environment, Planning and Customer Services)

41 APOLOGIES/MEMBER REPLACEMENTS

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor T Bridges, District Councillor R Leggott (Boston Borough Council), Andrew McGill (Lindsey Marsh Internal Drainage Board), David Sisson (Lindsey Marsh Internal Drainage Board), David Hickman (Environmental Services Team Leader (Strategy and Partnership)) and Mark Welsh (Floods, Water and Major Developments Manager).

Councillor Mrs J M Renshaw replaced Councillor N M Murray on this Committee, for this meeting only.

42 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests at this point of the meeting.

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43 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON
30 JANUARY 2014

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 January 2014, be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to "35" being added after the word "minute" in minute 30.

44 EFFECTS OF INCLEMENT WEATHER ON 5 DECEMBER 2013 ON THE
EAST COAST - PRESENTATION (MINUTE 33)

The Committee was informed that an additional meeting of the Committee had been arranged for 10.00am on Friday 18 July 2014, to receive a report on the effects and outcome of the sea surge on 5 December 2013.

This meeting would be followed by a meeting of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee at 11.30am or at the rising of the Flood and Drainage Management Scrutiny Committee, whichever was later.

45 RIVER STEEPING, BURGH LE MARSH - UPDATE (MINUTE 33)

In response to an enquiry from District Councillor Mrs F M Martin MBE, in connection with the donation of no longer used machinery by the Environment Agency for use by the local Drainage Board to dredge the River Steeping, Burgh le Marsh, officers stated that discussion had taken place with the Environment Agency about how to progress this matter. Further discussions would take place with the Drainage Board on the use of possible additional funding from central government to address flood risk in this area.

The Committee was informed that the Environment Agency Board had visited Wainfleet and that preparatory maintenance work of the River Steeping had commenced. The partnership arrangements had facilitated this development and it was now hoped that Defra would take the necessary action.

The Chairman in welcoming this development stated that Lincolnshire's flood management strategy should be circulated nationwide.

46 MARK AVENUE, HORNCastle (MINUTE 35)

Following an enquiry from Councillor Mrs F M Martin MBE, about the latest situation with Mark Avenue, Horncastle, Stephen Langlois, Anglian Water, stated that discussions were still on-going to address this problem, agreed that communication by Anglian Water could have been better and that Anglian Water continued to maintain the culvert in Mark Avenue in the short term. He added that in the long term there was still an issue about the management of the asset as it was not Anglian Water's responsibility. In the meantime, Anglian Water would continue to maintain the asset.

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47 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY COUNCILLOR C J DAVIE, THE EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TOURISM AND STEVE WILLIS, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES)

Councillor C J Davie stated that Lincolnshire's Flood Strategy Group had recently met Owen Paterson MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. He said that Mr Paterson had been impressed with the Council's flood strategy and had stated that the strategy should be disseminated nationally. Mr Paterson had also agreed that Lincolnshire was a major food producer for the country and supported the need to protect this land from flooding. Councillor C J Davie stated that it was proposed to meet Civil Servants from both Defra and the Treasury to discuss protection of Lincolnshire's agricultural land.

Councillor C J Davie stated that Matthew Hancock MP, the Minister with responsibility for floods, had been invited to visit the county, to discuss flood management issues and agreed to keep the Committee informed of developments.

Councillor C J Davie in response to an enquiry from the Committee stated that the whole of Lincolnshire including the area controlled by North and North East Lincolnshire Councils was under the Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership's area of responsibility for major economic development purposes and that he had attended a recent meeting of the Humber Strategy Group and it was clear that there were issues with funding and other challengers in the Humber region.

Comments made by the Committee included the importance of the Humber region for economic growth although it was in a high flood risk area. The Humber Strategy would be refreshed to ensure that strong partnership was in place to defend the area from flooding and there was an estimated £600/£800m available for investment purposes.

48 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY OTHER AGENCIES AND PARTNERS

There were no announcements by other agencies and partners.

49 INVESTIGATIONS UNDERTAKEN UNDER SECTION 19 OF THE FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT ACT 2010

(Note: Councillor J Money requested that a note should be made in the minutes to indicate that he and his wife owned the property next to the affected property on Main Street, Scopwick, page 7 of the appendices).

Steve Willis presented a report on investigations undertaken under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. This was a standing report which appeared on the agenda at each meeting of the Committee.

