

NORTH EAST LINDSEY DRAINAGE BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of North East Lindsey Drainage Board held on Wednesday, 26th May 2021 via video conference at 2pm.

Present: Mr. M. Archer
Cllr. P. Clark
Alderman I. Colquhoun
Mr. J. Fussey
Cllr. M. Green
Mr. L. Grooby **Vice Chairman**
Cllr. R. Hannigan
Mr. J. F. D. Hargreaves
Cllr. S. Harness
Mr. P. J. Hoyes **Chairman**
Cllr. B. Parkinson
Cllr. D. Wells

In Attendance: Mr I. R. Coupland, Acting Director of Operations
Miss J. Flower, Executive Assistant
Mrs. J. E. Froggatt, Chief Executive
Mr Chris Harris, Internal Auditor, TIAA
Mr. G. Hird, Acting Head of Engineering & Technical Services
Mr. S. Larter, Director of Finance & Governance
Mr. M.J. Shilling, Director of Engineering & Technical Services

1. Apologies.

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. S. Bedford, Mr. J. Finch, Mr. R. Kirk, Cllr. L. Nici MP, Alderman P. Mills, Cllr. M. Patrick, Mr. S. Shepherd, Cllr. G. Sheridan and Mr. P. Wilkins.

2. Declaration of Members' interests.

Members nominated by North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire Councils declared interests relating to their respective Councils.

3. Chairman's Announcements.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the May meeting of the Board, once again the meeting being held via Zoom video-conference platform during the Covid-19 pandemic. He was pleased to see Martin Shilling join the meeting, following six months of recovering from serious ill-health. Martin was initially picking up several projects including the Killingholme Marshes Pumping Station scheme.

The Chairman welcomed Chris Harris, Internal Auditor with TIAA, to the meeting. Chris would present his independent report on the last financial year 2020/21 and his audit

certificate, which is part of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return [AGAR]. The Chairman advised that also as part of the AGAR, he would later in the meeting take members through the 8 questions in the Annual Governance Statement.

He highlighted to colleagues that the Board ended the financial year 2020/21 on 31st March 2021 with a modest surplus of £10,267. This was a healthy position and within that bottom line the Board had absorbed the additional costs of implementing the new Telemetry system and the improvement works undertaken at East Halton Skitter.

Congratulations on behalf of Board members and officers were extended to Cllr Peter Clark, who had yesterday been elected as Mayor of North Lincolnshire for a record third term of office in the role. Members wished him a successful and enjoyable Civic Year ahead.

Finally, the Chairman advised members that during an update on Operational and Engineering services from Ian Coupland and Guy Hird respectively, members would receive further detail about:

- The EA have had their contractor complete the desilting works at Middle Drain pumping station, an issue since the doors were replaced in October 2019. Although the Board's additional electricity pumping costs have been reimbursed by the EA, this is public monies and the problem needed to be sorted out.
- Also at Middle Drain, the refurbished pump was reinstated in late February, and it was now working well.
- The works had been completed at Middle Drain access track, where there was a collapsed culvert under the track. The scheme was designed, surveyed and supervised in-house, and the Board's contractor Eric Carnaby & Son Ltd had successfully undertaken the works, completed on 07th May.
- The impact of the rainfall events of January and February would be given in detail, but it was highlighted to Members that during the events both pumps failed at New Holland Outfall. Pump number 1 was removed, repaired and reinstated and the second pump was subsequently removed for refurbishment.

4. Revised Standing Orders.

A copy of the Revised Standing Orders for each of the 4 Witham & Humber Drainage Boards, in order to provide flexibility in holding meetings in person, by video-conference platform or as hybrid meetings after 07th May 2021, had been circulated with the agenda. These had been drawn up using a template provided by Defra via ADA. The Chairman of each Board had then approved the revised Standing Orders and they had been despatched to Defra to seek Ministerial approval, which had been granted together with a certificate of approval on 17th May 2021.

The revised set of IDB Standing Orders was presented for two purposes. Firstly, to ask the Board to ratify Chairman's action in approving the Standing Orders and secondly to ask the Board to adopt the new set of Standing Orders in order that the meeting could proceed using the Zoom video-conference platform.

Members were reminded that a first set of revised Standing Orders received Ministerial approval in April 2020 and was adopted at the start of the May 2020 Board meeting. However, those flexibilities of New Rules 28 & 29 to permit remote meetings of the Board extended only to 07.05.21. On 27.04.21 ADA confirmed that Defra was content

to extend the flexibilities to enable in-person meetings, remote meetings and a hybrid of the two for IDB meetings after 07th May. Unlike for some public bodies like Councils, no change to primary legislation is required to enable those IDB flexibilities.

Under these revised Standing Orders, it will be for individual Boards to make decisions in future on which meetings they hold in person, or remotely, or in a hybrid form (i.e., some Board members attending in person and some remotely). As per the Standing Orders the agreed format should be clearly stated in the meeting agenda circulated before the meeting, for the avoidance of doubt. ADA will be working over summer, through its Policy & Finance Committee, to draft further guidance on the conduct of remote and hybrid meetings for IDBs.

Members AGREED to ratify Chairman's action in approving the revised Standing Orders and AGREED to adopt those revised Standing Orders, which received Ministerial approval on 17.05.21, thereby enabling the on-line meeting to proceed.

5. Minutes of the Board Meeting, held on 19.01.21.

The minutes of the Board's previous meeting held on Tuesday, 19th January 2021 were proposed, seconded and APPROVED as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING:

There were no matters arising, all items being covered by the agenda.

6. Joint Services Committee 10.05.21.

The minutes of the JSC meeting held on Monday, 10th May 2021 had been circulated with the agenda.

MATTERS ARISING:

6.1 JSC Budget Monitoring Report for financial year 2020/21 as at 31.03.21 (Minute 7 refers).

A financial position for the joint services budget 01st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 had been discussed by the JSC. This compared the approved budget for Q4 of 2020/21 at £911,050 to the actual expenditure incurred for Q4 at £934,212. The overall variance at Q4 year-end was therefore £23,162 against the annual budget of £911,050 (2.54%). These figures were included in the individual 4 Boards' outturn positions. A breakdown of some of the main variations, which together amounted to £23k, was provided:

Joint Services £27k:

Witham House had a net saving due to the reduction in NNDR for the office area (£5k). The 2021/22 budget had been reduced to reflect this reduction. W3rd as the host Board had a net adverse variation in expenditure, for the following reasons:

- External Support £37k for HR support (2021/22 budget increased).
- ICT Equipment £6k, including additional laptops to support home working during Covid-19 pandemic.
- Fuel and mileage savings (£8k).

- Stationery etc, saving (£3k).
- Annual Inspection 2020 cancelled, saving (£2.5k).

Engineering and Associated Services (£4k)

- W1st savings (£2k) on fuel and training/conferences, due to absence of Director of Engineering and Operations.
- W3rd savings (£5k), due to some of the part-time Engineer time being charged to Consents & Enforcement, which is charged to LCC rather than JSC.
- UW variance £3k, due to uplift and holiday buy out for Assistant Engineer.

JSC members had noted the broadly balanced 31.03.21 year-end position overall on the joint services budget for 2020/21 and that this had been fed through pro-rata into the year-end positions for each of the individual Boards.

6.2 Policies Handbook (minute 8 refers).

A Briefing Note had been provided to the JSC on 10.05.21 along with the Policy Handbook and 4 policies which were reviewed at the meeting.

Further review work had been completed to establish the handbook started in July 2020, as recommended by the Internal Auditor. It was now available on the website. Four Policies were presented to JSC members for approval:

- Vehicles Driving Policy:

As an existing policy is in place this was an update, with very minor changes including speed limits. This is quite a complex area for the vehicles operated by the Boards, particularly for the vans and 4x4s. Most of these vehicles are governed by reduced speed limits.

- Revised Health & Safety Policy:

There is an existing policy. It was confirmed there was little to update, this was a periodic review. The main issue highlighted to JSC members was that the overarching policy [there is a separate H&S Statement] now contains a link to a raft of policies which sit underneath this, e.g., vibration white finger policy. These are provided by COPE our H&S consultants.

