

WITHAM FIRST DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Minutes of the one hundred and nineteenth meeting of Witham First District Internal Drainage Board held on Tuesday, 16th November 2021 at Branston Booths Village Hall at 2pm.

Present:

Mr E Applewhite
MR D C Armstrong
Mr S Cobb
Mr P Gilbert
Mr M D Harrison
Cllr G Hewson
Mr A G Hodgson
Mr D Jackson
Mr D Leggate
Mr S B Leggate
Cllr P Lundgren
Dr B Maplethorpe
Mr S Maplethorpe
Mr C R Oxby
Dr V Stanton
Cllr P Vaughan

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
Mr Martin Shilling	Director of Engineering & Technical Services
Mr J Boyall	(Observer)

2500 Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr B Bean, Mr D Busby, Cllr I Carrington, Mr P Carrot, Mr WRB Grantham, Cllr M Head, Mr R C Hickling, Mr I Mair, Mr A Means and Cllr S Waring.

2501 Declarations of Interest.

Declarations of interest were received from members appointed by City of Lincoln Council and North Kesteven District Council, in matters relating to their respective Councils.

2502 Peter Gilbert, Chairman

This being the Board's Annual Public meeting, the Chief Executive initially took the Chair and on behalf of the Board she thanked outgoing Chairman, Mr Peter Gilbert for his service over the last 5 years as Chairman and the previous 5 years as Vice Chairman. On behalf of members, she acknowledged the considerable time, effort and contribution that Peter had given to the Board and to representing the IDB sector more widely and gave thanks for his support to officers too. He was presented with gifts and a card on behalf of members and officers. Peter then took the opportunity to thank Members and staff, stating he had enjoyed his time as Chairman and was very proud to hand over role to the next Chairman, leaving the Board in good health despite the considerable issues the Board had faced during his 5-year term of office, notably the impact of the most recent floods of 2019 and 2020. Peter would continue as a member, and everyone wished him well as he continued with the Board.

2503 Election of Chairman.

Peter Gilbert proposed David Armstrong, Vice Chairman, as Chairman and this was seconded and, there being no further nominations, was unanimously agreed.

2504 Chairman's Announcements.

David Armstrong welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked members for electing him as Chairman. He looked forward to working with members and officers to provide a steer and leadership for the Board.

He went on to thank Peter most sincerely for his hard work and dedication during his term of office, both his 5 years as Chairman since November 2016 but also the previous 5 years as Vice Chairman. Peter had been a calm, considered and resolutely good humoured Chairman for the Board under some of the most challenging issues the Board has faced, like notably working through the consequences of the heavy rainfall events of Autumn 2019, with partner Flood Risk Management Authorities and meetings with landowners and the NFU. He has been steadfast in his guidance and leadership of the Board, in a good humoured and calm way, which has enabled our officers to have the guidance and space in equal measure to manage some difficult situations. Peter had steered the approach of the Board and it was noticeable that as he completed his service as Chairman the Board's plant was in good condition, the Board's reserves were once again being steadily built up and there was now a good pumping stations maintenance regime and programme of undertaking minor improvement schemes.

He was pleased to report that the 2021 Election process for those 21 directly elected members had concluded, with the new term of office having started on 01st November and running until 31st October 2024.

He thanked those members who stood for membership of the Board once more. IDBs rely on local volunteers and local knowledge, and he appreciated that commitment.

Two members did not stand for re-election, former Chairman Mr Bob Fletcher and Mr John Crust. He put on record his personal thanks to both for their service to the Board.

Finally, the Chairman highlighted that the Board had 3 vacant seats, and if anyone had suggestions of interested people, they were encouraged to speak with him or Jane Froggatt.

2505 Election of Vice Chairman.

The Chairman confirmed that he had previously had discussions with Paul Carrott who was willing to stand for the role of Vice Chairman and he therefore nominated him. Unfortunately, due a case of Covid-19 in the family, Paul was unable to attend the meeting. The proposal was seconded and, there being no further nominations, Paul Carrot was elected unanimously as Vice Chairman.

