

WITHAM FIRST DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Minutes of the one hundred and twenty third meeting of Witham First District Internal Drainage Board held on Tuesday, 22nd November 2022 in Branston Booths Village Hall at 2pm.

Present:

Mr E Applewhite
Mr S F Cobb
Mr P Gilbert (Chairman)
Mr W R B Grantham
Cllr M Head
Cllr G Hewson
Mr D G Leggate
Mr S B Leggate
Mr I Mair
Dr B Maplethorpe
Mr A Means
Mr C R Oxby
Cllr P J Vaughan

In attendance:

Miss Jayne Flower	Executive Assistant
Mrs Jane Froggatt	Chief Executive
Mr Steve Larter	Director of Finance & Governance
Mr Martin Shilling	Director of Engineering & Technical Services

2583 Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Mr D Armstrong (Chairman) Mr D Busby, Cllr I Carrington, Mr P Carrott (Vice Chairman), Mr M Harrison, Mr R Hickling, Mr A Hodgson, Cllr P Lundgren, Mr S Maplethorpe, Dr V Stanton, and Cllr S Waring.

In the absence of the Chairman and the Vice Chairman, members elected Mr Peter Gilbert to Chair the meeting.

2584 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.

2585 Election of Chairman.

Ron Oxby proposed David Armstrong, be re-elected as Chairman. This was seconded and, there being no further nominations, was unanimously agreed.

2586 Chairman's Announcements.

Peter Gilbert, as Chair of the meeting, highlighted that the Board still has 3 vacant seats. He asked that if anyone has suggestions of people who may be interested in joining to

represent the following electoral wards, then please do speak to David Armstrong or to Jane Froggatt about this:

- Blankney & Martin Fens
- Heighington Fen & Lincoln
- Sleaford

The Chairman advised the papers indicate the Board is currently in good financial health. The year-end deficit problems and use of reserves we had in March 2020, following several heavy rainfall events of Autumn 2019, we have gradually recovered from. As of 31st October 2022, the Board had a small surplus position of £9k.

However, many cost pressures were building. Although the position looks stable on 31st October, the Board faces a difficult few months for the remainder of the financial year 2022/23, and even more severe challenges in setting a balanced budget for next year 2023/24. The most significant challenge was in relation to our escalating electricity costs at pumping stations, a challenge being felt across the IDB industry. We will make time today to focus on understanding what is happening to electricity costs. Following the ADA Annual Conference, a couple of weeks ago, and discussion there of these cost pressures, Jane Froggatt will be accompanying our ADA colleagues to meet with Defra officials on 30th November to outline the significant pressures on IDBs and to lobby for some flexibility over the next couple of years.

2587 Election of Vice Chairman.

Ron Oxby proposed Paul Carrot be re-elected as Vice Chairman. The proposal was seconded by Gary Hewson and, there being no further nominations, Paul Carrot was elected unanimously as Vice Chairman.

2588 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 2023. These were the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, Mr. E. Applewhite, Mr. S. Cobb, Mr Peter Gilbert, Mr. R. Oxby, Mr. M. Harrison and Mr. S. Maplethorpe. Should anyone else be interested in joining the subcommittee, they were encouraged to contact the Chairman or Jane Froggatt.

2589 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. The current Deputies were also re-elected, Mr. Steve Cobb and Mr. Mark Harrison.

2590 Calendar of Board and Executive Committee meetings for 2023.

A draft schedule of meetings dates had been circulated with the agenda. Each Board usually meets 4 times in the year [January, May, September and the November Annual Public Meeting]. It was proposed that in 2023 we try meeting on 3 occasions, with the usual January and May meetings, but combining the September and November meetings into one meeting in November, incorporating the Annual Public Meeting. The suggestion from members was that we timetable these 3 meetings for each Board, and if additional meetings are required for any purpose, these can be convened as in-person, videoconference or hybrid meetings. The September joint Annual Inspection [held this year on 29.09.22] had been brought forward, at the request of some members, to Thursday, 20th July 2023.

Witham First District Board Meetings (Branston Booths Village Hall at 2pm):

- Tuesday, 24th January.
- Tuesday, 23rd May
- Tuesday, 21st November (+APM).

Witham First Executive Committee Meetings (W1st Depot, Tilney Dales at 2pm):

- Tuesday, 10th January.
- Tuesday, 09th May.
- Tuesday, 07th November

Following discussion and assurance of compliance with Standing Orders, Members AGREED the calendar of events for 2023.

2591 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 2022 to November 2023 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.

2592 Minutes of the Board meeting, 20.09.22.

The Minutes of the Board's previous meeting held on 20th September 2022 were proposed by Cllr Pat Vaughan, seconded and APPROVED as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING:

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

2593 Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting, 08.11.22.