- Young People and Work Experience Policy:

This policy was previously known as the Child Protection Statement but was now out of date and required a significant review. It was put in place to protect anyone that comes into work aged under 18. Sarah Walden explained to JSC that we have had work experience placements in the past. Along with our Health and Safety policy this policy aims to ensure that all are protected whilst being very unfamiliar with the world/place of work, receive training and mentorship as appropriate and are treated appropriately in the workplace.

- Refunds Policy:

This is an additional, new policy. A condition of having the payments system on the website and via Worldpay in order to take payments to the 4 Boards is that we must state how refunds will be given on the services we offer. Drainage Rates, invoices and indeed any refund will be given where appropriate. Likewise

on Consents, if paid in error refunds will be available but not if the consent application is withdrawn or refused.

After presentation and discussion, JSC members had APPROVED the 4 policies as set out on behalf of all 4 Boards.

6.3 Insurance Renewals (minute 9 refers).

JSC members were reminded that all Boards had a challenging time at insurance renewal in Spring/Summer 2020. This was for two reasons, the nature of the insurance market in general and due to the claims history we had in IDBs locally and nationally given the impact of flood events.

The Boards undertook a market test for their insurance arrangements ahead of the 2018/19 renewals and established a framework contract which is available to all IDBs. This framework is hosted by Witham Third DIDB on behalf of the group. The OJEU compliant procurement exercise was undertaken by The Risk Factor Limited on behalf of the Boards, at no cost to the Boards. The process undertaken also ensures compliance with Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The framework contract that was put in place means that any IDB in the country can access their insurance requirements without having to undertake a separate tendering exercise and be compliant with the various public sector procurement regulations. The main insurances were held by Fiducia (Travelers & Lloyds of London) and Zurich Municipal Insurance, all of which are large insurance providers in the public sector. The motor cover was transferred from LV to Allianz in 2019, who the Boards were previously with, due to the takeover of LV by Allianz earlier in the year. This year 2020/21, due to increases proposed by Allianz, the motor cover has been placed with Unicorn Underwriting for W1 and W3 (it remains with Allianz for UW).

Work is ongoing to ensure the Boards have relevant and cost-effective insurance cover in place especially in areas such as Cyber cover, where a combined policy has been put in place to cover the 4 Boards. Furthermore, the value of the risks has also changed. For example, the value of plant and equipment has increased mainly due to recent replacements of excavators, and the turnover of the 4 Boards has increased with additional PSCA income.

Through undertaking this procurement exercise, significant savings were made for the Boards of almost £25k in the first year 2018/19.

We had a difficult renewal last year on 01.07.20 for Witham First and Witham Third. This was due to the claims experience, particularly following the rainfall events in Autumn 2019 where we had an excavator incident and the flooding of Stainfield Pumping Station on W3rd, plus several theft/damage incidents. Following this, we have had ongoing discussions with our advisors, The Risk Factor, to see how best to structure the insurances.

As part of the Budget process for 2021/22, due to the issues experienced at last year's renewal and the recent claims experience, we built into the budgets additional resources pre-empting the renewals for 2021/22 as follows:

	Actual 20.21	Budget 20.21	Budget 21.22	Increase	
	£	£	£	£	
NEL	£ 10,281	£ 15,450	£ 15,450	£ -	
UW	£ 30,976	£ 26,650	£ 45,000	£ 18,350	
W1	£ 30,301	£ 22,730	£ 35,000	£ 12,270	<i>Had increase in 20.21</i>
W3	£ 51,081	£ 30,340	£ 55,000	£ 24,660	<i>Had increase in 20.21</i>

The other key factor ahead of renewals was changes in the insurance market. Due to the pandemic, there have been several operational issues in that arranging insurance and reinsurance/underwriting is still on traditional, paper-based procedures. This has caused a lot of delays, and some covers not being quoted for by insurers. Also, some insurance companies have pulled out of certain markets, especially Professional Indemnity cover. Additional exclusions and increased excess levels are also feeding through.

In terms of the 4 Boards' current insurance arrangements, the current position regarding the existing framework arrangement, which was on an initial 3 year (2018-2021) plus optional 2-year extension (2021-2023), is:

- Combined coverage offered by Fiducia. They are not proceeding with the available two year extension.
- Personal Accident & Legal expenses & Fidelity offered by ZMI. They are not proceeding with the available two year extension.
- Contractors Plant & Engineering Insurance. Fiducia are continuing to offer the available extension.
- Motor Cover. THB are continuing to offer the available two year extension but they may remarket the insurers within that arrangement

Based on our officer discussions with the Risk Factor and how insurances are structured for some other Drainage Boards that work in a group structure like ours, we have agreed to group our policies/renewals together to enable economies of scale in terms of the quantum of the cover required, to reduce the number of policies held from 4 to 1 where we can and to simplify administration and claims handling.

To achieve this, policy renewal dates needed to be aligned. Currently, the annual renewal dates are 22nd April for North East Lindsey, 19th May for Upper Witham, and 01st July for both Witham First and Witham Third.

For the insurances companies to agree more favourable terms and hopefully premiums, they prefer a larger quantum of cover on which to base the premium. For example, the cost per vehicle for insurance of a fleet of 100 vehicles will be less per vehicle than it would be for a single or small number of vehicles.

North East Lindsey is the first Board to have renewed its insurances. However, due to the Board not having its own workforce, plant and machinery etc, then the quantum of cover required on this Board is much smaller than for the other Boards. It therefore was not feasible to use the Board's renewal as a base with which to align the larger group policies. It has though, meant that some of the smaller policies have been able to be agreed on a group basis with the following outcome

Personal Accident (Exc IPT)		
	2020	2021
NEL	£ 263.00	£ 1,473.10
UW	£ 568.00	
W1	£ 426.00	
W3	£ 830.00	
Total	£ 2,087.00	£ 1,473.10
Legal Expenses (Exc IPT)		
	2020	2021
NEL	£ 105.00	£ 793.12
UW	£ 258.00	
W1	£ 348.00	
W3	£ 454.00	
Total	£ 1,165.00	£ 793.12

It was highlighted that although these are only small covers, by doing this savings have been achieved. Also, the Legal Cover was previously for £100,000 but this policy is for £250,000 cover. We have also aligned the 4 Boards' Personal Accident covers (previously NEL was slightly lower-level cover). Engineering Inspection, which is more of a service provided rather than insurance cover, has also been renewed. This was previously with Zurich Municipal who contracted through Zurich Commercial. Zurich Municipal gave notice that they did not wish to renew the cover beyond renewal date. However, we have contacted Zurich Commercial who are happy to continue to provide this service to the 4 Boards from the renewal dates.

In order to align the renewal dates, the rest of the North East Lindsey covers were extended to 30th June 2021, to align with Witham First and Third renewal date. This has been done on a pro rata charge of the current 2020/21 premium, which is a good outcome. A similar process will be undertaken with Upper Witham renewals when they are due on 19th May 2021. The only exception to this may be the motor cover, whereas Upper Witham has a significant motor fleet, it may be that the 'group' arrangement is put in place at that time, depending upon the quotes received at that time.

The main covers will then be quoted for based upon a group arrangement to run from 01.07.21. The wording off the policies will be North East Lindsey Internal Drainage Board, Upper Witham Internal Drainage Board, Witham First District Internal Drainage Board and Witham third District Internal Drainage Board t/a Witham and Humber Drainage Boards. The policies cannot be arranged under Witham and Humber Drainage Boards, as this is not a legal entity, only a branding for the 4 Boards. Therefore, each Board is individually named on each policy.

The main covers are currently provided by Fiducia. However, they have also indicated that they are not looking at renewing beyond the current renewal optional extension date. We will therefore be seeking alternative quotations for these covers. As initially these will be for a 12 month period, these will be below the OJEU threshold of circa £190K. We are however carrying out a market

exercise in this regard, rather than a full OJEU, as the key insurers we expect to provide terms are based in the Lloyds market and they will not respond to tenders in the first instance. Once we have an acceptable market this year based upon the group of Boards, we can then look to carry out an OJEU /procure a new framework for next year 2022/23, as most policies will have the same renewal date and the new insurer will then need to respond to this, as they will not otherwise be able to renew. The alternative to this is that we remarket annually as long as the covers remain below OJEU but longer term (3 year+) policies will be far more cost effective

Several main benefits to this approach were outlined. Firstly, the Boards are having to duplicate cover such as Employer Liability Cover for £10m and Public Liability cover for £5m. In future it will be a single Employer Liability Cover for £10m and Public Liability cover for £5m, as this is the maximum amount of cover any Board is likely to need. This approach will also reduce some of the potential risks that we currently may have across the 4 Boards where Operatives and machinery are working across the different Boards, particularly for delivering, say, PSCA works.