2506 Election of nine members to the Executive Committee.

The current eight members were proposed, seconded and, there being no further nominations, were elected to the Executive Committee for the forthcoming year to November 2021. These were the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, Mr. E. Applewhite, Mr. S. Cobb, Mr. D. Jackson, Mr. R. Oxby, Mr. M. Harrison and Mr. S. Maplethorpe. Mr. R. A. Fletcher had now retired from the Board, and Mr P. Gilbert was duly elected to the Executive Committee as outgoing Chairman.

2507 Election of 3 members and 2 deputies to the Joint Services Committee.

The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Mr Peter Gilbert were proposed, seconded and, there being no further nominations, were elected to the JSC. Deputies elected were Mr. Steve Cobb and Mr. Mark Harrison.

2508 Calendar of Board and Executive Committee meetings for 2022.

A draft schedule had been circulated with the agenda, but it was agreed to WITHDRAW this item as during previous meetings with other Boards changes had been requested. It was AGREED that a revised schedule would be issued to all Boards and members ASAP.

2509 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 Witham House, so that an up-to-date Register for November 2021 to November 2022 is 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.

2510 Minutes of the Board meeting, 28.09.21.

The Minutes of the Board's previous meeting, held on Tuesday, 28th September 2021 were proposed by Pat Vaughan, seconded by Peter Gilbert and APPROVED as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING:

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

2511 Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting, 02.11.21.

The minutes of the Board's Executive Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 02nd November 2021 had been circulated with the agenda and were proposed by Peter Gilbert, seconded by David Jackson and APPROVED as an accurate record. The recommendations to the Board from the subcommittee were noted.

MATTERS ARISING:

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

2512 Chief Executive's Report.

The Chief Executive's report had been circulated with the agenda and the following items were highlighted:

2512.1 Covid-19.

The Boards currently have 2 staff who have Covid-19 confirmed and are self-isolating, and we have recently had staff with symptoms or who have been contacted by NHS Test & Trace who have taken tests and returned to work on a negative result.

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 and in depot vehicles.

2512.2 Board Membership.

Elected members [21 seats]: 18 members elected being, Ed Applewhite, David Armstrong, David Busby, Paul Carrott, Steve Cobb, Peter Gilbert, William Grantham, Mark Harrison, Richard Hickling, Andrew Hodgson, David Leggate, Simon Leggate, Ian Mair, Bridget Maplethorpe, Simon Maplethorpe, Andrew Means, Ron Oxby and Valerie Stanton.

Leavers: Neither long-standing member and former Chairman Bob Fletcher nor John Crust stood for election for a further term. The Board also has a third vacant seat for the electoral district of Sleaford.

Members nominated by the two Councils are unaffected by the recent election.

2512.3 Staffing Issues.

Fiona Scott, Environment & GIS Officer, left the 4 Boards on Friday 12.11.21 after over 4 years. Fiona has a new role as Senior Environmental Officer with Lincolnshire Rivers Trust. The Boards are currently advertising the vacant post, having reviewed the role.

2512.4 Capital Schemes

Farroway Improvement Scheme started on Site on Monday 01st November 2021. Billingham & Timberland PS Development of the outline business case of FDGiA funding, further details reported later the agenda.

The Chief Executive's report and update was received and NOTED.

2513 Risk Register.

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

The Corporate Risk Register aims to capture the high-level risks the four Boards face. These are generic to all four Boards with any specific risks to a particular Board highlighted. The final column then shows the current 'direction of travel'.

Following the series of heavy rainfall events during Autumn 2019 and the impact this had on the 31st March 2020 year end outturn positions and with the significant impact of COVID-19 upon the 4 Boards' operations, several risks were revised when the Risk Register was last approved in January 2021. Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, there have been no changes made to these risks at this time. It is envisaged that some risks can be reduced once the pandemic is in a more manageable format.

