THE BRAUNTON MARSH DRAINAGE BOARD

Clerk to the Board: Mrs Sue Squire
Haxlea, 2 Threeways, Bratton Fleming, Barnstaple, EX31 4TG
T: 01598 710526. Email: brauntonmarshdrainageboard@gmail.com

Agenda for a Board Meeting to be held on **Thursday, 9 January 2025 in the Committee Room of Braunton Parish Council after the Annual General Meeting.**

Sue Squire, Clerk to the Board, 31 December 2025

No.	Item
1.	**Welcome to Board Members who have been elected or co-opted.**
2.	**Apologies.**
3.	**Declarations of Interest.**
4.	**Approval of the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 12 September 2024.**
5.	**Finance.** **Balances will be tabled.**

5.1 To authorise the following payments:

Mrs S Squire	Two monthly salary & expenses November 2024 (no meeting held) and January 2025	**Redacted under Data Protection**
HM Revenue & Customs	PAYE £312.40 for November 2024 and January 2025	**£624.80**
Braunton Parish Council	Hire of room for meeting on 9/1/25	**£17.00**
Mr M Tucker	Deal with leak in drain, remove brambles, spraying Parrots Feather £696.00 (VAT is £116.00) Cleaning drains in November 2025. £5,569.20 (VAT is £928.20)	**£6,265.20**
Resourceful Bookkeeping	Pay documents for November 2024 £3.25 Pay documents for January 2025 £3.25	**£6.50**
Westpest Brothers	Treatment of wasps nest and a return visit to remove nest	**£95.00**
P K F Littlejohn LLP	Fee for 2023/24 external audit	**£252.00**
ADA	2025 Membership Subscription £135.60 of this amount is reclaimable VAT but this cannot be reclaimed until February 2025 as the invoice is dated 1/1/25. HMRC accepts claims for full months, i.e. 1/1/25 to 31/1/25.	**£813.60**

5.2. To set the 2025/26 Marsh Levy Rate

5.3. To set the 2025/26 Budget. Part of this process will involve a review of the Clerk's salary who will leave the room at the relevant point.

5.4 Identification of Marshes. There has been no further progress with this, due to all avenues investigated by the Clerk resulting in no information being obtained.

5.5 North Devon Council Levy Rate – 2nd tranche. To note that the sum of £14,343.60 was credited to the Board's Treasurers Account on 30/9/24.

5.6. IDB1 Form. The deadline date for completion is 28/2/25. The form has more questions than previously and the Clerk will give more details.

	5.7. VAT Reclaim. To note that the sum of £711.00 in respect of the period 1/8/24 to 31/8/24 has been credited to the Board's Treasurers Account. To further note that the sum of £1,163.28 for the period 1/9/24 to 30/11/24 has been reclaimed and is expected to be received in January 2025. **5.9 Clerk's Salary.** The Chairman to advise on her research / calculations as a result of the internal auditor's comments.
6.	**Matters Arising.** **6.1 Water Level Management Plan.** **6.2 Mr Faulkner's Marsh.** Mr Chugg to advise if he has met the owner on site. **6.3 Enforcement issues on the Marsh.**
7.	**Review and Compliance of douments in place.** To review the following. Members will have been circulated with the details ahead of the meeting for studying. It is expected that the Policies, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations will be approved en bloc. ▪ Standing Orders ▪ Financial Regulations ▪ Anti Bribery ▪ Anti Fraud and Corruption ▪ Employees Code of Conduct ▪ Members Code of Conduct ▪ Risk Management Strategy ▪ Whistleblowing Policy ▪ Biodiversity Action Plan To consider a Schedule of Delegation. To consider a Publication Scheme Guidance document.
8.	**Maintenance.** **8.1 Levelling Devices for the Sluices.** To discuss any other work required.
9.	**Correspondence.**
9.1	**North Devon Council Levy.** To note that the Clerk has emailed a letter to the District Councillors for passing to the relevant Department regarding the amount of the Levy, as suggested by ADA. District Councillors to give any feedback.
9.2	**ADA – article in The Guardian.** To note that the Clerk responded on behalf of the Board, due to a quick response being required, as to the next steps to be taken by ADA.
9.3	**ADA.** Email – Ratings SI meeting with VOA and Defra, circulated to Board Members on 4/10/24.
9.4	**ADA.** Email – Environment Agency FCERM Stakeholder update – September 2024, circulated to Board Members on 4/10/24.
9.5	**ADA.** Email advising the date of the AGM as being 3 December 2024 by Miscosoft Teams.
9.6	**Andrew St Joseph.** The Clerk received a telephone call from this person regarding breaches in banks and provided pictures of what could be achieved.
9.7	**To note that the SWADA AGM** was held on 27/11/24.
9.8	**Environment Agency.** Notice of public consultation on drought management in England running from 8/11/24 until 10/1/25. 'Drought: how it is managed in England' is the updated version of the 'National Drought Response Framework' (available on GOV.UK) released in 2017. It describes how drought affects England and