The JSC noted the insurance renewals ongoing work for 2021/22 and that a further update will be provided at the next JSC meeting in July 2021 on the outcome of the renewal terms and premiums.

Board members NOTED the briefing on insurances to the JSC meeting on 10.05.21 and the next update will be provided to the JSC meeting on 19.07.21.

7. Chief Executive's Report.

The Chief Executive's report had been circulated with the agenda and issues highlighted included:

7.1 Covid-19

The Prime Minister's announcement on Monday, 10th May confirmed the step 3 easing of lockdown arrangements in England from Monday, 17th May 2021.

The 4 Boards' Management Team continued to review weekly the latest guidance in order to determine any necessary changes to our systems and ways of working. The 3 priorities remain to keep our staff well by maintaining safe systems of work and compliance with national guidance, to maintain business continuity both in terms of office-based functions and operationally, and to maintain sufficient resilience in our teams to be able to respond to heavy rainfall and flood events.

Reviewing the latest announcement and guidance on 13.05.21, the guidance remains that staff should continue to work from home whenever they can [this is eased with step 4, planned for 21.06.21]. When staff do come into the office this will continue to be booked, with a maximum of 4 staff in at any one time. In the light of eased restrictions, particularly in indoor spaces, we have agreed that we should ease some of our current working restrictions for our Operatives. Operatives have observed single cab vehicle usage until now and this will continue whilst using machines [excavator and tractors] and for most of the working day. But with reduced Covid-19 transmission rates, reduced hospitalisation and death rates and with the roll-out of the vaccination programme we have agreed that the

Boards' Operatives may share vehicle cabs from when the summer maintenance season starts, subject to the 4 tests being met and step 4 of lockdown being eased on 21.06.21. This should be limited though to instances where sharing cabs improves sensible working arrangements, e.g., a lift to a machine which avoids a long walk for an Operative, but wherever single cab working can be maintained then for the moment it will continue. Also, sharing of vehicle cabs will be limited to Operatives within an individual Board, to minimise risk we will not at present permit cab sharing between Operatives of different Boards and office staff undertaking site visits will continue to meet Operatives on site rather than going to depots and vehicle cab sharing. Not all duties during winter works programmes lend themselves to 'hands, face, space' and socially distanced working, e.g., major bank reinstatement works undertaken at Reepham Brook on W3rd and Tillbridge Lane on UW. In these instances, for work to continue we have undertaken specific Covid-19 risk assessments for specific duties and schemes. These dynamic risk assessments [rather than the generic ones we have] will continue to identify Covid-19 risks and to plan works to mitigate transmission risk.

The Boards continue to make PPE available for the use of all staff, from gloves, wipes, face coverings and hand sanitiser through to vehicle fogging canisters for use between drivers in depot vehicles and indeed in office space too.

In the light of easing of lockdown arrangements nationally [& more circulation of people out of the workplace] and the availability of Lateral Flow Tests, we are asking staff to take a Lateral Flow Test each Sunday evening and each Wednesday evening before attending work the next morning if the result is negative.

7.2 Board Membership.

There had to date been no notified changes to nominated members of the Board, such changes often being notified by Councils after their May meetings. The Board comprises 21 members [11 nominated by North East Lincolnshire Council and North Lincolnshire Council and 10 elected by the occupiers of land in the district].

In terms of directly elected members, there are no vacant seats on the Board.

7.3 Staff

The following summarised some of the changes in staffing arrangements, either those agreed by the Joint Services Committee on 14.05.21 or those arising from the decisions of individual staff:

Martin Shilling, Director of Operations and Engineering, returned to work on a phased basis in mid-March, after a period of 6 months ill-health. Martin is initially focussed on 4 projects for the Boards, but it is planned that from July he will resume leadership of the Engineering and Technical Team.

Guy Hird is Acting Head of Engineering & Technical Services, this to continue to 31.12.21.

Ian Coupland is Acting Director of Operations, this to continue to 31.12.21.

Garry Winterton, Enforcements Officer, decided to retire on 30.04.21 having worked for the Boards since February 2013.

Alan Gardner, Consents Officer, has confirmed he will retire on 24.12.21.

The Acting Forman for Pumping Stations role [Adrian Skelton] for 3 of the Boards [not NELDB] has been confirmed as substantive in the role.

The Acting Operations Engineer role [Richard Wright] has been confirmed as substantive.

Recruitment to the role of Enforcement Officer [part-time].

Recruitment to the role of Planning & Consents Officer.

Recruitment to the role of Operations Supervisor [3 of the 4 Boards, not NELDB where there is a Works Supervisor, and the two posts will operate as mirror roles].

Following a recruitment process, 7 of the IDBs in Lincolnshire [including our 4 Witham & Humber Drainage Boards but also Black Sluice, Witham Fourth and South Holland IDBs] collectively appointed last week a FDGiA Capital Projects Officer [Georgina Nicholls] to work on the Business Cases and projects to secure flood defence grant monies for schemes. This is a replacement post for Nicola McGarry. The contract of employment will be held by Black Sluice IDB and the line management will be through our 4 Boards.

7.4 Partnership Working.

The Boards' officers continue to work with the EA on several EA-led system reviews, e.g., Billingham system review, the Lower Witham Review, the Upper Witham Catchment Review, Barton to New Holland review.

Cllr Richard Hannigan stated he was very encouraged to see the EA partnership review for the Barton to New Holland system, he was keen that the EA should be kept on side and looked forward to the results. With that in mind, it was noted that Morgan Wray at the EA had been invited to present to the Board's meeting in either September or November 2021.

The Chief Executive's report was received and noted.

8. Electoral Register 2021.

A paper had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Chief Executive.

The current 3-year term of office for those directly elected members of all 4 Boards in the group expires on 31.10.21. The new terms of office will run from 01.11.21 to 31.10.24. Those members nominated by the 3 relevant Councils to NELDB are unaffected by these elections. A timetable for the 3-year elections for all 4 Boards had been approved at the January meeting and the Chief Executive was appointed as Returning Officer.

The four Electoral Registers had been prepared, validated and advertised as available for inspection from Friday, 30th April to Thursday, 20th May 2021. In practice, given Covid-19 restrictions, interested parties would be asked to phone Witham House on 01522

697123 to make an advance appointment to attend the office reception area, in order to exercise their right to inspect the Electoral Register.

For the next stage, and it was confirmed there had been no objections, inaccuracies or anomalies raised by any inspections by c.o.p. 20.05.21, each Board was asked to formally APPROVE the Electoral Register, following which the approval of the Electoral Register would be advertised on the website www.witham3idb.gov.uk and at Witham House office.

Members were asked to note that Nomination Papers were due to be issued on 31st August 2021, completed and returned by members standing for election by no later than noon on 01st October 2021. Any members not wishing to stand were requested to advise the Chairman or Chief Executive at their earliest opportunity. If any members had a problem with these dates (e.g., away on holiday) or indeed if any members required assistance on completion of the Nomination Paper, they were asked to inform Officers well in advance of the closing date so support could be provided.

Members APPROVED the Electoral Register.

9. Internal Auditor's Report on 2020/21.

A summary of key findings and conclusions for the 2020/21 Internal Audit had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by Chris Harris, Internal Auditor with TIAA.