As a reminder, the key measures that have been put in place to address the COVID-19 Pandemic were:

- Initially from March 2020 Operatives worked alternate days undertaking pump runs, checking for blockages, bridges and culverts, etc.
- Operatives have undertaken summer maintenance works in 2020 and 2021 whilst maintaining '1 person 1 vehicle/item of plant' wherever practicable. No more than 1 Operative per vehicle including vans & 4x4's.
- Provision of PPE to all staff [face coverings, hand sanitiser, aerosols, gloves].
- Hand work outsourced to private contractor.
- Office staff working predominantly from home, where practicable. Office phones are accessible via Unity app. Staff set up with home working facilities (laptops, screens, etc). All ICT systems available from home.
- Access to office on a booking basis – maximum 4 people at any one time, with procedures when entering/leaving the office.
- Virtual meetings held via Zoom. Key staff (e.g., Management Team) limit as far as practicable meeting 'face to face' to maintain resilience in the team.

Further changes were proposed to the Risk Register regarding recruitment and retention of staff, this being problematic in the current employment market.

Budget pressures/funding issues for 2022/23 mainly relating to increased staffing costs (including increase in employers NI rate), conversion from red diesel to white diesel, insurance costs, plant maintenance costs and general inflation increases. These will be explained fully in the Budget report to the Boards in January 2022.

As previously reported, insurance renewals were difficult for the 2021/22 renewals in July 2021, and it is likely that due to the hardening market in the insurance suppliers then this is going to be a significant issue and future risk.

Following review and discussion Members APPROVED:

- increasing the risk regarding staff recruitment and retention, as set out in 2.4.
- Adding additional risk 4.3.4, to reflect the increasing cost risks being faced by the Boards
- Adding additional risk 4.4.3, to reflect the increasing issues of sourcing sufficient insurance covers for the Boards.
- the Risk Register as of November 2021, with these changes.

2514 Schedule of Expenditure, 01.09.21 to 31.10.21.

The Schedule of Expenditure for the two months' period from 01st September to 31st October 2021 had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Finance & Governance.

Gross expenditure totalled £188,202.96 or, net of £19,428.23 VAT, £168,774.73. It was emphasized that this is the invoices paid in the 2 months period, and some invoices relating to the period may not be included [e.g., electricity costs at pumping stations are invoiced in arrears].

Items highlighted to or raised by members included:

- Item 14: £5,500.00 (net) to E. Skinns Ltd for the new weedscreen for Farroway Bankside scheme.
- Item 29: £3,493.00 (net) to K&W Mechanical Services LTD. for the supply and install of the Xwatch height limiter to the JD AF68 JFN.
- Item 35: £12,038.50 (net) to Morbey Fencing for the fencing at Metheringham FDGiA scheme.
- Item 41: £2,000.00 (net) to PKF Littlejohn LLP for the External audit fees for the AGAR review, for the year ending March 2021.

Members received and NOTED the expenditure incurred between 01.09.21 and 31.10.21.

2515 Financial Performance Report 2021/22 to 31st October, month 7.

The Director of Finance & Governance presented the Financial Performance Report for the position as of 31st October 2021. This had been circulated with the agenda. A summary table of the overall income and expenditure position was presented, as follows:

	2021/22 Budget £	Profiled Budget £	Actual £	Variance £
Income	(1,022,281)	(989,192)	(1,001,290)	(12,098)
Board & General Admin	14,670	9,235	9,928	693
One Off Schemes	35,000	8,400	16,316	7,916
Conservation	1,750	483	273	(210)
Depot	13,440	11,177	14,181	3,004
Drains	346,040	284,066	279,950	(4,116)
Pumping Stations	216,590	74,782	71,454	(3,328)
Joint Admin/Witham House	102,192	52,171	53,705	1,534
Consents & Enforcement	10,603	0	0	0
Director of Operations/Engineers	69,336	43,321	44,155	834
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	40,000	0	(12,039)	(12,039)
PWLB	27,970	13,047	13,047	0
Rechargeable Works	60,000	31,836	35,983	4,147
EA Precept	84,690	42,345	41,516	(830)
FRS17 Pension Adjustment (net)				0
Wages & Plant Holding Account	0	(42,362)	(42,155)	207
(Surplus)/Deficit	0	(460,691)	(474,975)	(14,284)

