

THE BRAUNTON MARSH DRAINAGE BOARD

Clerk to the Board: Mrs Sue Squire
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Agenda for a Board Meeting to be held on **Thursday, 11 September 2025 in the Committee Room of Braunton Parish Council at 7.30pm.**

Sue Squire, Clerk to the Board, 4 September 2025

No.	Item		
1.	Apologies. Mr J Ashton, Mr D Hartnoll.		
2.	Declarations of Interest.		
3.	Approval of the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 10 July 2025.		
4.	A representative from Love Braunton will address the meeting regarding the Whitecross Wind Farm and in particular, the hydrology of the area which could impact the Marsh.		
	The Chairman will have been in touch with the Environment Agency regarding a hydrology report.		
5.	Finance.		
5.1	Balances will be tabled.		
5.2	To authorise the following payments:		
	Mrs S Squire	Two monthly salary & expenses	Redacted under Data Protection
	HM Revenue & Customs	PAYE	£131.20
	Braunton Parish Council	Hire of room for meeting on 11/9/25	£17.00
	Resourceful Bookkeeping	Pay documents for September 2025	£3.25
	Lloyds Bank	Service Charge. 1/8/25 & 29/8/25.	£4.25 x 2
5.3	VAT Reclaim. To note that the sum of £1,787.20 was reclaimed for the period 1/6/25 to 30/6/25 and credited to the Community Account on 23/7/25 and the sum of £190.06 on 24/7/25, making a total received of £1,977.26 bringing the VAT to be reclaimed up to date as at the end of July.		
5.4	2025/26 Levy Rate Invoices. These have been sent to Marsh owners and a steady rate of payments is being received. The Clerk has reverted from using a paper method to record the details on a spreadsheet which will be reflected in the information provided on the IDB1 form. This is the preferred way of keeping the information.		
6.	Matters Arising from the Board Meeting held on 10 July 2025.		
6.1	Enforcement issues on the Marsh. Email from the Enforcement Officer on 2/9/25 advised: The Planning Officer has made a decision and confirmed that the Department will proceed with a formal Notice, this will be for the unauthorised material change of use of land to a storage use and for the unauthorised construction of a building with associated extension, generator store, block wall and solar panels on the land for storage purposes and laying of a hardstanding. I need to obtain authorisation to issue the Notice and then draft the papers which I hope to do within the next week or so.		

	I will email again once I have issued the Notice and will set out the relevant timescales involved for compliance.
6.2	The Chairman to report on her conversation with Mr H Dart regarding a Members' Barbecue.
6.3	Abstraction of Water. Mrs Chesters to report on her conversation with the Environment Agency regarding the details of the Abstraction Licence.
6.4.	Clerk's Actions, not mentioned elsewhere on the Agenda: ❖ Made payments ❖ Responded to North Devon Council in respect of the planning application ❖ Contacted ADA regarding the correct details for Members to receive the publication. ADA has confirmed that their records have been updated. ❖ Updated Policies that had been reviewed and adopted ❖ Has sent the link regarding the XLinks Morocco Project, not now going ahead, to Members
7.	Maintenance. To discuss any work required.
9.	Correspondence.
9.1	North Devon Council. Pre-App Enquiry – ENQ/0524/2025 – RMB Chivenor, EX31 4AZ. The deadline date for the Board's response was 18/8/25. Board Members were circulated with details on 4/8/25. To ratify the response given, which was as follows: The response from the Board is 'no comment'.
9.2	North Devon Council. Planning Application Consultation. 80657 – Infill extension between garage and dwelling at 9 Tarka Way, Braunton, EX33 2FG. The deadline date for the Board's response was 29/8/25. Board Members were circulated with the details on 18/8/25. To ratify the response given, which was as follows: Braunton Marsh Drainage Board has no comments to make on this application.
9.3	North Devon Council. Planning Application Consultation. 80545 – Erection of dwellings (fallback position to 76973 and 77983) to include air source heat pump, pond, solar arrays and other associated works at LPG Storage Yard, Sandy Lane, Braunton, EX33 2NU. The deadline date for the Board's response was 2/9/25. Board Members were circulated with the details on 18/8/25. To ratify the response given, which was as follows: Braunton Marsh Drainage Board has no comments to make on this application.
9.4	North Devon Council. Planning Application Consultation. 80618 – Change of use from live/work property to full residential use at Grafton House, Saunton Road, Braunton, EX33 1HG. The deadline date for the Board's response was 1/9/25. Board Members were circulated with the details on 18/8/25. To ratify the response given, which was as follows: Braunton Marsh Drainage Board has no comments to make on this application.
9.5	North Devon Council. Planning Application Consultation. 80681 – Application for permission in principle for the development of 9 dwellings for social / local connection rental purposes at Broadlands Farm, Saunton Road, Braunton, EX33 1HG. The deadline date for the Board's response is 17/9/25.