The Internal Auditor, Chris Harris, undertook the 2020/21 internal audit remotely during March 2021, due to the continuing COVID 19 restrictions. The key outcomes from the audit were as follows:

- The overall assurance opinion for 2020/21 is Substantial Assurance and two priority three recommendations have been made this year and one Operational Effectiveness Matter (OEM).
- Recommendation one referred to some minor improvements to the information contained on the Board's website with regard to its Policies and Procedures page.
- The second recommendation referred to a purchase over £5,000 that should have been reported to the Board in accordance with the Board's Financial Regulations.
- The OEM referred to poor attendance at the Board meetings by its members on two occasions during the year. This is an important matter to demonstrate good corporate governance.
- Good corporate governance is practiced by the Board with appropriate Board involvement
- The accounting records are all in order, up to date and in balance.
- All outstanding recommendations from previous audits have now been implemented.
- It was pleasing to note that reserves were now improving following the high levels of expenditure the previous year as a direct result of the inclement weather.
- Overall, the Board can be satisfied that the governance, risk and control framework is working well and the finances are all in order.

Members noted the summary presented and were content with the assurance opinion of 'substantial' from the Internal Auditor, this being the second year of this assurance level.

10. Schedule of Expenditure, 01.01.21 to 31.03.21.

The schedule of expenditure for the three months ended 31st March 2021 had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Finance & Governance. The schedule was of invoices paid in the period, and therefore some expenditure incurred in the three months period was excluded. Items highlighted to or raised by members included:

- Item 2: £3,856.00 (net) to ADA for IDB Membership subscription 2021.
- Item 35 £342.00 (net) to Eric Carnaby & Son Ltd for disposal of waste (old tyres). Iain Colquhoun asked if this was as a result of fly tipping and it was confirmed that this was the case.
- Item 48: £9,488.00 (net) to Perry's Pumps Ltd for removal & recommissioning of Pump no.3 at Immingham PS.
- Item 77: £700.00 (net) to Water Resources East for contribution to the operating costs of water resources.
- Items 81 & 82: £350.00 and £350.00 (net) to Witham Third DIDB for moving plant to and from Goxhill. This related to the resolution of a complaint raised by Ms S. Gough, who had refused access to the Board Contractor, Carnaby's, and therefore it was necessary to transport W3 machines. Julian Hargreaves commented that he might have more cost effectively provided the necessary machinery.

Members noted the schedule of expenditure incurred for the three months 01st January to 31st March 2021, which totalled £125,439.25 gross or £107,417.09 net of £18,022.16 VAT. Recharges to other bodies during this period totalled £10,840.00.

11. Financial Performance Report to 31st March 2021,

The Financial Performance Report for 2020/21 to 31st March 2021, had been circulated with the agenda. The Director of Finance and Governance presented the position, summarised as:

	2020/21 Estimate	Actual	Variance (2-1)	FRS102 Adjusted	2021/22 Budget
	£	£	£	£	£
Income	(658,310)	(849,232)	(190,922)	(849,232)	(692,879)
Board & General Admin	16,650	12,823	(3,827)	12,823	20,050
One Off Schemes	0	46,561	46,561	46,561	20,000
Conservation	2,500	891	(1,609)	891	2,500
Depot	8,250	8,901	651	8,901	8,370
Drains	142,420	128,324	(14,096)	128,324	142,420
Pumping Stations	74,450	98,222	23,772	98,222	70,850
Staffing & Joint Admin	96,410	101,846	5,436	101,846	102,192
Consents & Enforcement	0	1,151	1,151	1,151	2,121
Engineers & Works Supervisor	155,000	153,323	(1,677)	158,323	161,746
PWLB	0	0	0	0	0
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	0	0	0	0	0
Rechargeable Works	0	125,904	125,904	125,904	0
EA Precept	162,630	161,019	(1,612)	161,019	162,630
FRS102 Pension Adjustment (net)	0	0	0	(5,000)	0
Wages & Plant Holding Account			0		0
(Surplus)/Deficit	0	(10,268)	(10,268)	(10,268)	0

The Board had a surplus position of (£10,268) at the end of the financial year which would be transferred to the Revenue Reserve.

On income, the tranche two Special Levy payments by the 3 councils (NELC, NLC and WLDC) had been received, which totalled (£572k) income for the full year. Drainage Rates invoices for 2020/21 had been posted out in April 2020. The collection rate for drainage rates income as of 31st March 2021 was 93.7% (compared with 90.4% for the same point in 2019/20). All outstanding amounts would be rolled forward to the next year's accounts, invoiced and collected in 2021/22.

Also, on income, Highland Water claims had been submitted the EA for the 2019/20 actual claim with a further balance of (£14,955) due and for the 2020/21 Estimate (£68,000). Of the estimated 2020/21 claim, 80% (£54,400) was paid in August 2020 along with the balance due on the actual claim 2019/20 of (£14,955).

For Rechargeable Works, New Cut Drain had been completed at Barton Upon Humber, works undertaken by the Board's contractor at a cost of £24k. This was recharged to Wren Kitchens and North Lincs Council on a 50/50 basis. (£6k) had been recharged to Able UK for the recovery of costs incurred in connection with the proposed new pumping station at Killingholme Marshes.

The bank balances as of 31st March 2021 were set out as follows:

Barclays Bank plc

Payments Account	£	6,891.97
Receipts Account	£	998.32
General Deposit Account	£	240,000.00
Developer Contributions Account	£	132,122.41
Nationwide Instant Access (Dev Cont's)	£	152,200.84
Total		<u>£ 532,213.54</u>

Members were reminded that the Board has a General Reserve Policy of holding 10% to 15% of budgeted annual income/expenditure, which currently has an allocation of £68,192. The surplus of (£10,268) would be transferred to the General Reserve increasing the balance to £78,460 which is 11.3% of 2020/21 estimated income and expenditure of £692,879.

Members noted the financial performance report for the full year 2020/21, from 01st April 2020 to 31st March 2021, and approved the surplus of [£10,268] be transferred to the Revenue Reserve. Members further noted that the outturn position had been used in the compilation of the Statement of Accounts, IDB Annual Return and the IDB1 Annual Report.

12. Annual Governance Statement 2020/21.

A copy of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2020/21 for Members to complete and approve had been circulated with the agenda. The Annual Governance Statement is incorporated into and forms part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2020/21. The Board has a statutory requirement to complete and approve the AGAR, an item later in today's Agenda.

The AGS part must be approved prior to the Accounting Statements, either at separate meetings or in the same meeting but with the correct order of business on the agenda and this must be evidenced by the meeting minute references and/or dates.

The AGS comprises 9 assertions (number 9 is not applicable to IDBs) which the Board must consider and agree or provide a detailed explanation for the external auditor where it cannot agree and how it will address any weaknesses identified. Once agreed, the Accounting Statements and overall AGAR may then be approved.

The Chairman took Members through the relevant 8 statements and the response to each was agreed.

Members were content to:

- COMPLETE the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2020/21.
- incorporate the completed AGS into the overall Annual Governance and Accountability Return [AGAR] for 2020/21.

13. Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for 2020/21.

The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts 2020/21 had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Finance and Governance. The Board does not have a statutory requirement to produce a full set of Statement of Accounts, but it is deemed good practice to do so. Furthermore, a lot of the detailed work undertaken is required to complete the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) which is a statutory requirement.

The accounts had been produced (where applicable) in accordance with the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England; A Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices to be applied in the preparation of statutory annual accounts and governance statements issued in March 2019.

The Statement of Accounts comprised the following key sections:

- Annual Report 2020/21 – narrative on the work of the Board during 2020/21.
- Statement of Accounts 2020/21 – lists the key components of the statements.
- Board Members – schedule of Board Members who served during 2020/21.
- The Annual Governance Statement – replication of the text in the Annual Report.
- Statement of Responsibilities – list the Board's and Chief Executive's responsibilities regarding the Statement of Accounts.
- Statement of Accounting Policies.
- Income & Expenditure Account 2020/21.
- Balance Sheet 2020/21.
- Notes to the Accounts.
- Appendices:
 - Map of Board drainage district
 - Organisational Structure Chart
 - Rainfall/Pump Use/Electricity data

Once approved, the document is loaded onto the Board's website to help meet its requirements under the Local Government Transparency Code 2015. It was noted this document was not subject to audit, as only the AGAR is subject to external audit.

Members APPROVED the unaudited Annual Report and Statement of Accounts 2020/21.

14. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020/21.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2020/21 had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Finance and Governance. The Board has a statutory requirement to complete and approve the AGAR.