The minutes of the Board's Executive Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 08th November 2022 had been circulated with the agenda and were proposed by Mr Ron Oxby, seconded by Mr Peter Gilbert and APPROVED as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING:

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

2594 Chief Executive's Report.

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

2594.1 Covid-19.

The 4 Boards' arrangements for Covid-19 risk mitigation are kept under regular review, maintaining the focus on our 3 priorities:

- Maintaining business continuity in the Boards' services as far as practicable, both operationally and in office-based services.
- Providing a safe working environment for our staff.
- Maintaining sufficient resilience across our teams to be able to respond appropriately to a flood event.

With these priorities in mind and with the end of national free Lateral Flow Tests [LFTs], the Boards had invested in sufficient LFTs to issue every employee with 2 LFT tests per week. Staff are asked to test routinely twice a week and if they suspect they may have Covid symptoms. Although the national isolation requirements have changed, we are asking staff to advise if they test positive and not to attend the workplace until we discuss with them whether they feel well enough to work and can work from home or work in a lone worker capacity, minimising the Covid transmission risk to colleagues. We have experienced more cases of Covid amongst staff recently.

2594.2 Staffing.

Mr Roger Maidens, Land Drainage Operative with Witham First DIDB, has decided to retire on 07.12.22. Roger started with the Board on 05.05.2003. He has requested that, in lieu of a gift or vouchers, Billingham Football club receive a donation for the purchase of a defibrillator. An informal lunch for Roger will be held at The Ship in Billingham, this being his preference.

It was noted that Mr Billy Reddish will replace Roger's role. Billy is currently the peripatetic Operative based mainly at Witham Third this season, and primarily a tractor/flail Operative, as is Roger.

2594.3 Capital Programmes.

For the last few months work has been underway to develop for each of the 4 Boards a Capital Programme to lever in and maximise FDGiA monies, where

practicable, and to model what annual contributions would be required from each Board to support and sustain the capital programme. Thanks were given to all members of Management Team for this work, and a particular thanks to our Capital Programme Manager Georgina Nichols [who works across our 4 IDBs and 3 others].

We have completed a first iteration of a Capital Plan for pumping station refurbishments over the next 20 years for each of the Boards. This will be presented to the Joint Services Committee meeting on 12.12.22 before each of the Capital Programmes is then taken to the January 2023 round of Board meetings.

2594.4 Pay Award 2023/24.

The ADA Lincolnshire Branch's Pay & Conditions Committee met on 10.10.22 to receive the staff side pay claim for next year 2023/24 and to negotiate a proposed pay settlement for next year. The 4 Boards' representative on the Committee is Cllr Lance Pennell, Upper Witham member [supported by the Chief Executive]. The staff side and employer's side reached agreement as follows:

"To use the ONS Earnings 01 Average Weekly Earnings Indicator of Total Pay in Great Britain, using the provisional figure, as published in September, for the public sector, 12-month average [August of the previous year to July of the current year] of the single month changes [KAC8], % change year-on-year. This to be for a 2-year deal, with it continuing beyond, unless either party gives 12 months' notice to re-enter negotiations. In addition, for 2023/24 an unconsolidated payment of £1,500 will be paid in addition to the salary over 12 months".

Applying the formula as set out, it corresponded to a 2.1% uplift across all pay scales in the ADA Lincolnshire White Book of Terms & Conditions from 01st April 2023 plus a further sum of £1,500 as an unconsolidated sum. The reasons for the £1,500 were to recognise the historical nature of the indicator and that CPI inflation is running closer to 10% now, but that similarly neither party knows what KAC8 will be in September 2023 for the previous 12 months and secondly to give a cash sum element to the pay award so that it targets a proportionately larger uplift to those on lower pay scales. The impact, for example, of the 2.1% recurrent salary uplift plus the £1,500 unconsolidated cash uplift for an Operative on Spine Point 15 is that basic pay rises from £25,824 in this year 2022/23 to £27,866 in 2023/24 [a 7.91% uplift, albeit 2.1% is consolidated].

Employers agreed to take this pay settlement to the ADA Lincolnshire Branch for endorsement, and the Branch adopted the recommended pay settlement at its meeting on 20.10.22.

Staff side agreed to take the pay settlement to a UNISON ballot of members, which they did without recommendation of acceptance or refusal. The ballot results were communicated on 11.11.22, as a refusal of the proposed settlement [83% of those who voted having voted against]. A meeting of the employer's side to the Pay Committee has been convened for 05.12.22.

As adoption or not of the ADA Branch pay settlement is a matter reserved to individual Boards, each is usually asked to adopt the pay settlement. Given the staff side rejection of claim and further meetings planned, on this occasion it was recommended that the pay settlement adopted by the ADA Lincolnshire Branch is NOTED and that it is adopted in principle by each Board with the caveat that the element which is unconsolidated may need further negotiation. This approach was AGREED by the Board.