The Board's budget profile as of 31.10.21 was an anticipated positive position of [£460,691], whereas the actual position was slightly better at [£474,975], a positive variance of [£14,284]. Members were reminded that it was still comparatively early in the financial year with some of the high risk spend areas not yet incurred such as electricity costs through winter months, full overtime costs for the weed cutting season etc.

On drainage rates income, of [£521,830.98] due to the Board in 2021/22 the collection rate was at 96.1% as at 31.08.21 compared to 98.4% at the same point in the previous year. After adjustments, [£20,491.99] remains as outstanding income due to the Board. Final reminders were posted on 28th September 2021 and a court date for unpaid bills was set for 28th January 2022.

Special Levy payments from NKDC and City of Lincoln Council had been received in May 2021, totalling [£199k] income to the Board, with the second and final similar payments for 2021/22 all paid in early November as scheduled.

Also, in relation to income streams, the Highland Water claims were submitted to the Environment Agency. Highland Water claims have been submitted to the EA for 2020/21 actual with a further balance of (£4,690) due and for 2021/22 Estimate (£25,600). 80% of the estimated claim for 2021/22 (£20,480) was paid in August 2021 along with the balance for 2020/21 actual (£4,690), making a total income to the Board of [£25,170] with the balance adjusted for the actual 2021/22 costs incurred payable in September 2022.

Rechargeable Works being the PSCA works which are invoiced to the EA of (£35k) have been recharged to date to 30.09.21, with further works due to be invoiced shortly.

The contribution from Lincolnshire County Council relating to Lincoln Eastern Bypass, as agreed at the last Board meeting, had been received at (£19.8k) and is included.

In expenditure for One Off Schemes the budget of £35k was approved for improvement schemes. Works have commenced on replacing the Farroway weedscreen which will be

funded by this budget. So far, the weedscreen £5.5k and culvert pipe £4.7k have been purchased, with dry mix concrete sand bags, back fill and toppings, fencing and gates still to be purchased.

The main scheme to be undertaken is the refurbishment works at Metheringham Pumping Station totalling £168,000 with FDGIA grant awarded of £163,000. The remaining funding of £5k will be resourced by the Board, as previously approved. (£163,000) has been received in previous financial years to undertake these works. The fencing has been completed £12k and the new control panel is due to be delivered by the end of November. The weedscreen will also be refurbished and new steps installed.

The Bank Balances as at 31.10.21 were set out as follows:

Natwest	£	645,033.72
Nationwide Instant Access	£	359,882.03
Nationwide 90 Day Notice	£	-
Total		<u>£ 1,004,915.75</u>

The Board's Public Works Loan Board loan was being repaid, with £171,127.80 now outstanding on the original loan to be repaid over the next 6 years:

2.41% £ 146,680.84

*Original loan £354,480. Loan period 14.5 years from 17/12/2012. Maturity date 17th June 2027
Repayments made 17th June and 17th December each year.*

It was highlighted that whilst bank balances looked healthy, this was at peak income position and there are no further significant income streams due in to the Board until May 2022. So, balances will steadily reduce between now and May 2022.

Members NOTED the financial performance 2021/22 for the 7 months 01st April to 31st October 2021.

2516 Health and Safety Update.

A Health and Safety update had been circulated and was presented by the Acting Director of Operations.

All Boards are still extremely busy with the summer maintenance programme and continue to be cautious with regards to the sharing of vehicles. With the rise in reported Covid- 19 infections, single vehicle cab-use is operated wherever possible along with supplying all the necessary PPE.