The AGAR has 4 separate sections and must be approved at a full Board meeting before 01st July 2021. It also must be submitted, along with additional requested information, to the External Auditor by 02nd July 2021 for their review. Alongside this, the rights of public inspection will also commence on Monday 14th June 2021 until Friday 23rd July 2021. This must incorporate the first 10 working days of July, as required by statute.

The AGAR comprises the following key sections:

- Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21 [received earlier in the meeting].
- Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 [agreed earlier in the meeting].
- Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2020/21 [circulated with this item].
- Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2020/21 [to be issued subsequently by PKF Littlejohn LLP].

The Annual Internal Audit Report had been completed by the Internal Auditor and his separate, more detailed report, was included earlier on the agenda.

The Annual Governance Statement was a separate item on this agenda and was approved before the AGAR is approved in full.

Accounting Statements [Section 2 of the AGAR] utilises the information used in the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, approved earlier on the agenda.

Once approved, the AGAR document is published on the Board's website to meet its requirements under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. This will be Friday 11th June 2021.

The statutory deadline by which the AGAR and signed external auditor report and the Notice of Conclusion of Audit must be published is 30th September 2021.

Members were content to:

APPROVE the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020/21.

PUBLISH the AGAR on the Board's website along with the Notice to commence the period of public rights of inspection from 14th June to 23rd July 2021.

15. IDB1 Annual Report 2021.

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

The report must be completed, approved and submitted by 31st August each year to:

- Defra.
- Environment Agency.

- The Chief Executives of:
- All local authorities that pay Special Levies to the Board.
- All County Councils or London Boroughs within which the Board is situated.

The form is in 3 sections covering:

- Financial information
- Special Levies issued for 2021/22.
- Income & expenditure Account for year ending 31 March 2021.
- IDB Reporting
- Policy Delivery Statement.
- Information on the National Flood and Coastal Defence Database.
- Biodiversity.
- Access to environmental expertise.
- Asset Management.
- Guidance and Best Practice
- Board Membership and Attendance.
- Complaints Procedure
- Declaration – to be signed by the Chief Executive.

Members were content to approve the Defra Annual Report (IDB1) for the year ended 31 March 2021.

16. Health and Safety Update.

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

Operatives are still busy with bank slip repairs and winter maintenance. They are now working in closer proximity than when they were on their machines lone working. Each job is individually risk assessed to ensure the protection of staff. PPE needed to stay safe is always available, including Face Masks, Gloves, Hand Sanitiser and Fogging disinfectant. 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. Pleasingly, several staff have had one of their Corona Virus Vaccinations, some have had their second. The Office Staff are working from home wherever possible in line with current national guidance, and measures remain in place to make the Office accessible to a limited number of Staff at any one time. This is being managed by a Booking system, with Jayne Flower managing the requests. The Office is currently closed to Members of the Public and Unauthorised Visits, unless by prior arrangement. These arrangements and the Risk assessments are reviewed weekly at the Management Team Meetings and changes in national guidance is kept under review.

Cope, external Health and Safety Provider, have completed their annual audit visit to Witham Third and to Witham First. They are due to visit North East Lindsey on 22nd June and Upper Witham on 12th August.

The one issue that was flagged as a high risk was the method of installation of wooden piles in the watercourses, as frequently needed when we are undertaking bank slip reinstatement works at this time of year. This task requires an Operative to be in proximity of the excavator bucket and as such it puts them at risk. Options for alternative ways of working were currently being reviewed.

We have had no accidents or near misses in the 4 Boards since the last report, but Fenflow (a regular contracted pump repair company) had an accident at Witham Third's Greetwell Pumping Station in April. The pump had been away for repair and during reinstatement a section of the pump slipped and dropped into the sump, causing the section suspended by the hoist to swing round trapping one of their employees against the wall. The individual was immediately taken to Lincoln County A&E for examination, fortunately they sustained only bruising, there was no bone injury, and the individual returned to work the next day. A copy of Fenflow's incident investigation report into the incident will be submitted to Officers. Witham Third had full copies of Fenflow's RAMS, and our staff on site completed incident statements following the accident, and Fenflow had been given an emergency response and evacuation list by Witham Third.

A Health and Safety representatives' meeting is booked for June 07th and any issues arising for the Boards from the meeting will be reported.

Training has now restarted, limiting course attendance to our own Operatives only. Telescopic Fork truck training has been undertaken for some of our new LDOs and refreshers for our existing users. We have Underground cable avoidance training booked for 02nd June, followed by overhead cable avoidance training for our recent new starters on the 03rd June and CDM training booked for the 14th June for 12 people [6 am and 6 pm]. Ian Coupland was currently in discussion with a training provider for Excavator training, and this should commence soon.

The company retro-fitting the excavator Cab Hand Rails [members will recall this is retrofitting rails on our older plant, following a fall from height of one of UW's Operatives, but new plant comes with the guard rails fitted] have been out to measure up the machines and have started the manufacture of the handrails. This should hopefully see the rails fitted before the start of the weed cutting season this summer.

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

17. Environment 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.

As a public body, under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006), Internal Drainage Boards must have regard to the purposes of conserving biodiversity in a manner that is consistent with the exercise of normal functions such as policy and decision-making. 'Conserving biodiversity' may include enhancing, restoring or protecting a population or habitat. The report set out the achievements of the environmental activities from April 2020 to March 2021, and environment plans and activities for April 2021 to March 2022.

Biodiversity Action Plan and Species Recording.

The 4 Boards' Biodiversity Action Plans state that certain species should be recorded. These species have been identified as having significance within Lincolnshire and are species which would benefit from specific management or actions by the IDBs. The overall aim of monitoring these species is to ensure that habitat and species targets are translated

into effective action within the Boards' districts. The species recorded over 2020/21 by Witham First District, Witham Third District, Upper Witham and North East Lindsey IDBs include barn owl (*Tyto alba*), eel (*Anguilla anguilla*), grass snake (*Natrix natrix*), kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*), otter (*Lutra lutra*), reed bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*), toad (*Bufo bufo*) and water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*).

ADA's Technical and Environment Committee had released its 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 (WFD). The Environment and GIS Technician will use the new template and guidance to update each Board Biodiversity Action Plan appropriately. This new plan will be renamed as a 'Nature Strategy', to be in line with the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership's upcoming Nature Strategy for Lincolnshire. At a workshop held in March 2020, delegates (including the Board's Environment and GIS Technician) agreed that the term 'Biodiversity Action Plan' was outdated, and the future document should be renamed to something to showcase a document that will contain long-term and overall aims.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*).

Since 2011, the Board has been working collaboratively with the Wildlife Conservation Partnership. Lincolnshire IDBs have continued the partnership and supported Lincolnshire barn owl populations with an investment in owl boxes. Situated throughout the four Boards' districts, there are a total of 103 owl boxes that are owned and maintained by each Board. Due to the success of the Lincolnshire-wide scheme, the Boards have been advised by the Wildlife Conservation Partnership to focus on replacing boxes that have deteriorated over the lifespan of the scheme. New orders for replacements were submitted before Christmas and were delivered in February 2021. The boxes will be replaced once breeding season is over. This usually runs from March to August (inclusive).

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Wildlife Conservation Partnership took the decision to limit the areas that would normally be monitored and did not check boxes in Witham First District and Witham Third District. The results for boxes checked in Upper Witham and North East Lindsey were shown.

2020/21 actions:

- *Replace and repair owl boxes across the four IDBs as and when required.*
- *Continue to monitor owl boxes with the help of the Wildlife Conservation Partnership.*

Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*).

Kingfishers remain prevalent within most of the 4 Boards' districts, particularly along drains where fish populations are high, for example in the North Delph in Witham Third District. They require a vertical bank with water directly below it to nest and to excavate a tunnel into the bank, which should be at least a metre long.

A total of 9 kingfisher were seen and recorded by IDB staff members throughout the 4 Board districts in 2020/21– 2 in North East Lindsey IDB, 1 in Witham Third DIDB, 2 in Witham First DIDB and 3 in Upper Witham IDB.

2020/21 action:

Kingfisher locations have been continually monitored and sightings have been recorded across the 4 Boards.