2594.5 Potential Expansion of the Witham & Humber Drainage Boards' Agreement.

The 4 Witham & Humber Drainage Boards work in partnership under a joint services legal agreement, which uses Section 11 of the Flood & Water Management Act [2010] to facilitate provision of services for and on behalf of another flood risk management authority in a legally binding, but voluntary partnership.

The partnership was originally of two IDBs, then three and from 01st April 2017 it was expanded to include North East Lindsey joining the joint arrangement. It currently works well as a partnership, providing a local service for each Board.

With the support of the Chairmen, the Chief Executive outlined the work being undertaken with her colleague Chief Executive, following an approach from a neighbouring IDB to consider whether it is feasible to expand the partnership to include a fifth IDB.

It is purely an option at this stage, and the advantages and disadvantages need to be worked through for all 5 Boards concerned. Neither our 4 Boards nor the neighbouring IDB need to take this step, but we are all conscious of the difficult economic climate in which we are operating, the recruitment and retention issues we will all face in future and the need to ensure not just now but in 5 years' time that our IDBs are resilient. Therefore, we need to consider the proposition carefully.

Members NOTED the approach from a neighbouring IDB, and the work being undertaken to explore the option to expand the existing joint services partnership.

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

2595 Schedule of Expenditure, 01.09.22 to 31.10.22.

The Schedule of Expenditure for the two months' period from 01st September to 31st October 2022 had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Finance & Governance.

Gross expenditure totalled £249,497.79 or, net of reclaimable £27,205.28 VAT, **£222,292.51**. Of this, £4,244.39 was recharged to other bodies. It was emphasized that this is the invoices paid in the two months period, and some invoices relating to the period may not be included [e.g., electricity costs at pumping stations are invoiced a month in arrears].

Items highlighted to or raised by members included:

- Items 29 to 31: £1,877.34, £1,976.46 and £1,519.73 (net) to Go Plant Fleet Services for Lease costs. Ed Applewhite queried why the lease costs were different for each vehicle. **Post meeting confirmation: this is due to different vehicle models and contracted mileages.*
- Item 34: £1,308.22 (net) to Jeremy Benn Associates LTD for Billingham & Timberland Catchment Study, interim invoice no.6 funded by FDGiA.
- Item 61: £22,450.00 (net) to Perry's Pumps Ltd for Nocton PS to remove, repair and refit pump no1.
- Item 63: £2,000.00 (net) to PKF Littlejohn LLP for External Audit Fees on the AGAR return for year ending 31st March 2022.

Members received and NOTED the expenditure incurred between 01.09.22 and 31.10.22.

2596 Financial Performance Report 2022/23 to Month 7, 31st October 2022.

The Director of Finance & Governance presented the Financial Performance Report to 31st October 2022, month 7 of 2022/23. A summary table of the overall income and expenditure position was presented, as follows:

	2022/23 Budget	Profiled Budget	Actual	Variance
	£	£	£	£
Income	(1,126,247)	(1,069,765)	(1,201,097)	(131,332)
Board & General Admin	16,870	11,552	8,858	(2,694)
One Off Schemes	35,000	4,200	21,347	17,147
Conservation	1,750	483	273	(210)
Depot	17,350	15,165	19,055	3,890
Drains	403,842	358,224	329,184	(29,040)
Pumping Stations	201,730	99,006	113,187	14,181
Joint Admin/Witham House	109,408	57,107	61,903	4,796
Consents & Enforcement	10,753	0	0	0
Director of Operations/Engineers	77,484	48,052	41,431	(6,621)
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	40,000	0	104,278	104,278
PWLB	27,370	13,047	12,920	(127)
Rechargeable Works	100,000	53,971	69,903	15,932
EA Precept	84,690	42,345	41,516	(830)
FRS17 Pension Adjustment (net)				0
Wages & Plant Holding Account	0	(98,978)	(97,348)	1,630
(Surplus)/Deficit	0	(465,591)	(474,590)	(8,999)

The Board was showing a modest positive position against budget of (£8,999).

On drainage rates income, of [£568,250.30] due to the Board in 2022/23 the collection rate was 96.8% as at 31.10.22 compared to 96.1% at the same point in the previous year. After adjustments, [£17,957.57] outstanding income remains due to the Board. First reminders were dispatched on 15th August 2022 and final reminders were posted in October 2022. A court date for any unpaid bills was set for 16th January 2023 in Boston.

Special Levy payments from NKDC and City of Lincoln Council had been received in full totalling ((£427k) for the second tranche of 2022/23.

Highland Water claims have been submitted to and paid by the Environment Agency for the balance owed to the Board on the 2021/22 actual claim with a further balance of (£7,944) and for the 2022/23 Estimated claim of (£26,700). The EA has paid 80% of the estimated claim for 2022/23 (£21,360) along with the balance on the 2021/22 actual claim (£7,944), making a total income receipt to the Board of (£29,304).

