

UPPER WITHAM INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Minutes of a Meeting of Upper Witham Internal Drainage Board held on Monday, 16th November 2020 via video conference at 2pm.

<u>Present:</u>	Mr. A. Buckley		
	Cllr. J. Cottier		
	Cllr. Mrs. L. Dales		
	Cllr. Mrs. M. Green		
	Cllr. G. Hewson.		
	Mr. D. Knight		
	Mr. F. H. Myers	-	Chairman
	Cllr. L. J. Pennell		
	Mr. G. Rawlings.		
	Mr. J. Scarborough	-	Vice Chairman
	Mrs. J.S.P. Smith.		
	Cllr. P.J. Vaughan.	-	Vice Chairman
	Mrs. J. Wilkinson.		

In Attendance: Mr. Ian Coupland, Acting Director of Operations.
Miss Jayne Flower, Executive Assistant.
Mrs. Jane Froggatt, Chief Executive.
Mr Guy Hird, Acting Head of Technical & Engineering Services.
Mr. Steve Larter, Director of Finance & Governance.

45.20 Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. J. Boyall, Mr. B. Charlesworth, Mr. N. Craft, Cllr. S. England, Mr. P. Gowen, Mr. R. Hollis, Mr. D. Jackson, Ms E. E. Jenkinson, Cllr. Mrs. Kaberry-Brown, Mr. V. Kerr, Cllr. Ms. R. Longbottom, Cllr. R. Oates, Mr. R. Phillips, Mr. G. E Porter, Mr. C. Smith, Mr. T. Speakman, Cllr. I. Stokes, Mr. N. Tobin, Mr. B. White, Mr. S. White and Mr. P. Wright.

46.20 Declarations of Members' Interests.

Members present appointed by the five Councils declared interests relating to their respective Councils (City of Lincoln, North Kesteven District, West Lindsey District, South Kesteven District and Newark & Sherwood District Councils).

47.20 Election of Chairman.

Pat Vaughan proposed Fred Myers as Chairman for the ensuing year, seconded by Jacky Smith. With no further nominations he was duly elected, this being unanimously AGREED by members.

48.20 Chairman's Announcements.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, the third Board meeting held via videoconference. Members were thanked for their continued support and understanding in this highly unusual period of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Chairman thanked members for electing him as Chairman for a further year. He realised he had now served as Chairman since November 2011. He went on to welcome Cllr John Cottier to his first meeting of the Board. John has been nominated by South Kesteven District Council and replaces former member Cllr Chris Benn.

Members were informed that the Chairman had received Bryan White's apologies for the meeting today. Bryan had also indicated that he would be standing down from the Board, as he is in his 80s and feels the time is right to do so. He had served as a member of the Board, representing the Stapleford & Claypole electoral district, for 30 years. On behalf of Members the Chairman would write to say thank you to Bryan for that long service. That does leave a vacant seat for the electoral ward and Bryan has tried to elicit interest in local landowners to succeed him, but so far to no avail.

The Board had been advised by North Kesteven District Council that Cllr Chris Spray resigned from the Council on 13th November, and he is therefore no longer a member of Upper Witham IDB. At NKDC's next meeting on 12th December, the Council will nominate a successor to serve on the Board.

Finally, the Chairman extended a welcome once again to Ian Coupland and to Guy Hird, who continued to hold the fort on operational and technical matters respectively in the ill-health absence of Martin Shilling. Although Martin remains on sick leave, he speaks weekly to Jane and he is now feeling somewhat better after suffering a heart attack on 17th September. We anticipate Martin will return to work in mid-January.

49.20 Election of two Vice-Chairmen.

Mr Fred Myers proposed John Scarborough and Pat Vaughan as the two Vice - Chairmen for the ensuing year. This was seconded by Cllr Lance Pennell. With no further nominations they were duly elected, this being unanimously AGREED by members.

50.20 Election of 12 members to the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Members voted to re-elect the current members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee for the ensuing year en-bloc, current members being the Chairman, 2 Vice Chairmen, Mr. N. Craft, Cllr. L. Pennell, Mr. R.J. Phillips, Mrs. J. Smith, Mr. T. Speakman and Mr. P. Wright. There are three vacant seats.

51.20 Election of 6 members to the Works Committee.

Members voted to re-elect en bloc the 6 members of the Works Committee for the ensuing year. Current members are the Chairman, two Vice Chairmen, Mr. P. Wright and Mr. N. Craft. In addition, a local representative for the area is co-opted to cover the issue concerned, as and when the Works Committee is convened.

52.20 Election of a member to the ADA Lincs Branch Environment Committee.

Members were content to re-elect Mr P Gowen to the ADA Lincolnshire Branch Environment Committee for the ensuing year.

53.20 Election of a member to the ADA Lincs Branch Pay & Conditions Committee.

Members were content to re-elect Cllr Lance Pennell to the ADA Lincolnshire Branch Pay & Conditions Committee for the ensuing year (Lance represents all 4 Witham & Humber Drainage Boards on the Committee).

54.20 Election of 4 members to the Joint Services Committee.

All four members were re-elected en-bloc to the Joint Services Committee and the two existing members who deputise were also re-elected for the ensuing year. Current members are the Chairman, two Vice Chairmen and Mr N. Craft. Current deputies are Mr. T. Speakman and Mrs J Smith.

55.20 Calendar of 2021 Meeting dates for the Board & F&GPC.

Members APPROVED the following meeting dates for 2021:

Board Meetings, 2pm

- Monday, 18th January.
- Monday, 24th May.
- Monday, 20th September.
- Monday, 15th November (+APM).

Finance & General Purposes Committee Meetings, 10am:

- Wednesday, 06th January.
- Wednesday, 12th May.
- Wednesday, 08th September.
- Wednesday, 03rd November.