2021/22 action:

- *Continue to monitor kingfisher nest sites on Board drains and install canes in the bank where these are identified.*
- *Install Kingfisher nesting pile boards where possible when doing bank restructuring work. Two posts hold a board/plank of wood against the bank, and 2-4 holes are drilled in the board to allow for burrow excavation by the kingfisher.*

Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*).

More than 90% of the UK water vole population has died out, making them the country's fastest declining land mammal. However, Lincolnshire is seen as somewhat a 'stronghold' for water vole populations which is likely due to the number of watercourses present within the county.

A total of 31 water vole were seen and recorded by IDB staff members throughout the Boards' districts in 2020/21 and added into the species database. 14 of these were in Witham First DIB and 17 were in Witham Third DIB.

2020/21 action:

Continue to monitor and record water vole populations and identify population strongholds.

2021/22 action:

- *Continue to monitor water vole populations and identify population strongholds.*
- *Identify banks that require revetments or reconstruction and undertake licensed water vole displacement outside of the breeding season (April – September). The Natural England licence CL24 – to allow internal drainage boards to intentionally displace water voles for work on flood defences, watercourses or drainage systems will allow Boards to undertake this and has been applied for by the Board's Environment and GIS Technician. Deliberate displacement of water voles must not be carried out without this licence and must not be undertaken during the breeding season. For the purposes of this licence, displacement means removal of vegetation followed, where appropriate, by a destructive search of the burrows, where the intention is to displace water voles from their burrows. Water draw-down or removal may be used in parallel with vegetation cutting, where appropriate.*

Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*).

Reed Bunting are predominantly a farmland and wetland bird. Typically found in wet vegetation but has recently spread into farmland and into gardens in winter. When singing, the males will usually perch on top of a bush or reed.

There have been 2 reed bunting recorded in North East Lindsey IDB in 2018/19. The lack of recordings can be attributed to the fact that reed bunting are often identified by their call and are hard to see. Like most birds, they will take flight when near noisy machinery so can be hard to spot.

2020/21 action:

There has been no net loss of reed bed in 2020/21.

2021/22 action:

- *Ensure that there is no net loss of reed bed and encourage establishment where possible, especially in IDB districts where no reed bunting have been recorded recently. Gently sloping profiles at the margins of watercourses*

Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*).

The Eels Regulations 2009 (England and Wales) is still in force. 'High Priority' pumping stations still have 'Eel screen exemption notices' and these notices have been renewed for one year and are in place until 2022. It is likely that these will continue to be issued year on year until the Environment Agency have decided on a strategy to replace exemptions. 'High Priority' were classified as such by the Environment Agency in 2016 and is based on eel populations in the area of the pumping stations. 'High Priority' pumping stations over the 4 Boards are:

Upper Witham	Aubourn	SK9482962502
Upper Witham	Boutham	SK9687969470
Upper Witham	Thorpe	SK9161979451
Witham 1st	Billingham	TF1884158355
Witham 1st	Blankney	TF1658763599
Witham 1st	Chapel Hill	TF2000154096
Witham 1st	Farroway	TF1462053236
Witham 1st	North Kyme	TF1733653916
Witham 1st	Timberland	TF1777255921
Witham 3rd	Duckpool	TF1576765202
Witham 3rd	Southery	TF1415166235
Witham 3rd	Stixwould	TF1569465132

2020/21 action:

Eel locations were recorded and passability was considered when new pumping station schemes were designed.

2021/22 action:

- *Continue to record the location of eels and consider passability when designing new pumping station schemes.*

Grass Snake (*Natrix natrix*).

Grass snakes favour wetland habitats but can also be found in dry grasslands and in gardens, especially those with a pond nearby. During the summer, grass snake can be spotted basking in the sun near their favourite ponds or swimming in the water.

They hunt amphibians, fish, small mammals and birds. Females lay 10 to 40 eggs in rotting vegetation, such as compost heaps, incubating them until they hatch in early Autumn.

Like all reptiles, grass snake hibernate, usually from October to April.

There were two grass snakes recorded in 2020/21 in Witham First DIDB.

2020/21 action:

When removed from the weedcreens, weed is left to dry at the pumping stations which provides a damp and dense habitat for any grass snakes that may reside there.

2021/22 action:

- *Continue to allow grass snakes to use weed taken from weedcreens. Do not remove weed in June and July as this is when females will lay eggs. Once the eggs hatch, the weed can be removed (August onwards).*

Wildflower Meadows.

The U.K. countryside was once full of meadows with a variety of flowering plants, supporting butterflies, insects, farmland birds and other wildlife. However, since the 1930s, over 99% of what are called 'unimproved grasslands' has been lost, and those that are left are fragmented. The grassland surrounding pumping stations offers excellent scope for various types of wildflower meadow.

2020/21 action:

- New meadows have been planted at Rosper Road Pits (one wetland mix area and one 100% U.K. wildflower mix area).
- The shed at Southrey has been removed due to anti-social behaviour. However, the bare ground underneath offers a good area for extending the wildflower area. The meadow will be planted with a 100% U.K. wildflower mix in Spring 2021.

2021/22 action:

- *Identify more suitable sites in Upper Witham IDB and Witham First DIDB for wildflower meadows and purchase more seed (100% Native Traditional British Wildflower seed mix) to plant these with.*

Other Issues.

Each Board continues its aim to reduce the spread and damage from invasive non-native species. The objectives for this Biosecurity Protocol statement are as follows:

- Increase awareness around invasive non-native species via training.
- Identify, and keep a record of, known areas where invasive non-native species are an issue.
- Ensure operators take care to avoid transporting water and material between water bodies where a risk has been identified.
- Ensure ongoing monitoring of invasive non-native species when undertaking operations.
- Remain vigilant when undertaking operations to identify any further areas where invasive non-native species exist.

Bird monitoring continues to take place at Rosper Road Pits in North East Lindsey IDB. The site is home to a variety of wetland birds including UK Conservation Red (globally threatened) species: Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) and Black Tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*).

The 4 Boards hosted a Year 2 Geography student placement from January to April 2021, after being approached by the University of Lincoln as a significant public body in the Lincoln area. The placement introduced the student to Internal Drainage Boards and what they do, as well as showing the student the environment side of IDBs and actions they take to conserve and enhance the environment. The student has written an article for the ADA Gazette about their time on placement which will be published in the summer issue.

The Environment and GIS Technician has undertaken Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) training with the British Trust for Ornithology online. These skills will be applied working in wetland areas within the Boards' districts. WeBS surveyors monitor the UK's internationally important non-breeding waterbirds. Following a tradition begun in 1947, wetland sites are counted once per month, providing data for population and trends in abundance and distribution.

The Environment and GIS Technician has gained Associate membership of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). CIEEM is the professional body which represents and supports ecologists and environmental managers. Membership of CIEEM is achieved by providing sufficient evidence of professional competence.

Members received and noted the report and update.

18. Proposed Killingholme Marshes Pumping Station.

A report prepared by the Director of Operations & Engineering had been circulated with the agenda.

The proposed pumping station development is to be located within the Board's district serving an area of development between the North and South Killingholme Haven outfalls into the Humber Estuary.

The development had been promoted by Able UK Ltd. [AUL] for many years and previous involvement by the Board extended over nearly 20 years. After a previous meeting between the Board's Officers and AUL on 22.10.20 when a series of scheme obstructions and delays including land assembly problems were outlined by AUL, the Board's officers were advised on 08.03.21 that the project to construct the proposed pumping station was to proceed. Officers were invited to a series of meetings to discuss and agree construction and operational details relating to the station. The meetings were attended by AUL along with their consultants and mechanical & electrical [MEICA] main contractor. The Board's officers were supported by engineers from Stantec Ltd., as necessary.

The Director of Operations & Engineering is the Project lead for KMPS and had led the Board's responses to numerous issues raised by AUL recently and responded accordingly. AUL and their MEICA contractor sought the advice and comment of the Board's officers on a range of issues that will improve the performance and operation of the station and AUL have responded positively to issues raised by officers.

Issues raised during this process include the supply and manufacture of the pump control panel, the provision and performance of the automated weedscreen cleaner along with elements such as site lighting, emergency power supply, site security and access to all parts of the structure.

In addition to an order received earlier this year, the Board received an order in the value of £80,090 to enable the independent checking of drawings and specifications at design stage. These two orders combined covered the costs of the engineering support requested by the Board and will be provided by Stantec Ltd. of Cambridge with an estimated value of £90,090.