9.6	ADA. Email giving ADA's draft response to Defra Flood Funding Consultation circulated to Board Members on 19/7/25.
9.7	ADA. Email asking for feedback from IDBs about problems they are facing due to the dry weather circulated to Board Members on 19/7/25.
9.8	ADA. Main river maintenance. Request for information – straw poll. Email received on 7/8/25 asking for a response by 12/8/25 in connection with the Somerset Consortium of IDBs encountering a recent serious issue with the Environment Agency who have notified many landowners of their intention to permanently withdraw maintenance to a range of low and medium consequence stretches of main river, giving people six months notice. The Clerk was on leave at that time and on her return on 18/8/25, replied advising that most of the answers would have been 'No', adding that the Board does not have any communication with the EA except when their culvert becomes blocked at the automatic penstock which they maintain remotely.
9.9	SWADA. Email dated 11/8/25 informing of an Extraordinary Meeting on 18/8/25. Due to the Clerk's leave, this was not picked up until the day of the meeting, and an email was sent explaining the reason why it had not been possible for the details to be circulated to Board Members in time for them to make arrangements to attend.
9.10	ADA. Email received as follows: Some IDBs have recently received audit returns from the External Auditor, who has highlighted a change to the Practitioners' Guide 2025 and a new assertion to be added to the 2025/26 AGAR in relation to Digital and data compliance The external auditor's letter states: <i>We would like to draw your attention to a change within the Practitioners Guide 2025 which is mandatory for the 2025/26 period. Paragraphs 1.47 to 1.54 relate to an additional assertion to be included in the 2025/26 AGAR, Assertion 10, regarding email management, websites, compliance with both the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and the data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the requirement to have an IT Policy. The requirements in relation to Assertion 10 are listed in Paragraphs 1.47 to 1.54 and the local authority should review these requirements and take appropriate steps to ensure compliance.</i> The same mandatory rules applies to Parish Councils and the Clerk has researched and written an IT Policy tailored to Braunton Marsh for Members to consider adopting. The document is attached for studying ahead of the meeting, with a view to adopting in good time before the rules come into force.
10.	Drainage Board Website. This item links with the above item. The latest 2025 edition of the Practitioners' Guide brings important updates for authorities preparing Annual Governance and Accountability Returns (AGAR) for financial years starting on or after 1 April 2025. The most notable changes to the Practitioners' Guide this year are: ▪ Email management – every authority must now have a generic email account hosted on an authority-owned domain, e.g. clerk@abcdrainageboard.gov.uk or clerk@abcdrainageboard.org.uk rather than abcdrainageboard@gmail.com or abcdrainageboard@outlook.com ▪ New Assertion – a new Assertion 10 has been added to clarify data compliance, previously covered under Assertion 3.

	Updated Assertion – Guidance on Assertion 9 (Trust Funds) has been updated to reflect changes to the AGAR for 2025/26 when Cell 11a and Cell 11b will. Be replaced with a single Cell 11. These updates streamline processes, enhance transparency, and improve governance standards to help ensure your authority is ready for these changes. The Clerk will suggest that Board Members agree a new .gov.uk website to comply with the changes in time for the 2025/26 end of year audit. The Clerk will also suggest that a new website is constructed by Town and Parish Websites, with whom she has had positive experiences with the websites they create being easy to use and can be updated by her. The cost is in the region of £1,500.00. The present website is very difficult to manage and any alterations have to be sent to the webmaster, Vision ICT, involving a cost which would no longer be the case with a more user friendly website. The current website domain and hosting expire on 31/5/26 and the suggestion will be made that the new website, which must be in place by 1/4/26 is in place from 1/1/26.
11.	Items raised by Board Members.
11.1	Mr R Paelinck has requested the following Agenda item: Large planned South West Water works on the East side of the river.
12.	Items to note.
13.	Items raised at the Chairman's discretion.
14.	Date and time of next Meeting: Thursday, 13/11/2025 at 7.30pm in Braunton Parish Council Committee Room. The Annual General Meeting will be held ahead of the Board Meeting.