It was also NOTED that the four IDBs' joint Annual Inspection was planned for Thursday, 23rd September 2021.

56.20 Register of Members' Interests.

A copy of the Register of Members' Interests form had been circulated with the agenda. Members were requested to complete this and return it to Officers via email or to Witham House, so that an up-to-date Register for November 2020 to October 2021 was maintained. Members were advised of the importance of this being an accurate record. The information in the Register may be subject, for example, to an FOI request and public disclosure and the Register serves as both protection for the Board and for individual members.

57.20 Minutes of the Board Meeting, 21.09.20.

The Minutes of the Board's previous meeting held on Monday, 21st September 2020 were proposed, seconded and APPROVED as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING:

57.20.1 Capital Schemes in 2020/21 (minute 26.20.2 refers).

The Chief Executive highlighted to members that since the January Board meetings when several schemes were supported in Budget Estimates for 2020/21, several other schemes had come forward where, for example, funding was not assured but where Grant in Aid applications have been successful and where for a modest contribution from the Board a worthwhile scheme can be delivered, e.g., the refurbishment of Pyewipe Pumping Station.

FDGiA monies totalling £251,100 had been received for the refurbishment of Pyewipe Pumping Station. The total scheme cost was £368,950 [£71,000 of this an upfront contribution from Anglian [Northern] RFCC which will be repaid when the Board received the Section 104 developer contribution as part of the proposed Western Growth Corridor development], with a total FDGiA grant allocation of £282,950. A contribution of £15,000 from the Board was approved at its June 2020 meeting to enable the scheme to proceed, funded from the Capital Receipt income of £255,000 from the sale of the former Witham House at J1 The Point.

It was noted that the Board is awaiting the Local Planning Authority decision notice of 24.09.20 from City of Lincoln Council, on the planning application for the new building element of the scheme.

57.20.2 Staffing Issues (minute 29.20.2 refers).

Chris Hoyle, Land Drainage Operative with Upper Witham IDB, retired on 27.09.20, having completed 23 years' service with the Board. Chris was presented with his choice of retirement gift.

A third new starter with the 4 Boards was due to start with Upper Witham IDB on Monday 07.09.20 in the role of Land Drainage Operative (commensurate with Chris Hoyle's retirement). Unfortunately, the individual was admitted to hospital the day before. After several weeks it was clear that sadly the individual would not be joining the Board. Interviews had taken place 10 days ago and a shortlist of 2 potential candidates would be going through to a skills assessment this week, under supervision of Lee Albans, Foreman, and Ian Coupland.

57.20.3 Plant and Machinery (minute 29.20.3 refers).

Upper Witham IDB has purchased the former Witham First DIDB Atlas 140W wheeled machine at £32,000 (the offered trade-in value to that Board), to replace the Board's old Atlas Terex machine (which is older and has done many more hours), the Terex being a machine which was retained and not traded in some 2 years ago in order to provide back-up and flexibility in the fleet, particularly for the additional EA PSCA work. The Atlas Terex machine had been sold at £19,000.

58.20 Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting, 04.11.20.

The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday, 04th November had been circulated with the agenda and were proposed, seconded and APPROVED as an accurate record.

There were no matters arising, all issues being covered by the agenda, and the recommendations from the sub-committee were noted.

59.20 Chief Executive's Report.

The Chief Executive's report had been circulated with the agenda. Issues highlighted included:

59.20.1 Covid-19.

The 4 Boards' arrangements to maintain business continuity were updated following the Prime Minister's announcement on 31st October introducing restrictions from Thursday, 05th November to Wednesday, 02nd December 2020.

Those staff based at Witham House office have been asked to now work from home wherever practicable, coming into the office by exception and only when necessary for specific duties which cannot be undertaken from home. Staff have been provided with ICT and mobile phones to support working from home.

The main office number 01522 697123 continues to be answered remotely during office hours, using the Unity phone app. Calls are triaged to the most appropriate person. When staff do go into the office, the post is opened, scanned and sent on electronically. Meetings continue via video conferencing; the Boards having paid for use of zoom for 12 months. The office will be closed to visitors and the public, unless by prior appointment for an essential purpose. The QR Test and Trace Code has been downloaded and is in use at UW's office / depot and each of the other 3 depots.

The Boards' Operatives will continue with the summer maintenance programme, with observance of the single person vehicle cab use policy, and with Operatives going straight from home to machines. The depots will be used only when necessary, for example for refuelling, but communal areas like the mess rooms and kitchens are to be avoided.

PPE like hand sanitiser, gloves, wipes, face masks and fogging aerosols is available for all staff to use, in the office and at the 4 depots. The emphasis is on 'Hands, Face & Space', encouraging frequent thorough hand washing, use of face coverings in circulation areas away from individual workspaces and working at a recommended distance of 2 metres and where this cannot be achieved and 1 metre is required, a dynamic risk assessment and use of precautions like face coverings.

There continues to be some logistical problems, e.g., when we have plant breakdowns and with the restrictions of not sharing vehicles which means

we hire more low-loader moves. However, these are being worked around.

The emphasis remains on following national guidance and thereby to provide a safe working environment for our staff, to provide as much continuity of service as practicable, to reduce the risk of cross-infection in the workplace in order to both relieve pressure on the NHS and to ensure we keep a resilient workforce able to respond should we have a flood event.

59.20.2 ADA Lincolnshire Branch Recommended Pay Award 2021/22.

The four IDBs' representative on the ADA Lincolnshire Branch's Pay & Conditions Committee is Cllr. Lance Pennell, NKDC nominated member of Upper Witham IDB. He and the Chief Executive attended the last meeting of the Committee on 07.10.20 at which the proposed pay settlement for 2021/22 [from 01.04.21] was discussed. This is year two in a three-year pay deal agreed in October 2019. The agreement is based on ONS data on Average Weekly Earnings [AWE] for total pay in the public sector, using 3 months rolling average [KAC9] for the 3 months May, June and July 2020 compared with a YOY average for the same 3 months of last year 2019, as published in September 2020. The figure published in September was a useful baseline, to enable budget setting work to build in the estimated pay costs into next year's budgets. This figure is 4.1%.