Our guidance to office-based staff remains the same, to work from home wherever possible and to book the use of Witham House. Measures remain in place to make the Office accessible to a limited number of Staff at any one time. Staff continue to have small face to face work meetings from time to time, with office use being managed by a Booking system.

The Office is open to members of the public and to visitors, but by prior arrangement only.

These arrangements and the risk assessments are reviewed weekly at Management Team Meetings, and changes in national guidance is kept under review.

Ron Oxby asked what the long-term strategy for dealing with Covid was and what was the Board's Policy. It was confirmed that there is not currently a fixed policy, as we are still responding to the pandemic. But it is likely that flexible working will continue to some extent and providing the business needs of the Boards are met.

Cope, external Health & Safety advisor, were approached to review and update the Fire Packs at each Depot. These are the grab packs located at the exit to hand to the Fire Brigade giving the building layout and stored location of any flammable or dangerous goods.

We have had one accident reported since the September report. This involved a member of staff from Witham Third cutting his finger badly while fitting new blades to a hedge trimmer. This did involve a trip to A&E at Lincoln County Hospital, although he was back at work the next day stitched and bandaged up.

We have had no near miss incidents reported since September.

Following the H&S review of our piling methods it was decided to have the vibrating whacker plates on Witham First and Witham Third altered to undertake this operation more safely. This modification will be undertaken by the manufacture of the whacker plate and is a tried and tested modification. The cost of this is £7,500 per modification but will meet H&S needs. Upper Witham will look to purchase one next year, as the winter works programmes for this coming winter will allow sharing of that equipment. That is not always the case, and bank repairs are frequently completed at the same time of year.

The annual Overhead Cable Avoidance Training has been completed by Shoc, the only training provider offering this training at present. The Wheeled Excavator training is started on 08th November by XRE training, this is NPORS excavator training.

As reported previously, Witham First access bridge to Ringmoor Pumping Station is still being investigated (ascertaining ownership via the Environment Agency). There is no easily available information on this.

The Culvert has been delivered to Farroway and work to install the new Culvert and Weed Screen started during the week commencing 01/11/21. Material is being sourced and delivered to site ready for the installation. This Culvert will give the Board much needed access to the far bank and replace the dangerous collapsing weed screen deck.

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

2517 Environment Report & Joint Witham & Humber Nature Strategy 2021-26.

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

This Nature Strategy 2021-26 had been prepared by Witham and Humber Drainage Boards in accordance with the commitment in the Implementation Plan of the Defra Internal Drainage Board Review of 2007 for Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) to produce their own strategy documents. It demonstrates the 4 Boards' commitment to fulfilling their duty as public bodies to conserve and enhance biodiversity under 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 the Water Framework Directive.

It had been circulated to all members of all 4 Boards via email prior to the November Board meetings, to allow sufficient time for review, due to the sheer size and comprehensiveness of the document.

Importantly, it reflects the 4 Boards' aspiration to maximise the support provided to biodiversity, particularly priority UK species and habitats, and the wider environment in general through day-to-day activities, by setting clear objectives, actions and targets.

The 4 Boards are recommended to adopt this Nature Strategy as one of their policies and commit to its implementation. The Boards will review the plan periodically, with a review period no greater than 3 years, and update it as appropriate.

This Nature Strategy is part of a much larger biodiversity framework that encompasses international, national and local levels of legislation and policy and which also include ecosystem services and climate change.

When carrying out its functions, an IDB must pay regard to the effect on the environment. Some environmental legislation relates specifically to maintaining or restoring the condition of protected sites or protecting certain species, but there are also statutory duties for IDBs to conserve and enhance biodiversity in and alongside the watercourses they manage and the wider landscape.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 places a duty on IDBs to conserve biodiversity. The Environment Bill (Act) 2020, when enacted, extends this duty on IDBs to also enhance biodiversity and report periodically on its actions. Therefore, as a public authority, every IDB must consider what action it can take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in England.