The refurbishment works at Metheringham Pumping Station continue totalling £168,000 with FDGIA grant awarded of £163,000. The remaining funding of £5k will be resourced by the Board, as previously approved. The (£163,000) had been received in previous financial years to undertake these works. Most of the spend has now been incurred, with the replacement steps and 2 flap valves being the final elements of works to be completed.

The catchment study of Billingham & Timberland continues, and results will be outlined to the Board in due course when the work is complete.

The Telemetry scheme has also been agreed by the EA and the grant aid funding for Witham First DIDB of up to £149,750 is awaited. Site visits have been completed and hopefully the roll out will be completed in this financial year [a total of 39 pumping station sites will have telemetry upgrades across W1st, W3rd and UW IDBs].

Electricity will be a significant cost pressure in this financial year. This Board has a budget of £69k in 2022/23 for the Pumping Station electricity and to date £29k has been spent. This is only for the first 6 months up to the end of September and equates to nearly 42% of the annual budget for 2022/23. A detailed discussion followed on the position on electricity.

ESPO have notified the Board that a price increase takes effect from 01st October 2022 (the last increase was 01st October 2021). There is a substantial increase for all 4 Boards, especially in Standing/Daily Charges (payable whether the pumps are used or not) as well as in day and night unit rates. However, these day and night unit rates @30p/KWH are far less than if we were procuring electricity on the open market now @65p to 70p/KWH. Whilst the increase in day and night rates are not to the level of the significant increases in the current market rates, due to the way that ESPO 'buy ahead' blocks of units of electricity, there may be a lag in when the increase comes through, i.e., there could be a further increase of unknown magnitude from 01st October 2023. This will depend upon the unit rates at the time the blocks of electricity purchases are made. This therefore means we are budget setting for 2023/24 from 01.04.23 with known increased electricity prices for only a half-year to 30.09.23, and we are having to make assumptions for the remainder of the year.

A significant increase from October 2022 is in the standing charges. These have increased due to the national 'OFGEM Targeted Charging Review'. The Targeted Charging Review was initiated by OFGEM to investigate how network charging (DUoS (Distribution) and TNUoS (Transmission) costs) could be made fairer across all consumer groups. The concern was that the costs of maintaining the grid have been steadily increasing over recent years, yet they were passed on to a reducing number of users.

The reason for this is the nature of energy generation and consumption has changed radically in recent times. Energy efficiency measures, embedded generation and load shifting have all meant that a growing number of consumers can minimise or even avoid any reliance on the grid, and therefore their exposure to the current charging regimes of DUoS

and TNUoS.

These costs are split into two parts. Firstly residual, which is the cost of maintaining the electricity network. The second, forward looking, covers the cost of expanding the network. This change only effects the residual charge, which is 90% of the cost of TNUoS and 50% of DUoS.

Currently, the residual charge is built into the day & night unit rates. From April 2022, network operators are charging suppliers like ESPO and our provider Total Gas & Power (TG&P) a fixed amount for every business customer's site. Essentially, it means similar sites will pay the same towards maintaining the network. Previously, these costs were recovered over 4 months November to February each year, but now they will be recovered each month. This has led to a 'transitional amount' to cover, not only the previous full year costs which are charged over the winter months (November to February) in full, but also the first 6 months of the new monthly charge regime from April 2022 to September 2023 (so in effect 18-month charges to be recovered in 12 months).

The objective of the OFGEM TCR was supposedly to reinstate fairness for everyone involved, while making sure network operators recover the revenue they need to maintain the transmission and distribution systems.

OFGEM believes the most effective way to make sure everyone contributes fairly is through a fixed per/day charge (standing charge). In 'normal' times the day/night unit rates will have correspondingly reduced, due to these charges coming out of the unit rates and into the standing charges. Unfortunately, we are not seeing the increase in standing charges matched by a corresponding reduction in unit rates due to the significant increases in day and night unit rates for other reasons. The level of charge paid is determined by the TCR Band to which each site is allocated, an allocation that is carried out by the distribution networks. ESPO's flexible energy contract meant that customers started to see the changes from October 2021, with the beginning of the new scheme starting in April 22 onwards. The full year effect of the charges will be seen in the pricing in October 2022, before the transitional element begins to subside in October 2023.