This support includes the regular inspection of the site and works as they proceed.

Work on site included the creation of site access routes and security along with the office and mess facilities for those working on site.

The Board was asked to sign a Deed of Grant providing access to the Board to the outfall of the new station. Therefore, Sills & Betteridge of Lincoln were instructed to act on behalf of the Board in this matter. Following discussions with the Chief Executive and Director,

their advice was to seek agreement on all legal matters relating to access and liabilities *en bloc* rather than agree a series of individual agreements. The Board's officers await confirmation from AUL that they will cover the Board's reasonable costs in association with these matters and Sills & Betteridge have written to AUL's Solicitor in Newcastle [and chased them subsequently] to seek a written undertaking of meeting legal costs estimated at £10k.

The Board noted the contents of the report and discussed the Board's position should AUL not provide assurance they would meet the reasonable due diligence work costs to be necessarily incurred by the Board in agreeing and signing all Deeds and legal agreements relating to the future operation and maintenance of the proposed pumping station. The Board had previously approved in principle the adoption of the pumping station, but subject to the adequacy of design and construction and in fair recompense for future maintenance liabilities via an appropriate set of legal agreements and payment of a commuted sum.

A regular position statement will be provided to Board meetings as the proposed scheme progresses.

19. Operations Report.

The Operations Report had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Acting Director of Operations.

During January and February 2020, the Board experienced yet another heavy rainfall event. Generally, Board maintained systems coped well and all Operatives and staff worked tirelessly to keep the systems running. The difference this time was, unlike in Autumn 2019 when it was mainly our Witham Third and Witham First Drainage Districts that experienced a series of heavy rainfall events, this time it was all 4 districts, which did stretch staff resource. During emergency event discussions with other Flood Risk Management Authorities, there was clear concern from colleagues at the EA about the high-water levels for a protracted period in the Lower Witham system and the fragility of the banks and risk of bank failures.

In North East Lindsey Darren Scott, Works Supervisor, responded to a call from a resident at Barrow Haven concerned his property was going to flood. Although IDBs are not Category 1 emergency responders, this concern was due to the EA's Barrow Beck being tide locked and the Board's watercourse being unable to discharge into Barrow Beck. The property in question did stay dry as the Council provided a pump, and the Fire brigade [as the emergency response] also responded.

All the Boards are now busy with recovery work following the recent heavy rainfall events. We are undertaking a range of tasks from minor bank slip repairs to major flood bank reinstatement, collapsed culvert replacements. Despite this, we are managing to get some desilting completed. The teams have achieved a large amount of work in the short amount of dry weather we have had.

Red Diesel use in Tractors.

The response to letters sent to local MPs by our 4 Chairmen and then on to HM Treasury, as part of a national ADA initiative, had so far elicited responses to Fred Myers [UW] and to Peter Gilbert [W1st] from Dr Caroline Johnson MP. This confirms she has referred the matter of IDBs asking for a similar exemption as the agricultural sector to HM Treasury

and suggests the reforms are to encourage users to improve their emissions and upgrade fleet to reduce pollution and improve the energy efficiency of their vehicles. At present UW and W3rd do have a tractor each running on white diesel, the ones used for haulage, but unless and until our membership body ADA resolves this we do run some plant on red diesel that under the new legislation should be on White, which is a risk to our Boards and to our individual Operatives. At present the advice from ADA nationally is to switch operations to white diesel from April 2022.

Timber supplies and prices.

Large quantities of timber, stone etc have been used in undertaking bank slip repair work in the last couple of months. It is noticeable that at present we are experiencing supply problems, having to source timber in a 100 miles radius and the cost of this has risen steeply.

Middle Drain Pumping Station.

The last refurbished pump was reinstated in late February and is working well. The culvert under the access track to Middle drain that links Branch no.1 to Middle Drain has partly collapsed and was replaced by Carnaby's, the Board's Contractor, under Board design scheme and supervision. We are in possession of Carnaby's RAMS and the site was surveyed by one of the Board's Engineers to provide levels and utility searches. This minor improvement works scheme was completed on Friday 07.05.21.

New Holland Outfall Pumping Station.

During the rainfall event in January / February both pumps failed at New Holland Outfall. Pump number 1 was removed by Perry's Pumps and taken for repair on the 13th February and has now been returned, and is working fine, at a cost of £12,686.00. Pump number 2 is currently away at Perry's Pumps undergoing repair and will be back with us shortly. The failure of the pumps is believed to have been caused by a power surge, this was determined by the Board's appointed electrician as the most likely event. We have therefore also had Surge protection fitted to the incoming supply at a cost of approximately £600.

Goxhill.

It was arranged for the Board's contractor Carnaby's to access a property at Goxhill on Thursday 13th May 2021 to remove the disputed gates and reinstate a fence line. The occupant of the property alleged the gates had been installed onto her property without consent, and after numerous times to reason with the individual and explain the benefits of leaving the gates in situ we were left with no other option. These works would have been completed a year ago had it not been for Covid-19. The Board had requested written agreement for alternative access to the watercourse via the property roadway, but no response was forthcoming. The decision was made to proceed and remove the gates with the view that should we be denied access we would pursue the issue through enforcement.

PSCA Works 2021/22 for the EA.

We are now in receipt of the orders for all 4 Boards to carry out the PSCA work as agreed, this has not been an easy process this year and confirmation of orders was in early May [not before 01.04.21]. With new staff at the EA overseeing this, we did not receive the orders or official maps and profile paperwork in time for the April cuts. We started to receive them in time for the May cuts, but still await some much-needed paperwork. This has been escalated within the EA and several IDB officers have had discussions at various levels of the EA to expedite this.

All the Boards have been requested to undertake a similar level of PSCA works for the EA in 2021/22 as undertaken in 2020/21, so this is a considerable workload to accommodate [circa £600,000 across the 4 Boards] in addition to our own work and it needs to be properly programmed, with due notice.

Members received and noted the report and update.

20. Engineering Report.

January 2021 Flood Event (JA-5457-2021-FLD).

This event started with rainfall on the 15th January until the end of the month. Although the rainfall amounts (approximately 86mm) were not excessively high the catchments across the whole of Lincolnshire were very wet and in addition the aquifers were very high, at record levels, with the ground water event being continuous since November 2019. The result was a prolonged event with very high-water levels throughout the River Witham system particularly on the Lower Witham, with similar conditions to November 2019. There was the same concern of the risk of breaches in the Lower Witham. The EA escalated the situation with the Lincolnshire CC Emergency planning Local Resilience Forum to an emergency because of the risk. Although there were no breaches, numerous EA flood banks were sandbagged to reduce overtopping, including Snakeholme Drain, Duckpool Catchwater, Billingham Skirth. Several areas within the Boards' districts were affected.

In North East Lindsey DB Barrow Beck was high, preventing discharge from the Board maintained Barrow Haven Branch 3 and putting a property at risk of flooding.

The EA used Branston Island washland, but the Lincoln Washlands were not operated.

Several properties were flooded, mainly locally from surface water aggravated by ground water.

All the Boards' pumping stations ran for prolonged periods and incurred high costs.

Multi agency Rain Gauge Project (JA-5378-2020-ASS).

Officers are exploring on behalf of all four Boards whether to be involved with this multi-agency scheme. Potential partners across Greater Lincolnshire are the 3 Lead Local Flood Authorities [LLFAs] namely Lincolnshire County Council, North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council. Other partners include Anglian Water and other Internal Drainage Boards (but not the EA). The scheme is proposed to be part funded by the Anglian (Northern) RFCC Local Levy and a draft bid was submitted by Lincolnshire County Council in November 2020. The proposal is to have 'live' web-based rainfall data available to partners during heavy rainfall events and historic data for post event investigations including the LLFA led Section 19 investigations. Approximately 50 sites would be located across the area hosted by partners in appropriate secure sites which potentially could be the Boards' Pumping Stations. However, we need to understand more about locations, potential ongoing maintenance costs for which the Boards may be liable etc before agreeing to participate in what is currently an expression of interest stage project. Information is awaited from Anglian Water, but they were not present at the last meeting.

Lincolnshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF) (JA-1400-2014-ORG).

The first meeting since April 2019 was held on 06th April 2021. The main focus of the meeting was on the Covid-19 situation, but the importance of Flood Risk Management, Emergency Response and Recovery was recognised and remains at the top end of Risks for the County.

Middle Drain Pumping Station.

Despite the installation of the new flap-valve serving the gravity outfall at this site in late October 2019, it has been necessary to continue with the operation of the pumps at this site. Whilst the gravity outfall was dammed-off, silt accumulated within the outfall structure. Contractors for the Environment Agency removed the silt w/c 12th April allowing the water to finally discharge into the Humber by gravity and dropping the water level some 0.5m.

The Environment Agency have reimbursed the Board for the cost of the additional pumping required caused by the obstructed outfall and provided an order for the recovery of future additional costs which will be incurred until this issue is addressed by the EA. This arrangement has now stopped, the final cost was £23,733 for 2521 hours pumping.

Immingham multi-agency study and model (ND-3987-2018-PRO).

A multi-agency approach has been taken to assess the Flood Risk and distribute potential scheme benefits between the parties involved, North East Lindsey Drainage Board, EA, Anglian Water and North East Lincolnshire Council - who are hosting the scheme because they have an in year GiA scheme which has received funding for the work. NELDB commissioned the survey of the watercourses which will be combined in the model which Anglian Water have agreed to undertake.

The results of the work will potentially allow the Board to proceed with GiA funding schemes for Middle Drain Pump Station and Habrough Marsh Drain system.

All types of flood risk are included including surface water, fluvial and coastal.

North East Lincolnshire Council have secured some alternative funding and this joint approach may not continue. This would mean the potential Middle Drain Pump Station and Habrough Marsh Drain schemes would have to be progressed separately by the Board.

Ground Water Flooding November 2019, Barton upon Humber (ND-5379-2020-FLD).

An 'off site' plan for Wren Kitchens is being produced, this would include the setting of various trigger thresholds for alarms and warnings to be issued. The current expansion of the Wren Kitchens site will have no adverse effect upon the local drainage system, nor will it increase the likelihood of flooding of this nature in the area.

A second meeting was held on 17th September 2020, no further meetings have been held.

Humber Wader Migration (ND-3458-2017-ENV)

A meeting was held on 18th November for this site to attract wading bird as part of mitigation for development in the area. It is located adjacent to Mawmbridge pumping station and will include a small pump within the compound to top up the wet areas on the site. A number of site meetings have taken place and a Consent application is awaited for the proposed works.

North Lincolnshire Council Operation Flood Group (ND-4485-2019-GEN)

After a long gap since February 2019 a meeting was held on 24th March 2021 and they will now be held every 3 months. It is a multi-agency meeting to discuss and resolve local drainage issues.

Environment Agency.

Stallingborough 3 Sea defence improvements - NE Lindsey IDB liaison (ND-5362-2020-ASS)

The EA are advancing the development of the scheme to improve the tidal defences and outfalls along the frontage from Middle Drain to New Cut Drain at Barton. The Outline Business Case was approved in July 2020. One aspect of this scheme is considering how best to sustain the conveyance of Oldfleet Drain. Furthermore, they are also particularly looking at options to improve the defences and outfall at Mawmbridge Drain.

This potentially has an impact on Middle Drain pumped catchment, Mawmbridge pumped catchment and Oldfleet Drain.

We have been invited to a meeting to discuss the current systems and operations of the Board/EA and how they interact.

An initial meeting was held on 24th November with the EA where options to divert flows from Oldfleet Drain into the Middle Drain or Mawmbridge Pumped Catchments were discussed, initially Middle Drain Branch 3 (6C) adjacent to the Humber bank is favourable. Further analysis and modelling will need to be done to establish how the connection is made and whether the Oldfleet gravity outfall is abandoned. The EA gravity outfall and Board pumped outfalls will be looked at to see whether it is feasible to combine them like at Middle Drain, to ensure the gravity is not obstructed by silt.

Potentially the schemes can use GiA funding either combined with the EA or separately for the Board. Further meetings and a site visit are expected in 2021.

Barton to New Holland Sea defence improvements - NE Lindsey IDB liaison (ND-5613-2021-GEN).

The EA are advancing the development of the scheme to improve the tidal defences and outfalls along the frontage from Barton to New Holland. The EA do have a provisional project plan and are due to present this at the September Board meeting.

North Killingholme Outfall and Habrough Marsh Drain Outfall (ND-5364-2020-DRA).

Contractors for the EA have advised they will survey and inspect two outfalls with a potential for them to be refurbished/replaced.

Members received and noted the report.

21. Planning & Consultations Report.

A report had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Acting Head of Engineering & Technical Services, Guy Hird. The report provided information on the

planning applications received by the Board and detail of the comments submitted to the relevant Local Planning Authority (LPA).

There were no issues to highlight to members on this occasion and members received and noted the report.

22. Consents and Enforcements Report.

A report had been prepared by the Consents and Enforcements Officers, circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Acting Head of Engineering & Technical Services:

Byelaw Consent Applications

Reference	Location	Applicant	Details	Date
ND-5515-2021-CON	New Holland Drain Branch 3 (15C) / North of Lincoln Castle Way, New Holland	Arbor Forest Products Ltd	Corrugated metal pipe arch culvert – 3.14m span x 2.09m rise x 18.75m long	29-04-21
ND-5560-2021-CON	Old Fleet Drain (5A) / Wells Road, Healing	Hayton Cramphorn	Install headwall for existing treated foul water outfall	17-03-21

Section 23 Land Drainage Act Consent Applications – District

Reference	Location	Applicant	Details	Date
ND-5520-2021-CON	Queens Road, Immingham	The Spencer Group	Temporary (4 months) culvert for access to haul road	19-02-21
ND-5529-2021-CON	A160 Humber Road, South Killingholme	Phillips 66	Enclose 109m of ditch for reconfigured petrol station	03-03-21
ND-5561-2021-CON	Clough Lane, North Killingholme	C RO Ports Killingholme Ltd	Two restricted discharges from brownfield site	19-03-21
ND-5575-2021-CON	Bradley Road, Waltham	Snape Properties Ltd	Farm access culvert; restricted discharge to ditch	26-03-21

Section 23 Land Drainage Act Consent Applications – Extended Area

The Board acts as Agent for Lincolnshire County Council, the Lead Local Flood Authority. North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council process their own Consent Applications.

None received.

Enforcement Issues – District

Reference	Location	Description / Comments	Actions
ND-5207-2020-ENF	Land adj Brocklesby Ave, Immingham	Encroachment of access strip adj to Habrough Marsh Drain Branch 1 with a fence	Property owner had agreed to move the fence back to the original line, but he has now completed the fence encroaching on the Board's land. Further action will be required either to move the fence or accept the fence on this line and reserve the right to take action in the future.

ND-5440-2020-ENF	Keelby Sports Association. DN41 8JA	Potential enforcement	Issue has been resolved following a site visit. Case closed 01-02-2021
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Enforcement Issues – Extended District

The Board acts as Agent for Lincolnshire County Council, the Lead Local Flood Authority. North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council undertake their own enforcement.

No current cases.

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

23. Immingham Motor Cycle Track Project.

A briefing note had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Chief Executive.

There had been no further action or information since the January Board meeting. Members resolved to leave in abeyance. Should the Town Council attract grant funding then possibly the matter would be resurrected but there had been no further communication.

Lionel Grooby noted that adequate insurance would have to be provided for the site. Currently he is aware that there are three containers on the site which could cause a possible anti-social behaviour issue. Ian Coupland stated that he would visit the site as part of the Cope Health and Safety visit and assessment and could arrange for removal of the containers.

The Members agreed that the matter would be closed until and unless further communication is received from external interested parties.

24. Any other business.

There were no further items of business and the meeting closed at 16:12.

25. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Board was confirmed for Tuesday, 14th September 2021, with the format and venue to be confirmed. It will commence at 2.00pm. As the Amethyst Hotel, previous venue for in-person meetings, had now closed, Members and Officers were requested to consider potential new locations for holding the in-person meetings.

..... Chairman..... Date

NELB BM 26.05.21