The Pay & Conditions Committee acknowledged that the figure was higher than anticipated, attributable largely to the additional hours worked in the public sector during Covid-19 in the relevant 3 months of 2020, compared with 2019. However, after discussion between management and staff sides of the Committee, it was acknowledged that a deal was a deal and it was agreed unanimously by those members present that it be recommended to the full ADA Lincolnshire Branch (in return some other claims, e.g., hours harmonisation at 37 hours from 38 per week, were dropped by staff side).

The ADA Lincolnshire Branch meeting on 21.10.20 agreed unanimously to adopt the recommended pay settlement of 4.1% for 2021/22. It noted that with the 8 heavy rainfall events of Autumn/ Winter 2019/20 and the challenges presented in dealing with several flood events, plus the challenge of Covid-19 thereafter, honouring the agreement was appropriate.

It is, however, for each individual Board to determine pay settlements. The Board was therefore asked to determine whether it wished to adopt the ADA Lincolnshire Branch's recommended pay settlement of 4.1% for 2021/22 or indeed do something different. It was resolved and **AGREED** that the Board will adopt the ADA Lincolnshire Branch recommended pay settlement of 4.1% for 2021/22.

59.20.3 Capital Schemes

Pyewipe Pumping Station [UW]

City of Lincoln Council confirmed planning approval on 24.09.20 for the control room building, a key element of the Pyewipe Pumping Station refurbishment scheme in 2020/21, funded mainly from FDGiA monies and with a £15k partnership contribution from the Board.

Thorpe Catchwater, Tillbridge Lane [UW]

Martin Shilling met Board member Andrew Buckley and the Chairman on site on 17.09.20. Following a procurement process with tenders returned at circa £90k, the scheme will be developed as an in-house scheme, with the intention of reducing the amount of material removed from site and reuse of materials on site, thereby reducing costs. It is also proposed to undertake the works in-house, ideally in spring 2021.

New Depot and office scheme [UW]

This 40-week JCT contract with Taylor Pearson (Construction) Ltd for the build of the new Upper Witham depot and the joint Witham House office facility was affected by Covid-19 and the completion date of 05.02.20 was not achieved. After Taylor Pearson went into administration on 15.05.20 arrangements have been made for terminating the contract and for the main outstanding contractual items to be concluded [e.g., bell mouth entrance to the depot site, heating, electrical works and plumbing]. A detailed update report is on the agenda today, with the aim of completion of the project and a subsequent scheme closure report to the Board in January 2021.

The Chief Executive's report was received and noted.

60.20 External Auditor's Notice of Closure on the IDB Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2019/20.

A report had been circulated with the agenda and was introduced by the Director of Finance and Governance.

The Annual Return 2019/20 was agreed at the Board meeting on 29th June 2020, subsequently published on the Board's website for public inspection and despatched to the External Auditor on 02nd July 2020. The public inspection period was from 06th July 2020 until 14th August 2020. Due to the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown, the Board had until 31st July 2020 to submit its Annual Return 2019/20 (normally 30th June) and the External Auditor has until 30th November 2020 (normally 30th September) to complete their work and publish their report.

The External Auditor has a statutory deadline of 30th September (extended to 30th November for 2020 only) to complete their external audit and publish the formal Completion of Audit Certificate (Section 3 of Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)). This was issued on 23rd September 2020 and received by the Board on 24th September 2020.

Part 2 of section 3 of the AGAR has been completed as follows; 'On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance

with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met'.

Under the section 'Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority' they have reported 'None'.

This therefore completes the External Audit for 2019/20 and the Board, along with the other 3 Boards in the Witham & Humber group, have all received the same Audit opinion stating there are no issues to report to the Board. The Notice of Conclusion of Audit was issued on 28th September and has been displayed at the Board's depot/Witham House and on the Board's website.

Members noted the External Audit Notice of Closure on the IDB Annual Return 2019/20.

61.20 Schedule of Expenditure, 01.09.20 to 31.10.20.

The Schedule of Expenditure incurred for the two months of 01st September to 31st October 2020 had been circulated with the agenda. It was highlighted that this refers to invoices paid in the two months period.

Expenditure totalled £309,492.41 gross or, excluding £33,827.77 VAT, the net amount of £275,664.64. Of this, £6,831.63 was rechargeable expenditure to other bodies.

Items raised by or highlighted to members included:

- Items 13,14 & 15: £4,475.90, £5154.00 and £4,680.00 (net) to Carlton Fuels for fuel supplies to the depot.
- Item 42: £5,200.99 (net) to Claas Eastern Ltd for Claas Arion FX14 BBE fix inner bearing on rear axle housing.
- Item 84: £6,665.00 (net) to Lincs Lining Ltd for internal & external line marking to the new depot.
- Item 87: £3,626.45 (net) to M Gladwin Electrical Contractors Ltd for electrical works at the depot.
- Item 92: £885.00 (net) to Morbey Fencing Ltd, for repairs to the left-hand side and rear fencing of the compound to the new depot.
- Item 118: £2,400 (net) to PKF Littlejohn for the external audit fees.
- Items 140 & 141: £520.00 and £1092.00 (net) to Sills & Betteridge LLP for legal advice regarding the JCT contract for the new depot & office.

Members received the expenditure schedule and NOTED the expenditure incurred in the two months 01st September to 31st October 2020.