These new standing charges have put a significant increase on the 4 Boards' cost of electricity based on a 'normal usage' year. In effect, the standing charges in W1st are consuming now almost 80% of the annual electricity budget, before a pump is switched on. This, coupled with higher unit rates and additional usage if a heavy rainfall event occurs, will put a very significant pressure on the budget:

Standing Charges						
	01/10/2022	01/10/2021	01/10/2020	01/10/2019	Budget 2022/23	% of Budget
NEL	£ 10,670	£ 4,679	£ 1,521	£ 1,223	£ 15,000	71.1%
UW	£ 28,820	£ 12,505	£ 4,427	£ 3,877	£ 48,000	60.0%
W1	£ 54,623	£ 20,362	£ 5,174	£ 5,219	£ 69,000	79.2%
W3	£ 33,803	£ 14,099	£ 4,459	£ 3,595	£ 69,000	49.0%
Total	£ 127,917	£ 51,645	£ 15,580	£ 13,914	£ 201,000	63.6%

The Government has announced a support scheme for energy costs incurred by business, including the Public Sector, to help with meeting these additional costs over the winter months. The scheme, as currently announced, will only cover October 2022 until March

2023. No announcement has yet been made of any further support after March 2023. This support is based upon a maximum unit rate of £211 per megawatt hour (or 21.1 pence per kilowatt hour). We have no confirmation from ESPO/TG&P of how this will benefit the Boards, as the detail of implementing the scheme is still being worked through.

However, in order to provide Members with the potential financial impact of these increases, the following table was provided to set out the indicative costs for the Board based on different usage levels for a wet year, an average year and a dry year [based upon historical usage levels]. Any flood event will significantly add to the costs of electricity for the Board:

W1	Usage KWH	Total @10p/kwh	Total @20p/kwh	Total @30p/kwh	Total @40p/kwh	Total @50p/kwh	Total @60p/kwh	Total @70p/kwh	Budget 2022/23
Dry	500,000	124,047	174,047	224,047	274,047	324,047	374,047	424,047	£ 69,000
Average	800,000	154,047	234,047	314,047	394,047	474,047	554,047	634,047	£ 69,000
Wet	1,500,000	224,047	374,047	524,047	674,047	824,047	974,047	1,124,047	£ 69,000
Increase									
Dry		£ 55,047	£ 105,047	£ 155,047	£ 205,047	£ 255,047	£ 305,047	£ 355,047	
Average		£ 85,047	£ 165,047	£ 245,047	£ 325,047	£ 405,047	£ 485,047	£ 565,047	
Wet		£ 155,047	£ 305,047	£ 455,047	£ 605,047	£ 755,047	£ 905,047	£ 1,055,047	
Penny Rate Increase									
Dry		5.98%	11.40%	16.83%	22.26%	27.69%	33.12%	38.55%	
Average		9.23%	17.92%	26.60%	35.29%	43.97%	52.66%	61.34%	
Wet		16.83%	33.12%	49.40%	65.69%	81.97%	98.26%	114.54%	

The October 2022 rates are @30p per unit so will have the impact as set out in the table for each scenario, based upon this rate for a full calendar year 01st October 2022 to 30th September 2023 including standing and KVA charges. From October 2023, there is likely to be a further price increase of @35% which would then mean the 40p/kwh column would apply (indicatively). Historically, @80% of usage is October to March (so the second half of the financial year) and therefore we are budgeting for 2023/24 to account for this increase and based on an average year.

For information, the tables for the other 3 Boards within the Witham & Humber group were highlighted as follows, to demonstrate what a significant impact this is for the 4 Boards:

UW	Usage KWH	Total @10p/kwh	Total @20p/kwh	Total @30p/kwh	Total @40p/kwh	Total @50p/kwh	Total @60p/kwh	Total @70p/kwh	Budget 2022/23
Dry	275,000	65,226	92,726	120,226	147,726	175,226	202,726	230,226	£ 48,000
Average	400,000	77,726	117,726	157,726	197,726	237,726	277,726	317,726	£ 48,000
Wet	500,000	87,726	137,726	187,726	237,726	287,726	337,726	387,726	£ 48,000
Increase									
Dry		£ 17,226	£ 44,726	£ 72,226	£ 99,726	£ 127,226	£ 154,726	£ 182,226	
Average		£ 29,726	£ 69,726	£ 109,726	£ 149,726	£ 189,726	£ 229,726	£ 269,726	
Wet		£ 39,726	£ 89,726	£ 139,726	£ 189,726	£ 239,726	£ 289,726	£ 339,726	
Penny Rate Increase									
Dry		1.49%	3.88%	6.27%	8.65%	11.04%	13.42%	15.81%	
Average		2.58%	6.05%	9.52%	12.99%	16.46%	19.93%	23.40%	
Wet		3.45%	7.78%	12.12%	16.46%	20.80%	25.13%	29.47%	