The following responses were given by officers to comments made by the Committee:-

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1. The issue of tidal flooding in the area between Mablethorpe and Trusthorpe formed part of the Lincshore project and therefore received protection. However, the Environment Agency would examine this matter further as part of its forward review.
2. Surface water problems at Wainfleet had existed before the current arrangements under Section 19 were in place. Officers agreed to discuss the issues raised by Councillor C Pain in connection with Wainfleet, with highway officers.
3. Officers agreed to contact Councillor L A Rollings about the issue of flooding at Susworth, near the River Trent.
4. Anglian Water's water network connections in Horncastle would be examined in detail together with the funding of any necessary works.
5. Anglian Water was a member of the Customer Engagement Forum.
6. Target dates for the completion of work would be detailed as soon as the analysis of costs had been completed.
7. It was accepted that there was a need to examine the whole of a catchment area to avoid soil erosion, the effects of chemicals and silt pollution.
8. It was accepted that there was a need to work closely with the farming community.
9. The Internal Drainage Boards were responsible for enforcement in connection with drainage from farms.
10. The Environment Agency was working with local authorities to maximise the economic benefits of businesses by the protection of land. A number of options were being examined by the Environment Agency in connection with the protection of Bulldog Bank.

Further comments made by the Committee included the effects of dredging and the use of silt on agricultural land.

Officers stated that dredging was only undertaken where there were benefits but there was a need to examine the effects on the whole of the catchment area. It was accepted that faster moving water could aggravate problems further down its course. Silt could only be re-used on land as long as it was free of hazardous waste.

Councillor C J Davie accepted that there were diverse views about Shoreline Management and that it was important to approach the government with evidence of the benefits of investment in coastal protection. Communities might also be prepared to accept an increase in insurance premiums if they could be reassured that their community was being protected.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the investigations undertaken under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, be noted.
- (b) That the comments made by the Committee be noted and actioned by officers, accordingly.

50 LINCSHORE AND SALTFLEET TO GIBRALTAR POINT COASTAL
MANAGEMENT REVIEW - UPDATE

Steve Willis reported verbally on the outcome of JBA Consulting's evaluation carried out on behalf of Defra between March and October 2013 on how the Partnership Funding approach for flood and coastal risk management was being implemented and whether or not the policy's objectives were likely to be delivered. He briefly outlined the conclusions of the Review and agreed to circulate the Executive Summary of JBA's evaluation to the Committee.

Steve Willis stated that the report's findings would be examined because there was a need to develop an alternative long term strategy for the protection of the coast for consultation with local communities.

Deborah Campbell stated that it was the Environment Agency's opinion that a much broader view of managing coastal defences was required in the future and this had been recognised by the Environment Agency's Chief Executive.

Comments made by the Committee included the installation of groynes to prevent the movement of sand, the importance of sand for the tourist industry, the effects of sand movement on the fishing industry, the placement of large rocks instead of sand and the need to carry out a desk top exercise to evaluate different solutions to prevent coastal erosion.

Councillor C J Davie emphasised the importance of economic growth from coastal protection investment. In the long term this would address the problem of deprivation on the east coast. The final strategy would contain a mixture of solutions including those suggestions made by the Committee.

Deborah Campbell stated that in future the Environment Agency would suggest a preferred approach but in the meantime there was a need to work with local authorities and other agencies to show the benefits of the economic growth agenda.

Councillor Mrs A E Reynolds thanked the Committee for allowing her to speak.

Steve Willis stated that the views expressed by the Committee would be considered in the preparation of a long term strategy to protect the east coast and that he would report further on this matter to a future meeting of the Committee before any consultation took place with communities.

RESOLVED

- (a) That officers circulate to the Committee JBA's Executive summary of their research carried out on behalf of Defra.
- (b) That the comments made by the Committee be considered in the preparation of a future coastal Flood Risk Strategy.

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51 FLOOD AND DRAINAGE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK
PROGRAMME

Louise Tyers presented the Committee's Work Programme.

RESOLVED

That the Committee's Work Programme be noted and that the issues around Bulldog Bank would be picked up in the coastal surge item at the meeting of the Committee on 18 July 2014.

52 SITE VISIT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE AFTERNOON

The Committee received details of the proposed itinerary for the site visits on the afternoon of 1 May 2014.

Robert Caudwell stated that due to logistical reasons it would not be possible for a large bus to negotiate the road to his farm to view the effects of the damage caused by the sea surge on 5 December 2013. It was agreed to visit Slippery Gowt instead of Mr Caudwell's Farm.

Robert Caudwell gave an update in connection with the state of his land. He stated that while there was still a breach in the defences there had been no incursion by the sea following the recent high tides. His neighbour had planted crops on their land.

Robert Caudwell stated that it had been decided following consultations with Natural England and the Environment Agency to realign the sea defence bank and a planning application had been submitted to both Boston Borough and East Lindsey District Councils in this respect. The scheme would include salt marsh, improved defences and would eventually extend approximately 80 kilometres.

Following an enquiry by the Committee Robert Caudwell stated that Borrow Pits had been used to provide material for the realigned sea defence bank but it was necessary to provide compensatory habitats for the material which had been removed.

Following an enquiry by the Committee Deborah Campbell stated that the Environment Agency had examined the effects of high tides and the need for protection.

The meeting closed at 12.15 pm