62.20 Summary Financial Performance Report 2020/21 to 31st October 2020.

The 2020/21 Financial Performance Report, detailing the 7 months to 31st October 2020, had been circulated with the agenda. The report was presented by the Director of Finance and Governance. The summary position was as set out in the following table:

	1		2		3		4
	2020/21 Budget £		Profiled Budget £		Actual £		Variance (3-2) £
Income	(1,432,622)		(1,255,825)		(1,318,664)		(62,839)
Board & General Admin	18,830		9,186		7,375		(1,811)
One Off Schemes	105,000		0		20,155		20,155
Conservation	2,000		602		265		(337)
Depot	64,420		28,883		37,083		8,200
Drains	614,202		434,645		496,698		62,053
Pumping Stations	184,970		89,603		69,909		(19,694)
Joint Admin/Witham House	144,615		83,228		76,675		(6,553)
Consents & Enforcement	16,444		0		0		0
Director of Operations/Engineers	106,178		56,355		55,026		(1,329)
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	(19,200)		0		(18,000)		(18,000)
PWLB	0		0		0		0
Rechargeable Works	25,000		8,490		57,135		48,645
EA Precept	170,163		85,082		83,413		(1,669)
FRS17 Pension Adjustment (net)	0		0		0		0
Wages & Plant Holding Account	0		(26,334)		(76,853)		(50,519)
(Surplus)/ Deficit	0		(486,085)		(509,783)		(23,698)

The Board's budget profile as of 31st October was a surplus of [£486,085] and the actual position was a budget surplus of [£509,783], a positive variance of [£23,698]. Members were reminded that it was still comparatively early in the financial year with some high-risk areas such as electricity costs still to be incurred during winter months. However, there were no issues of concern at this point, other than to try and improve the Board's reserves position if practicable at the year end 31.03.21 given the adverse impact on reserves of a deficit 31.03.20 year-end position for 2019/20.

On income, Special Levies had been received by 01.11.20 from the 5 relevant councils, the second and final 2020/21 tranche of Special Levy payments due in 2020/21. This income was included in the position and members were reminded that bank balances would reduce over the next few months, there being no further significant income due to the Board from Special Levies until May 2021.

Drainage rates income as at 31.10.20 was [£241,197.85], of £249,459.35 invoiced for 2020/21, a collection rate of 93.9%, compared with 94.8% for the comparable month 7 in 2019/20. As at 31.10.20 after adjustments, there was a balance of [£15,752.48] rates income outstanding to the Board.

The Highland Water claims had been submitted to the Environment Agency for the balance on the 2019/20 actual claim, with a further balance of (£57,053) due to the Board, and for the 2020/21 estimated claim of (£200,000). Of the estimated claim for 2020/21, 80% (£160,000) was due to be paid by 30.09.20 and was paid by the EA in August 2020 along with the balance on the 2019/20 actual (£57,053), i.e., a total of (£217,053) had been received. This is a positive variance of (£26k) to the anticipated Highland Water income to the Board.

A FDGiA business case and grant application had been submitted and grant income of £251,100 had now been received for the Pyewipe Pumping Station works. This scheme will be progressed in 2020/21, with the agreed £15,000 partnership contribution from the Board. Therefore, it had contributed to the one-off schemes reserve.

On budget headings, variations included (£10k) underspend to date on the Joint Administration / Witham House budget head regarding National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR). A challenge has been submitted to the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) to review the assessment for the new depot and offices, as the charge levied included the workshop area twice (ground floor and upper floor). The Board had received notification that this challenge was successful. The revised NNDR payable on the new depot and new office is now broadly the same as the previous NNDR for the former separate depot and office buildings. The NNDR payable for the office portion is £5,888 and for the Depot £12,325.

On bank balances and investments, as at 31.10.20 these were as follows:

Lloyds Current	£	478,191.41
Lloyds Deposit	£	55,000.00
Nationwide Instant Access	£	603,024.63
Nationwide 90 Day Notice	£	14,431.59
Total		£ 1,150,647.63

It was noted that the Nationwide Instant Access account included the balance remaining on the PWLB loan, which is being used to fund completion of the new depot and office scheme. This balance would therefore reduce as further payments are made on the scheme towards completion.

PWLB Loan - Balance Outstanding

2.68%

£ 1,160,010.80

Original loan £1,200,000. Loan period 30 years from 18/01/2019. Maturity date 15th November 2048. Repayments made 15th May and 15th November each year.

Members received and NOTED the financial position as of 31st October 2020.

63.20 Health and Safety Update.

A report prepared by the Acting Director of Operations had been circulated with the agenda and was presented.

On 18th May 2020, the Operatives returned to full time days, being provided with all the PPE required complete their duties safely, whilst still observing social distancing including one Operative per vehicle. "Fogging" disinfectant aerosol cans have been provided for use in vehicles. This system has been tested and does kill Coronavirus. All drivers have been instructed to fog their machines and vans at night before finishing and when anyone else has had access to their machine.

Following the latest guidance, Office Staff are again now working from home wherever possible. Measures have been put in place to make the office accessible to a limited number of staff at any one time, this being managed by a booking system, with Jayne Flower managing the requests. The office is currently closed to members of the public and unauthorised visitors, unless by prior arrangement. These arrangements and the risk assessments are reviewed weekly at the Senior Management Team Meetings

Cope, the external Health and Safety Provider have completed their annual review and have recommended to guard all the diesel pumping station engines with modern guards. Quotes for this work will be obtained. Cope have also reviewed and updated some of our generic risk assessments.

Pleasingly there have been no accidents or near misses since the last report to the Board in September.

The scheduled Health and Safety Meeting, planned for October, will take place later due to booked holidays and isolation rules concerning some of the H&S Representatives. The meetings will take place via video conference.

All Operatives except three have successfully completed the annual Overhead Cable Training. The company fitting the Cab Hand Rails have yet to complete this task due to shutting down the factory and furloughing their staff. They have reopened on reduced staffing levels and will resume our order as soon as they can.

Members received, discussed and noted the Health and Safety update.