W3	Usage KWH	Total @10p/kwh	Total @20p/kwh	Total @30p/kwh	Total @40p/kwh	Total @50p/kwh	Total @60p/kwh	Total @70p/kwh	Budget 2022/23
Dry	300,000	75,975	105,975	135,975	165,975	195,975	225,975	255,975	£ 69,000
Average	450,000	90,975	135,975	180,975	225,975	270,975	315,975	360,975	£ 69,000
Wet	750,000	120,975	195,975	270,975	345,975	420,975	495,975	570,975	£ 69,000
Increase									
Dry		£ 6,975	£ 36,975	£ 66,975	£ 96,975	£ 126,975	£ 156,975	£ 186,975	
Average		£ 21,975	£ 66,975	£ 111,975	£ 156,975	£ 201,975	£ 246,975	£ 291,975	
Wet		£ 51,975	£ 126,975	£ 201,975	£ 276,975	£ 351,975	£ 426,975	£ 501,975	
Penny Rate Increase									
Dry		0.67%	3.55%	6.44%	9.32%	12.20%	15.09%	17.97%	
Average		2.11%	6.44%	10.76%	15.09%	19.41%	23.74%	28.06%	
Wet		5.00%	12.20%	19.41%	26.62%	33.83%	41.04%	48.24%	

NEL	Usage KWH	Total @10p/kwh	Total @20p/kwh	Total @30p/kwh	Total @40p/kwh	Total @50p/kwh	Total @60p/kwh	Total @70p/kwh	Budget 2022/23
Dry	150,000	26,747	41,747	56,747	71,747	86,747	101,747	116,747	£ 15,000
Average	200,000	31,747	51,747	71,747	91,747	111,747	131,747	151,747	£ 15,000
Wet	300,000	41,747	71,747	101,747	131,747	161,747	191,747	221,747	£ 15,000
Increase									
Dry		£ 11,747	£ 26,747	£ 41,747	£ 56,747	£ 71,747	£ 86,747	£ 101,747	
Average		£ 16,747	£ 36,747	£ 56,747	£ 76,747	£ 96,747	£ 116,747	£ 136,747	
Wet		£ 26,747	£ 56,747	£ 86,747	£ 116,747	£ 146,747	£ 176,747	£ 206,747	
Penny Rate Increase									
Dry		1.90%	4.34%	6.77%	9.20%	11.63%	14.07%	16.50%	
Average		2.72%	5.96%	9.20%	12.44%	15.69%	18.93%	22.17%	
Wet		4.34%	9.20%	14.07%	18.93%	23.80%	28.66%	33.52%	

This was acknowledged as a very significant issue for the Boards and their future financial standing. Hopefully, the Government support scheme will assist the Boards for the second half of this financial year 2022/23, but currently the support only lasts until 31st March 2023. Nationally, ADA is aware of the pressures on IDBs, and the Chief Executive will be attending an ADA convened meeting with Defra officials and the EA in Doncaster on Wednesday, 30th November 2022 to set out the position and to ask for some financial flexibility over the next 2 years or so of potential instability in energy markets. Some IDB members were briefing local MPs on the situation.

The inflationary pressures that the country is currently experiencing is affecting many of the Board's costs too. Electricity, fuel, plant and vehicle maintenance, insurance, mobile phones and other costs are all escalating. Where possible, these are locked into contracts so not all the impact is being felt currently, but it will feed through into future costs putting undue pressure on the latter half of this financial year's budgets and next year's budgets. Additionally, the availability of materials, spare parts and suitable companies to carry out works is causing additional downtime and delays for the Boards.

The Bank Balances as at 31.10.22 were set out as follows:

Natwest	£ 432,347.84
Nationwide Instant Access	£ 735,093.40
Nationwide 90 Day Notice	£ -
Total	£ 1,167,441.24

The Board's Public Works Loan Board loan [taken out to pay LCC for the transfer of Bridges and culverts liability from the Board to LCC] was being repaid, with £122,233.88 now outstanding on the original loan of £354,480, and to be repaid over the next 5 years:

2.41% £ 122,233.88

*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.*

Members NOTED the 2022/23 financial performance for the 7 months to 31st October 2022, the impact of price increases in electricity and the pressure this will put on budgets for the remained of 2022/23, and the challenge electricity costs present in setting financially balanced budgets for 2023/24 without a significant increase in the Penny Rate [which consequently impacts upon Drainage Rates and Special Levies for 2023/24].

2597 Health and Safety Update.

A Health and Safety update had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Engineering & Technical Services, in the absence of the Director of Operations [who has Covid].

With the end of summer maintenance in sight, we continue to review work practises as we move into winter maintenance, to keep staff safe and at work wherever possible. There have been more Covid 19 (C19) cases within teams this year than through the lockdowns. Positive cases are assessed individually, and if possible, we give Operatives and other staff the opportunity to work with a positive test result providing a) they feel well and b) can work with no interaction with others. Failing to meet those criteria would mean staying at home until 2 negative LFT test results (on separate, consecutive days). Our support staff can work from home if they feel well enough.

Witham House office is open to the public, contractors, and visitors by prior arrangement. In line with the Government's 'living with Covid' guidance, face masks are not mandatory, however are provided for those who wish to wear one. Testing is no longer a requirement, but WHDB continue to provide LFTs to staff to help reduce the likelihood of C19 transmission within our workplaces.