The key environmental legislation (by no means an exhaustive list) relevant to the work of IDBs includes:

- The Environment Bill (Act) 2020
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
- Eels (England and Wales) Regulations 2009
- Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2003
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (Section 40)
- Environmental Impact Assessment (Land Drainage Improvement Works) Regulations 1999
- Land Drainage Act 1994
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992
- Flood and Water Management Act 2010
- Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975

The aims of this Nature Strategy are:

- To ensure that opportunities for conservation and enhancement of biodiversity are fully considered throughout the IDB's operations, as required by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006);
- To enable more effective monitoring and reporting of progress and outcomes.
- To ensure that Priority species and habitats receive effective action within defined targets within the drainage district.
- To identify targets and appropriate actions for other habitats and species of local importance within the drainage district. This includes invasive non- native species.
- To contribute to local environmental partnerships such as the Local Nature Partnership to ensure that programmes and priorities for biodiversity conservation are aligned and maintained in the long term.
- To raise awareness within the IDB and locally of the need for biodiversity conservation, and to communicate with the local and wider community what actions the IDB are undertaking to support biodiversity.

Following much discussion, Members received and NOTED the update and APPROVED the joint Nature Strategy 2021-26.

2518 Timberland & Billingham Catchment Review.

A report by Georgina Nichols, Capital Programme Manager, had been circulated and was presented by the Director of Engineering & Technical Services.

A catchment model, funded via Grant in Aid (GiA), of Timberland and Billingham was commissioned in 2019 to look at the current flood risk within the catchment and identify the potential for future Grant in Aid works within the catchment.

This work was undertaken by JBA Consultants, who constructed a model using HEC-RAS detailing the Board's watercourses and the two pumping stations of Timberland and Billingham.

Once the model was constructed to accurately represent the Board's watercourses, we were able to look at various scenarios to determine the flood risk within the catchment. The baseline scenario is all watercourses and pumping stations operating as intended, several different rainfall events were then run through the model to determine what was at risk of flooding in the different rainfall events.

In addition, the project looked at two other scenarios, what would happen if all the pumps in the catchment failed and what would happen if we only operated Billingham and if the two catchments were operated independently of each other.

The maximum flood extents for the 10-, 20-, 100- and 1,000-years baseline (pumps operating) scenario were shown along with the climate change scenario extents. This shows the northwest and western part of the catchment flooding at lower return periods as this is the area furthest from the pumping stations. The flood extents grow towards the southeast as the event magnitude increases. Flooding occurs via ponding in topographic low spots across the catchment with some instances of channel overtopping along reaches such as Walcott Bank South, Timberland Town and Timberland Banks particularly for events greater than 1 In 100 years. A number of properties were affected by the flooding in the 1

in 100-year event in the baseline, pumps operating, scenario. Five buildings, both residential and non-residential, were highlighted as being at risk within the catchment.

The information from the original modelling project has been reviewed regarding the proposed refurbishment projects for Timberland and Billingham in the 6-year capital programme. In order to progress developing an Outline Business Case (OBC) to gain GiA to fund these projects additional information is required regarding condition and residual life of the two pumping stations and to model the various options available to the Board for repairing or replacing these structures.

We have commissioned, using GiA funding, JBA to undertake a condition assessment of the civils and M&E elements of both Timberland and Billingham pumping stations. This will give us the information required to determine if repairing the pumping stations is a viable option, the cost associated with the repair and the residual life of the structures.

The modelling will also be extended, by JBA, to include some additional scenarios such as replacing the pump at Billingham with a smaller capacity pump and combining it with the previously modelled catchment boundary split and pumping only at Timberland PS i.e., making Billingham PS redundant.

These options along with the modelling already done will enable us to undertake an economic analysis of the options so we can determine the best way forward for the catchment.