64.20 Environmental Update.

A report by Fiona Scott, Environment & GIS Technician, had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by Guy Hird, Acting Head of Technical and Engineering Services.

Upper Witham once again had a successful year in 2020 for the barn owl box checks. Nine of the boxes checked contained barn owl (*Tyto alba*), kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) or both. All remaining boxes contained either stock dove (*Columba oenas*) or jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*). Generally, it has been a relatively poor year for barn owls. This is thought to be because of a very wet start to 2020, as barn owls do not have waterproof feathers, and will not head out to hunt when it is raining so a prolonged wet period is very bad news for both species. However, it has been a good year UK-wide for kestrels, who in turn are waterproof.

The camera in Pyewipe PS box continues to work well and is monitored by the Board's officers. A female barn owl (who had been ringed previously by Alan Ball) with 6 eggs was present during checks this year.

The badger sett at Oxpasture Outfall drain continues to be monitored. It is not believed that it is a main sett, as camera traps have been used overnight and only one male has been sighted leaving. Badgers are less active during November, however digging and bedding collection will continue. It is especially important that any badger digging into IDB embankments is closely monitored by Board Officers and Operatives.

COVID restrictions permitting, the Board will host a Year 2 Geography student placement from February to June 2021. Students who have shown interest in a placement with the Boards will be interviewed by the Board's officer (likely via Zoom or Microsoft Teams) and the best candidate will be selected. The placement will introduce the student to Internal Drainage Boards and what they do, as well as showing the student the environment side of IDBs and actions we take to conserve and enhance the environment.

ADA will officially release their updated Biodiversity Action Plan template to be in line with various legislation and policy including, but not limited to, the Environment Bill (Act) 2020, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, the 25 Year Environment Plan and Water Framework Directive.

The Board's Environment and GIS Technician will be undertaking Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) training with the British Trust for Ornithology online. These skills will be applied working in wetland areas within the 4 Boards' districts.

Members received and noted the report and update.

65.20 Water Vole Policy Update & Approval.

A report prepared by the Environment & GIS Technician had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Acting Head of Technical & Engineering Services.

This policy helps protect and enhance the water vole habitats and population associated with the 4 Boards' land and the drainage channels in the Drainage Board areas.

Updates to the policy are as follows:

- The addition of 'The Water Vole Mitigation Handbook' as guidance for the Boards. This handbook is very well used by those in environmental vocations (ecologists, environmental managers, etc.) and is endorsed by the UK Water Vole Steering Group. A PDF copy of the handbook is held by the 4 Boards' Environment and GIS Technician.
- The addition of encouraging Boards' staff to report water vole activity via their species recording app 'iRecord', data of which is sent to Lincolnshire Records Centre (part of the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership).
- Inclusion of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 when undertaking all works, ensuring that all works have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing biodiversity. IDBs, as a public authority, have a legal duty to follow the NERC Act (2006).

Members further AGREED the updates to the Policy.

66.20 Director of Operations and Engineering Services' Report.

In the absence of the Director of Operations and Engineering Services, a report had been compiled jointly by Ian Coupland and Guy Hird and was presented jointly:

Planned Maintenance Programmes.

Following an early start to the annual summer maintenance programme on Upper Witham, work is progressing well. Upper Witham have progressed well on maintenance and have completed all PSCA work required by the EA to date. They have incorporated the repair of several bank slips as they have come across them.

Officers have interviewed via video conference to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Chris Hoyle. Having shortlisted 2 candidates, a practical excavator assessment will take place shortly.

The Claas Tractor and herder flail is being nursed along this maintenance season, pending replacement in June 2021 as part of the approved plant programme, and repairs and maintenance are incurring some relatively high costs as evidenced in the Schedule of Expenditure earlier on today's agenda. Invitations to tender had been

sent out to suppliers and quotations were due into the Board on 07.12.20, following which these will be evaluated.

The Board unfortunately had been the victim of crime recently with the theft of a trailer body from Oxpasture Pumping Station. This structure collects the weed from the AWC. There was no damage caused during the theft, except for the padlock on the entrance gates. The theft has been reported to the police, a crime number was received, and the case was closed. Officers are now looking for a second-hand replacement.

Hykeham Pumping Station

North Hykeham pump and motor are out and away for overhaul and refurbishment, with the Pump at Perry Pumps in Lincoln and the Motor at Edgar Allen Mining in Mansfield. Both should be returned and recommissioned soon. Issues have been identified at this pumping station; a structural survey will be undertaken as some subsidence is suspected as the root cause. A leak in the outfall chamber has been identified, the liner being cracked and split. Quotes will be obtained for repairs.

Thorpe Pumping Station

Consideration of an amended design is in progress to reduce the cost of the work to reinstate a bank slip on Tillbridge Lane and make it suitable for the Board's workforce to undertake in the spring of 2021 [upon completion of the planned winter programme].

Pyewipe Pumping Station

Planning Permission has been granted by City of Lincoln Council for the construction of a new pump control house. This building will house the new Motor Control Centre [MCC] that will control the 3 electrically driven pumps on the site. The process to receive Grant in Aid monies from EA was completed in January, upon the receipt by the Board of £282,950 plus a further £71,000 contribution underwritten by RFCC. This second sum being the Western Growth Corridor S104 contribution to be used for the provision of an additional Weedscreen cleaner. The Board agreed in June to contribute £15,000 towards the total scheme costs of £368,950.

The scheme includes the provision of:

- I. a new pump control building and MCC,
- II. the refurbishment of the penstocks controlling flows within the syphon under the Fosdyke Canal and,
- III. the provision of an automatic Weedscreen cleaner to the 'Old' electric pump that will deal with the flows emanating from the proposed Western Growth Corridor development.

The metal probes that monitor water levels on site had corroded causing the system providing the continuous monitoring of water levels on site to fail. These probes have been replaced and the system reinstated.