We remain conscious of the changing picture of C19, both morally for the wellbeing of our staff and for organisational resilience to continue to deliver the works required. C19 arrangements continue to be reviewed weekly at Management Team Meetings, and any change to national guidance and our local practices are kept under review.

H & S Visits (by Cope Health and Safety Consultancy)

The 4 Boards' Annual H&S Policy Review has been completed. In attendance were Simon Cross (Cope), Jane Froggatt, Ian Coupland and Leila Quirk (WHDB). During the visit the H&S policy, policy statements and booklets are all reviewed.

Accidents.

There have been 2 reported accidents, resulting in minor injury. Root cause - assets not robust, e.g., damaged gates. Internal investigations completed, onward reports to the EA who have added to their H&S lists. The assets do not belong to WHDB or EA, so the landowners would need to make the necessary arrangements for required improvements.

Near Miss Reports.

There have been 3 near misses reported. These involve tractors slipping or edging the banks (fully or in part). All near misses have been or are being investigated.

Pyewipe pumping station – The Board's Contractor was hand digging and struck/ exposed a cable. The area was assessed/scanned by the Contractor prior to commencing works but the cabling had not shown up. No damage to the cable. Cables have been now rerouted.

Positive points:

- In 2021 there were 8 incidents reported. So far in 2022 there have been 15.
- This figure shows there are more Near Misses being reported, and these are investigated for the purposes of trend analysis and any ensuring lessons are learned.

Training.

6 x Operatives undertook masted forklift training, 2 x Chainsaw with felling, 4 x operation of armed flails, 5 x spraying near water, 5 x safe use of Robo-mower, 6 x Abrasive wheels, 3 x basic welding, 4 x Cat H licence and Overhead cable avoidance training was undertaken by most Operatives, with the remainder of Operatives and North East Lindsey's contractor booked early in the new year.

Manual handling, fire awareness, and working at height refreshers are booked for later this year for all staff members [early December].

Updates.

As reported previously, Witham First access bridge to Ringmoor Pumping Station is still being investigated (ascertaining ownership via the Environment Agency). EA colleagues have stated that this bridge is a riparian responsibility and we have asked repeatedly for the EA's legal department to confirm this to the Board's officers.

Policies and Procedures

Procedures:

- Display Screen Equipment – to include agile working, review of DSE home/office.
- Fire – review of fire policy.
- Young Persons – including RA for young people on work experience.

Emergency Planning:

- FloodEx (National exercise). W&HDB were involved in the Lincolnshire & Humberside LRF exercises 14th-18th November 2022.
- Emergency Plan (EP-001) in draft,
- Emergency Procedures Manual (EP-002), in draft with annexes for additional information e.g., loss of utilities, pandemic, fuel, COMAH etc.
- Emergency Flood plan (EP-003) is being reviewed – any lessons learned during National FloodEx, following the debrief, will be incorporated

Corporate Risk:

- The Corporate Risk Register will be reviewed for January 2023.

Risk Assessments / SSOW:

- Board Annual Inspection 20.09.22
- Review RAF4 001 Clearing Dykes
- Review RAF4 005 Use of wheeled and tracked vehicles
- Review RAF4 002 & SSOW lone working
- Review RAF4 General workshop & SSOW Welding and allied processes
- Fire Risk Assessments (and packs) for all Boards

Proactive workstreams:

- Risk matters – 2 sent out to cover pertinent H&S matters (July / November).
- Ongoing visits to Depots/sites to work with our Teams and provide the opportunity to raise any queries as they may arise.

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

2598 Environment Update.

A report prepared by the GIS and Environment Officer had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Engineering & Technical 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. An IDB has a legal duty to protect and enhance the environment, set out in a wide range of legislation.

There were no recommendations to the Board on this occasion.

Members NOTED the Environment Report.

2599 Operations Report.

The Operations report had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Engineering & Technical Services in the absence of the Director of Operations.

We expect to finish summer maintenance no later than mid-January and will move straight into the winter works programme. We have programmed in Robert's Drain in Walcott Fen, Mill Drain in Martin Fen, Engine Drain No1 Nocton, and Elkington's Drain. We may be able to accommodate a little more winter works but are conscious we may be an Operative down again this winter, as one Operative has continuing ill-health and has elective treatment starting potentially before Christmas.

The order has been placed for the new wheeled excavator that the Board approved as part of its plant replacement programme. We sent invitations to tender to six companies and had four returned. We had prices ranging from £187,000 to £233,000. The order has been placed with distributor TDL for a straight replacement Atlas 140W wheeled excavator at a price of £187,000 [net]. This is £7k over the budget estimate of £180k in the plant programme. The existing trade-in machine will be offered for sale at the point we take delivery of the new excavator, as companies were declining to offer quotes now on a machine to be traded-in potentially in June 2023, given the volatility of plant prices.