We will also take the opportunity to determine the impacts of stopping pumping for a 24hr period in a large-scale event to simulate the Environment Agency requesting the Board to cease pumping during a flood event. This will enable us to determine what the impacts are and advise the Environment Agency of the impacts so emergency plans can be formulated. The Environment Agency Lower Witham Resilience project potentially has a large impact on this catchment as it is looking at the strategic flood risk management options for the Lower Witham catchment. The work we do in the Timberland and Billingham will be used to inform the outcomes of the Lower Witham Resilience project.

It is anticipated the findings of this next phase of the study will be ready early in 2022 and will be used to write the OBC and develop the projects in the 6-year programme, which will be updated in May 2022 in the next programme refresh.

Members NOTED the report and the further modelling work which had been commissioned.

2519 Operations Report.

The Operations report had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Acting Director of Operations:

The group of 4 Boards were still busy with the summer maintenance programmes, the weather in general had been good in October and allowed us to catch up on the summer maintenance programmes in those Boards that were behind with their programme delivery [particularly Upper Witham and Witham Third].

Planning of winter works had commenced across the Boards, with maps and Notice of Entry letters now posted out.

Witham First have had a good year up to now and are on schedule, although it was accepted that some reordering of the programme meant that some landowners who would usually have had the drains weed cut had not yet seen the Operatives. They started the installation of Farroway Culvert and Weed Screen Deck w/c 01/11/21. There have been no major plant breakdowns since the last report. Witham First had an Operative contacted by track and trace and told to isolate until a PCR test was taken, this was negative, and the Operative returned to work.

Red Diesel use in Tractors.

The issue has not changed: The Red / White diesel issue is still being negotiated by ADA colleagues and other parties. As it stands at this time, we have kept our excavators on red and our tractors that are not used for haulage on red diesel. Keeping the tractors on red is a slight risk as Customs and Excise have confirmed that travelling from one site to another or flailing watercourse in a City, Town or Village would never be classed as an agricultural duty. But to put the infrastructure in place i.e., purchase fuel bowsers on each Board so we can fuel red and white diesel is not affordable or practical when it looks like we will have to put everything on to white diesel from April 2022. We can then flush our current bowsers and tanks out and we are just delivering one fuel again. A real concern will be theft of fuel from machines left overnight on site.

This will also be a considerable cost pressure for budget setting 2022/23 for all 4 Boards [as NELDB's contractor costs will be affected too].

Supplies, Plant and Machinery.

There continues to be an issue with prices and availability of stock and spares being a real problem at present. Conversations have started with main dealers of plant and machinery and some meetings are planned to review current terms with an intended outcome of better hourly rates and bigger discounts on spares.

Farroway Pumping Station

We are still waiting for this pump to be removed by Perry's pumps. We will keep an eye on the weather before removal and defer if necessary.

Members NOTED the Operations Report and update.

2520 Engineering Report.

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

Flood Events:

There had been no flood events to report.

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. There has been no change since the May meeting and information is awaited from Anglian Water.

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

The meeting due to be held on 12th October 2021 was cancelled. In addition to the main meetings the 'LRF Flood Group' subgroup met on 02nd September, the agenda included 'FloodEx2022' which is a significant regional exercise taking place in September 2022 involving all the LRFs along the Trent Catchment as well as all the East Coast LRFs covering both Tidal and Fluvial Flooding.

The Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP)

The Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) is a project lead by Anglian Water to improve the lives of people and the environment, in the East of England over the long-term. It will use it to plan for investment in drainage, treatment and sewerage systems. This collaborative and long-term strategic plan will highlight the known and expected future risks to drainage and treatment and identify the solution strategies to mitigate.

The DWMP is a long-term plan covering 2025-2050, looking at the risks in 2025, 2030, 2035 and 2050. There have been several general meetings starting in January 2020 but now catchment specific meetings are being held. On 12th October there was a meeting looking at the catchments of Louth and Horncastle which was attended by Internal Drainage Boards, ELDC and the EA.