Lincoln Flood Alleviation Scheme.

Officers have been involved in detailed discussion with the EA concerning their proposals to automate the operation of this scheme. The electrical control gear of the sites is due for replacement this financial year 2020/21 and the EA are to combine this

with the provision of automation and remote operation through an improved telemetry system.

The thresholds of operation and the schemes effect upon the Board maintained systems and stations remains un-changed and will continue to be as previously agreed. Provisions have been made, for inclusion by the EA, of the Board's telemetry system.

Work has commenced on site and will continue over the winter months, work on the pump control panels is now been reprogramed for February 2021. Alternative arrangements are in place for the operation of the pumping facilities on the sites effected with access by the Board's Operatives provided. All back-up alternative methods of operation are in place so that the risk of failure of the system is not increased and the operation of the scheme remain unchanged during an event.

Environment Agency

Regarding PSCA Works, the Board has been awarded the works order for the maintenance of the River Till.

However, on a slightly negative point the works undertaken by the Board at the EA's Foston Beck have again brought complaint, from the EA themselves this time. They will be reviewing our works at Foston. Members were reminded we have had previous issues with works at this location, which caused concern amongst the local dog walkers and birdwatchers, deeming the works "too severe". It is a very sensitive area. We await the outcome of that review by the EA in winter 2018, although long promised the EA has not made the internal review report available to the Board.

Lower River Witham Strategy Review & Billingham System Review.

Officers and Board members have attended several meetings relating to these two EA led reviews, at the invitation of the EA. These reviews relate to two aspects of the lower River Witham system. The strategic review is tasked with looking at how the whole of the lower River Witham system is to be maintained and operated into the future, whilst the Billingham system review is a much more local approach focusing on maintenance and the effects a system failure has on the adjacent Witham First District IDB system.

The EA are to issue a scoping document requesting prices for various elements of work from their framework consultant, Arup. Over the next 2 years the system is to be re-surveyed and the existing computer based hydraulic model is to be updated to reflect the current condition of the system. Arup have been appointed to undertake the strategy review and their work will include the management of the topographical survey work, model update, updating hydraulic information used within the modelling exercise, stakeholder engagement and development of the business case document by 2022.

The strategy, which was originally produced in the late 1990's and resulted in the rebuilding of many kilometres of raised earth embankments in the early 2000's, is reviewed every 5 years. This review will consider the existing preferred option of 'providing additional storage' and how the existing system effects the adjacent IDB pumped and gravity systems.

The review of the Billingham system review will take information generated by the topographic survey of the watercourses and consider the need for de-silting of the various channels. The current method and specification of annual maintenance will also be discussed along with the need for more enthusiastic maintenance of bushes and trees within the main river system. EA officers will hold site meetings with the local landowners who have experienced problems over the years within the Digby and Dorrington Fen areas; with officers from the Board and NFU assisting wherever possible. Any future projects for capital work within the system will depend on a combination of both Defra Grant in Aid and partnership funding. The importance of the defences in protecting the adjacent land has already been raised along with the need for a decision as to the long-term value, in the wider sense, of the adjacent land.

A joint questionnaire from the Board, the EA and the NFU has been sent out this week to the circa 200 local landowners and tenants within the catchment, with responses invited between 02nd and 27th November 2020.

Members received and NOTED the report and verbal update.

67.20 Engineering Services Report.

The Engineering Services Report had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Acting Head of Technical and Engineering Services.

The Planning matters continue to be exceptional busy for this Board, with a high volume of applications coming through. However, on this occasion there were no issues to highlight to members.

Members received and noted the report.

68.20 Lincoln Water Transfer Scheme

A report had been prepared by the Technical Assistant, Abi Gilbert, and was circulated with the agenda and presented by Guy Hird.

This year the season began within the second week of the licence period from 10th April. A couple of wet spells within the season caused abstraction to drop however abstraction continued throughout the whole of the season with only 2 weeks of 0 abstraction occurring at the end of August/beginning of September. The members abstracted a total of 452,035m³ of water out of the 580,600m³ available, exceeding 2018's highest abstraction record of 350,469m³; we also saw vast usage of the pool water. Oxpasture's transfer pipe was opened and closed twice within the season to reduce risk of backflow of water and our Saxilby pipe stayed shut due to sufficient water available. 549,000 was also transferred from the River Trent to the Fosdyke Canal by the Environment Agency.

This year the Board's Pumping Stations were operated as follows:

Summer settings: March/April to Mid-October / Early Nov

Transfers.

The transfer pipe at the Board's Oxpasture Pumping Station was opened twice this season. The Board's Saxilby Pumping Station transfer pipe was not opened.

Fosdyke Nav to IDB system	m3
Oxpasture PS	176617
Saxilby PS	0
Total	0
R Trent to Fosdyke Nav	
Torksey	549,000

Licence Returns.

The Licence return was completed online in mid-November.

Abstraction rates.

Abstraction occurred from 10th April through to 25th September with a two-week break on the week commencing 28th August. Higher abstraction rates can be seen across the season compared to 2019 with many weeks having double the amount of water abstracted. Peak abstraction occurred week commencing 29th May with a total of 48,396m³ being abstracted. 182,837m³ was given to the pool this year with a request mid-season for members to give up any unwanted water from their allocation. 182,000m³ of that water was taken up by 6 members leaving just 837m³ within the pool. Tillers Turf was again the largest user of water this year as they used a total of 231,500m³ whilst also taking 120,000m³ from the pool. There was a total of 6 members and 4 secondary users abstracting this year.