	how the Environment Agency works with government, water companies and others to manage the effects of drought on people, business and the environment. Each of the Environment Agency's 14 operational areas also produce their own area drought plans, which serve as operational guidelines for their response to drought. 'Drought: how it is managed in England' supports the area drought plans by providing a strategic overview of how the Environment Agency manages a drought to minimise impacts, and provides information for our staff, government departments and stakeholders to use in planning for and managing drought. The consultation is hosted on Citizen Space, the Environment Agency's online consultation hub: https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/environment-and-business/drought-how-it-is-managed-in-england/
9.9	**ADA Flood and Water Conference.** Tuesday, 25/11/25 at 1 Great George Street, Westminster, London.
9.10	**ADA. IDB Fund Tranche 2B announcement.** This is for capital projects only and closes on 31/1/25.
9.11	**ADA.** Environment Day, 5/2/25 at Peterborough.
9.12	**ADA.** Environmental Audit Committee **–** New Inquiry: Flood Resilience in England. Call for evidence with a deadline of 13/1/25: - To what extent are current flood resilience assets and interventions fit-for-purpose and what are the strengths and weaknesses? - To what extent are current metrics for monitoring the effectiveness of flood resilience fit for purpose, and what improvements could make them more effective? - How effectively and how frequently do flood risk management authorities work together to tackle flooding issues and do they have sufficient resources and skills available to carry out their work? - Is there a backlog in maintenance of existing flooding adaptation/resilience assets and in identifying where new ones could be introduced? To consider responding to the above.
9.13	**ADA.** Waste Exemption Reform and New Charges. This applies to IDBs where dredged material from waterways is deposited on the banks for screening and removal of water. The EA proposes to bring in new charges for this activity as follows: It is proposed that waste exemptions will be subject to both a new 'registration charge' of £56 to register one or more exemptions, and a further 'compliance charge' per exemption. The compliance charge is split into bands based on the EA's assessment of the risk of the activity. Band 1 exemptions are considered highest risk, whilst band 3 lowest risk. There are some existing exemptions that will be transitioning into waste permits too (classed as 'upper band'). Those in each band will be subject to different inspection and assessment: • All band 1 waste exemptions assessed within the 3-year registration period • 50% of band 2 waste exemptions assessed within the 3-year registration period • Band 3 compliance assessed through targeted campaigns and desk-based assessments • All upper band compliance waste exemptions (T8, T9, U16) assessed annually Below are the proposed compliance charges for an exemption in each band: • Band 1: £420 • Band 2: £212 • Band 3: £30 • Upper band: £1,236

	For awareness the D1 exemption will be in Band 2. Where multiple exemptions are taken the EA proposes to have a reduced rate for each additional exemption in bands 1, 2, and the upper band, as follows: • Additional band 1 or 2 compliance charge: £76 • Additional upper band compliance charge: £227 For farmers there will be a 'common on-farm' compliance charge that packages a range of exemptions for on-farm activities. The EA has proposed a 'common on-farm compliance charge' of £88. If the total cost of compliance charges for waste exemptions to be registered is lower than the 'common on-farm' compliance charge, the lower of these total charges would apply. ADAs initial reading of this is that the 'common on-farm compliance charges' will not be available for IDB activities. The **consultation** closes on **20 January 2025**. ADA would welcome members' views on the impacts on these new charges on their flood and water level management activities and encourage you to respond. ADA had not previously been notified by the EA regarding the consultation and is concerned that no assessment of affordability to smaller public authorities has been considered nor the implications for risk management authorities. To consider responding to the consultation.
9.14	**ADA.** Local Audit Reform Consultation, running until 29/1/25. You can access to MHCLG consultation here: Local audit reform: a strategy for overhauling the local audit system in England - GOV.UK
9.15	**ADA.** There is a consultation on Local Government Funding reform which closes on 12 February 2025. Para 2.3.20 mentions flood defence, land drainage and coastal protection and invites views on the merits of a bespoke formula. **https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-authority-funding-reform-objectives-and-principles**
9.16	**ADA.** A consultation on Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England, which closes 26 February 2025. **2025: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/strengthening-the-standards-and-conduct-framework-for-local-authorities-in-england** Whilst this does not cover IDBs currently (it does include Parish Councils etc). We will use the consultation to raise questions of its application to IDBs, and/or whether there should be alternative mechanisms to strengthen IDB standards and to find a suitable conduct framework for them.
10.	**Office for National Statistics – Business Register and Employment Survey 2024.** The Clerk received a form for completion where the deadline was 4/10/24. This was done and a copy of the form circulated to Board Members for information.
11.	**White Cross Offshore Wind Farm.** To receive an update on the position, should information be available.
12.	**Items to note.**
13.	**Items raised at the Chairman's discretion.**
14.	**Date of next Meeting:** Thursday, 13/3/2025 at 7.30pm in Braunton Parish Council Committee Room.