Further information can be found on this website

<https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/about-us/our-strategies-and-plans/drainage-and-wastewater-management-plan/>

Section 19s

A small number of Section 19 Investigation information requests from Lincolnshire County Council have been responded to, and it is known that there are still many of these flood investigations outstanding.

Metheringham Fen Pumping Station (FD-1143-2014-PRO)

This station has attracted Flood Defence Grant in Aid monies allocated via the EA in the sum of £163,000, subject to a contribution from the Board of a further £5,000 as approved at the June 2020 meeting. These monies will be used to replace or refurbish the elements of the site as listed:

1. Replace existing MCC (pump control panel)- currently under construction by Paktronic, Grantham.
2. Replace outfall flap valves.
3. Refurbish automated weed screen cleaner.
4. Health & Safety improvements including fencing, site lighting and steps.

Billingham Pumping Station and Timberland Pumping Station (FD-5336-2020-PRO)

A business case is currently being produced for a potential application to the EA for a Flood Defence Grant in Aid. The scheme is looking at both pumped catchments and the interaction between them.

Heighington Flooding Group (FE-5548-2021-FLD)

A multi-agency group has been set up following the significant impact of ground water in the village. Although Heighington is remote from the Witham First district boundary there is an impact because the Anglian Water Services' foul sewer system gravitates to Heighington Treatment Works [which is in Washingborough]. The foul sewer system gets inundated with ground water, causing flooding in the village and overwhelming the Treatment Works.

An initial meeting was held on the 09th March 2021 with further meetings to be arranged following the outcomes from the Scopwick Groundwater Flood Risk Task and Finish Group (FE-5321-2020-FLD).

Farroway Bankside Drain

The screen and material have been ordered for the replacement Weedscreen deck on Farroway Bankside Drain and it is due to be installed.

Members NOTED the Engineering report and update.

2521 Planning and Consultations Report.

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

There were no issues to highlight to members on this occasion.

Members received and NOTED the Planning and Consultations report.

2522 Consents and Enforcements.

A Consents and Enforcements report had been circulated with the agenda and was introduced by the Acting Head of Technical & Engineering Services.

Byelaw Consent Applications

None received

Section 23 Land Drainage Act Consent Applications – District

Reference	Location	Applicant	Details	Date
FD-5776-2021-CON	Grange Farm, Digby Fen, Billingham	Application awaited	Surface and treated foul water discharge from barn conversion	

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
FE-5801-2021-CON	Field Beck, Sleaford just South of A17	Persimmon Homes	Spine road culvert and two attenuated discharges	04-10-21

Enforcement Issues – District

Reference	Location	Description /Comments	Actions
FD-3835-2018-ENF	Sleaford Rugby Club	Blocked watercourse	Awaiting response from Network Rail
FD-5564-2021-ENF	Sleaford Golf Club, Willoughby Road, Greylees, Sleaford, NG34 8PL	Flooding	This is mainly a ground water issue, but also a watercourse requires clearing. Network Rail have been advised and have agreed to do the work. Waiting for confirmation work done.

Enforcement Issues – Extended Area

Reference	Location	Description /Comments	Actions
FE-5491-2021-ENF	Branston Beck, Branston.	Potentially obstructed watercourse	No further information case closed. 27-10-2021
FE-5563-2021-ENF	Waste Away Solutions Ltd Unit 19, Woodbridge Road, Sleaford NG34 7EW	Unconsented work (piles) in a watercourse	The works undertaken also do not match the planning submission, but they are not taking action. LCC are considering whether legal action is appropriate

Members received and noted the report on Consents and Enforcements.

2523 Any Other Business.

There were no further items of business and the meeting closed at 15.45.

2524 Date, Time and Place of the Board's Next Meeting.

The Board's next meeting was confirmed for Tuesday, 25th January 2022 at 2pm format TBC.

..... Chairman Date
W1st BM 16.11.21.