<u>Catchment</u>	<u>Amount Abstracted (2014)</u> <u>m³</u>	<u>Amount Abstracted (2015)</u> <u>m³</u>	<u>Amount Abstracted (2016)</u> <u>m³</u>	<u>Amount Abstracted (2017)</u> <u>m³</u>	<u>Amount Abstracted (2018)</u> <u>m³</u>	<u>Amount Abstracted (2019)</u> <u>m³</u>	<u>Amount Abstracted (2020)</u> <u>m³</u>
Oxpasture Outfall	39,680	52,100	38,800	29,340	77,928	127140	129137
Oxpasture	101,894	72,746	78,266	57,775	225,155	140632	269865
Burton	47,258	28,840	6,220	1,450	43,140	45500	44674
Skellingthorpe/Saxilby	33,141	13,833	36,650	1,200	4,246	0	8359
Total	221,973	167,519	160,936	89,765	350,469	313,272	452,035

Potato Brown Rot.

The Board carried out boat spraying along the Fosdyke Canal on 22nd, 23rd and 24th June 2020 using 2.5L of chemical to reduce the spread of Woody Nightshade. The cost of the spraying to the Lincoln Water Transfer Company currently stands at £2,750.

Flowmeters.

Both Oxpasture and Saxilby flowmeters were certified in March 2016. To comply with the licence requirement to be certified every five years they will required to be certified prior to the 2021 season. The Oxpasture flowmeter was replaced in November 2011, the flowmeter at Saxilby is still the original. It was discovered this year that the Saxilby flow meter has stopped working which will be investigated and repaired/replaced at a cost to the Lincoln Water Transfer Company before the 2021 season.

In conclusion, this was another successful year for the Lincoln Water Transfer Scheme with all parties working and communicating together well to manage allocation resources.

Members received and noted the report on the Lincoln Water Transfer Scheme.

69.20 Consents and Enforcements Report.

The Engineering Services Officer introduced the Consents and Enforcements Report which had been circulated with the agenda and set out the position, both within the drainage district and in the extended Rainfall Catchment where the Board acts for and on behalf of LCC, as the LLFA. For this Board, the consents have been relatively quiet, however the enforcement workload continues to increase:

Byelaw Consent Applications

Reference	Location	Applicant	Details	Date
UD-5356-2020-CON	Boultham, North Intake Drain / Riverside path	JBA Bentley	River Witham embankment repairs	22-10-20

Section 23 Land Drainage Act Consent Applications – District

Reference	Location	Applicant	Details	Date
UD-5217-2020-CON	Thorpe Farm, Thorpe in the Fallows	Thorpe Farm Partners	Discharge to ditch from new building	

Section 23 Land Drainage Act Consent Applications – Extended Area

The Board acts as Agent for Lincolnshire County Council, the Lead Local Flood Authority

Reference	Location	Applicant	Details	Date
UE-4412-2018-CON	Land off Ingham Road, Stow	John Kinch Builds	Discharge from 3no. dwellings development	24-09-20
UE-5347-2020-CON	Mill Lane, North Hykeham	Robert Laskey	Fill in 60m long redundant ditch	16-10-20
UE-5369-2020-CON	Norton Disney Fishery	Embryo Angling Habitats	Temporary pumping to clear out lakes	29-10-20

Enforcement Issues – District

Reference	Location	Description / Comments	Actions
UD-3857-2018-ENF	Rear of Mill Field Close, Harby	Possible work required to watercourse	Investigating.
UD-4501-2019-ENF	A46 Lincoln By-pass A57 roundabout	Obstructed culvert and watercourse	Following a site meeting the Highways England have agreed to clear a section of watercourse where roots are holding up water.
UD-4851-2019-ENF	The Fosdyke Delph	Material restricting access	A works compound and debris is now blocking access. A letter needs to be sent.
UD-5245-2020-ENF	Unit 15 -17 Allens Business Park, Skellingthorpe Road, Saxilby, Lincoln LN1 2GH	Debris and equipment on West of Saxilby Outfall Drain downstream of the railway	To date the obstruction has not been moved. A formal Notice will be sent.
UD-5344-2020-ENF	Newark Road, North Hykeham	Fallen tree across Pike Drain	Investigating.

Reference	Location	Description / Comments	Actions
UE-4730-2019-ENF	Dyke off Long Leys Rd, Lincoln	Maintenance to watercourse	No further information
UE-4915-2019-ENF	The Green Welbourn	Possible maintenance to watercourse	Waiting for information.
UE-4916-2019-ENF	Hough on the Hill	Possible maintenance to watercourse	Investigating
UE-4990-2019-ENF	Clay Lane, Wheatley Lane Junction, Carlton Le Moorland	Waterlogging - Possible blocked culvert	Continue to monitor.
UE-5035-2020-ENF	Land off Wheatley Rd, Carlton Le Moorland	Flooding public right of way	Continue to monitor.
UE-5037-2020-ENF	Manor Farm Drive, Sturton By Stow	Possible maintenance of watercourse	Investigating
UE-5117-2020-ENF	A607 Lincoln Road, Carlton Scroop	Property flooding-blocked road culvert	No further information
UE-5298-2020-ENF	Copperfield Cottage, Grange Lane Ingham, LN1 2YD	Pipe found which discharges into pond	There is no action the Board can take Case Closed 10-9-20
UE-5323-2020-ENF	Swinderby Road, Norton Disney	Potential obstruction in watercourse	Issue resolved Case closed 28-10-20
UE-5354-2020-ENF	Doddington Village	Potential obstruction to watercourse.	Investigating

Members received and NOTED the report on consents and enforcement cases.

70.20 New Depot and Office Scheme at Meadow Lane North Hykeham.

A briefing note had been circulated with the agenda and was introduced by the Director of Finance and Governance.

Following a Business Case and procurement process to select a preferred contractor, Upper Witham IDB's JCT demolition and build contract with Taylor Pearson (Construction) Ltd (TPCL) commenced on 01st May 2019, for a 40 week period to 05th February 2020.

Office staff began the relocation phase from the former offices on The Point, Weaver Road, to the new offices and depot on Meadow Lane, from the week commencing Monday 10th February 2020, with staff being fully relocated by Thursday 13th February 2020. Some TPCL staff remained on the Meadow Lane site, finishing remaining contract items and work started on checking and formulating a snagging list. The sale of the former office at J1, The Point completed on Monday, 17th February at a sale price of £255,000, which has been paid into a capital reserve for Upper Witham IDB.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and following Government guidance, the site was closed to visitors and office staff began to work from home on 19th March 2020. TPCL made the decision to remove their staff from the site on 24th March 2020, the day that national lock down formally commenced.

As previously reported, client-side progress report meetings had been held every 2 weeks between the Project Manager (Garry Winterton, Enforcement Officer and Building Inspector by background), the Director of Finance and Governance and the

Chief Executive, to ensure transparency and control in that any variations authorised by the client representative were agreed by senior management.

Following legal advice from the Upper Witham (UW) Board's solicitors, TPCL were issued with a 'Notice of Non-completion' on 07th May 2020 which in effect required a response from them within 14 days for the completion of the remaining items contained within the original JCT Contract.

Contractual Items Outstanding were:

Tarmac Entrance Bell Mouth

Painting to workshop floor

Workshop area heating system

White Lining to carpark & Health & Safety markings

Various snagging list items

On 15th May 2020, TPCL entered administration. On 21st May 2020, JW Butler and AJ Nichols of Redman Nichols Butler were appointed joint administrators of TPCL. The assets of TPCL were auctioned online on Monday, 15th June 2020.

Officers continued to liaise with the Administrators to see whether the contract could be concluded. A site visit was due to be held on 23rd June 2020 with the administrators appointed Quantity Surveyor but, after we had collated a likely 'final account' figure for the works outstanding, they concluded that there was no value in completing the works. The Board's Solicitor therefore issued a notice of termination of the contract to TPCL on 13th July 2020. Officers commenced arrangements to undertake the outstanding works.

On 23rd July, the Board's solicitor issued a schedule of warranties and guarantees that need to be transferred to the Board from TPCL to ensure the Board receives any benefit required during the warranty and guarantee periods. To date, no response has been received.

Liquidated damages have been agreed with the administrator at £2,625. The monies not yet paid to TPCL will now be utilised to complete any outstanding works. However, if any sums are remaining compared to the original contract value plus variations, then any difference will be due to be paid to TPCL.

Site meetings had taken place with various contractors in order to complete the works outstanding. The focus was the bell mouth entrance, replace block paving, main depot area heating, floor painting and electrical works. Although some subcontractors had not been paid for the works undertaken on behalf of TPCL, they had been willing to return to complete works outstanding. The following works had been completed:

- SBEN and EPC certificates required for Building Regulations sign off.
- Outstanding electrical works.
- Floor painted and associated health and safety markings.
- Outside notice board installed.
- Gate bollards installed
- Window blinds fitted (not part of main contract).
- TV's installed in Boardroom (not part of main contract).
- Fencing repairs
- Outstanding plumbing works.
- Replace block paving.

Other works commissioned but not yet completed:

- Additional CCTV and alarm work (not part of main contract).
- Entrance Bellmouth (commenced 9th November).
- Depot Heating.
- Cold Water Pressure Booster Pump.

These will be progressed in the coming weeks to ensure completion, hopefully ahead of Christmas. The sale of various site cabins from the compound area will also take place.

The financial position as of 4th November 2020 was set out:

<u>New Depot & Offices</u> <u>(as at 04/11/20)</u>	Budget £	Payments to Date £	Commit/ Allocation £	Total £	Variance £
Main Contract	1,072,335	1,021,440	0	1,021,440	(50,895)
Contingency & Fit Out	107,234	99,860	0	99,860	132,123
		92,847	46,650	139,497	
Depot Fit Out	25,000	10,545	5,000	15,545	(9,455)
Interim Office rent	20,000	0	0	0	(20,000)
Revenue Costs	0	6,713	(7,000)	(287)	(287)
	1,224,569	1,231,405	44,650	1,276,055	51,486
<i>Charged to Revenue 2018/19</i>					
<i>Enabling Works</i>	20,000	31,259	0	31,259	11,259
<i>Professional Fees/Contingency</i>	0	12,253	0	12,253	12,253
	20,000	43,512	0	43,512	23,512
Overall Cost	1,244,569	1,274,917	44,650	1,319,567	74,998

The bulk of the contractual works have been completed and there was a further £38k due to be paid to TPCL for outstanding works yet to be completed under the contract including retention monies being held at 2.5%. As the contract has been terminated, these monies will now be utilised to complete the works listed in section 2 above. Once completed, if any monies are left over these will be repayable to the Administrator of TPCL. If there is a shortfall, this will become a debtor with the Administrators to go through due process, although it is unlikely any funds would be received. Until all works are completed, it is not known if all the works can be completed within the monies remaining, but this is unlikely.

The funding of the scheme was set out, as follows:

Financed by:	£
PWLB Loan	1,200,000
Capital Receipt	76,055
Sub Total	1,276,055
Revenue 2018/19	43,512
Total Funding	1,319,567

The Board on 29th June 2020 approved to utilise up to £60k of the Capital Receipt received for the previous office at J1 The Point to complete the scheme. At this stage it is projected that this may not be sufficient by up to £20k (funding from capital receipt is currently anticipated at £76,055). This variance is mainly with the additional costs associated with the entrance bell mouth and resolving the cold water pressure to site.

Members noted the update report and received the verbal update on the latest position regarding progress on the new Depot and office scheme at Meadow Lane.

71.20 Any Other Business.

There were no further items of business and the meeting closed at 15.30.

72.20 Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Board was confirmed for Monday, 18th January 2021, venue and format TBC.

.....Chairman.....Date
UW BM 16.11.20