At Nocton Pumping Station all pumps have now been overhauled and are back in situ and working.

Roger Maidens has decided at the age of 72 it is the right time for him to retire and enjoy some family time. Roger has been an Operative with the Board since 05.05.2003 and retires on the 07th December 2022. This post will be filled by Shaun (Billy) Reddish, who is already employed by the Board as an Operative, but who has been working in effect as a floating

Operative and recharged to other Boards accordingly in order to complete their works, including PSCA works.

Ed Applewhite queried the timing of maintenance at Silkhomes & Longstone's. It is the last watercourse to be cut every year, and he doubted that the work would be completed by mid-January. It is one of the wettest areas. He also argued that summer works are never completed before Christmas. He asked if it would be possible for him to get a contractor in to complete the works. It was confirmed that yes, he was certainly at liberty to use contractors for additional maintenance works as the landowner, but that cost could not be deducted from Drainage Rates payable by all owners/occupiers of land in the drainage district.

Members received and NOTED the Operations Report and update.

2600 Engineering Report.

A report had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Engineering & Technical Services.

'FloodEx2022' was a significant National, Regional and local simulation exercise from 14th to 18th November, involving all the LRFs along the Trent Catchment as well as all the East Coast LRFs, covering both Tidal and Fluvial Flooding.

The exercise tested the interaction between LRFs including the Humber which is also looking at a scenario like the east coast tidal event in 2013. For our 4 Drainage Boards the relevant LRFs are the Humber LRF, the Lincolnshire LRF and Nottinghamshire LRF.

It gave an opportunity to consider how we engage with the LRF(s) and the exercise to maximise protection of the drainage districts, reduce the impact of flooding and potentially to lobby to have access to national resources for future flood events.

Whilst funding for 'in event' [response phase] additional costs incurred is potentially available through the Bellwin Formula, this is only providing certain trigger criteria for the relevant District Council are met [and IDB costs may not trigger such]. There is no funding mechanism available post-emergency response phase for the 'recovery phase'. So, for example, there is no additional money to clear away the sand and debris washed in by the sea, clear and reinstate the drainage channels or repair pumping stations or embankments. It is an opportunity to raise this issue in the National Forum.

The Recovery Phase of the Flood event was also included in the exercise. The 4 Boards' Officers were involved and took the opportunity to highlight the complete lack of post-event funding available and the difficulties any Drainage Board is likely to face.

A debrief will follow for Lincolnshire LRF on the 09th December 2022.

An opportunity arose following successful FDGiA grant funding schemes for other Boards within Lincolnshire to upgrade Telemetry systems. Georgina Nichols, Capital Programme Manager for our 4 IDBs and 3 other Lincolnshire Boards, has successfully gained Flood Defence Grant in Aid for the three Boards to the value of £98,353 for Upper Witham IDB, £125,625 for Witham 1st DIDB and £93,750 for Witham 3rd DIDB.

The system being implemented is from Xylem, a multinational company including the division that was formally known as Flygt. The system is the web based 'VTScada' installed successfully in NELDB pumping stations and several other stations across the Witham Boards.

The previous generation server based 'AquaView' system is currently used for existing Upper Witham stations with telemetry. Two Witham 3rd stations and one Witham 1st station will require upgrades for the equipment on site to enable communication to the web-based system. All other stations across the Boards will require new equipment picking up existing telemetry ready provision where available and new connections as required.

Following the formal confirmation being received from the EA, initial site visits have taken place with Xylem to finalise the units and equipment required at the stations. Some information has been received but it is insufficient to report further. There is no further update since earlier in the year, we are waiting on Xylem.

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

This station has attracted FDGiA 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 were used to replace or refurbish the elements of the site as listed:

- i. Replace existing MCC (pump control panel)
- ii. Replace outfall flap valves.
- iii. Refurbish automated weed screen cleaner.
- iv. Health & Safety improvements including fencing, site lighting and steps.

The new steps have been installed and the new outfall flaps will be delivered and installed soon. This will then complete the scheme.

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

The second phase of work on the study of this catchment has begun following completion of the first phase in 2019. The hydraulic model has been updated and run to model a variety of scenarios and the resulting effects of a range of rainfall events. These events include a 'do nothing' option with no pumping at all.

The draft condition survey reports have been received and comments have been submitted by officers for clarification. The most significant issue raised is the condition of the brick retaining wall at Timberland Pumping station. Its condition has been assessed as 'poor'. At Billinghay, an issue with the electrical elements of the control panel were noted as most pressing.

Officers will be meeting with the consultants to discuss the outcome of the second phase of modelling and the next steps for the project work in December.

The River Slea Flood Resilience Project (FD-6209-2022-GEN)

The EA have started a potential project to manage flood risk on the River Slea between Sleaford and Haverholme.

Further information is available on this webpage on Citizen Space:

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/lincolnshire-and-northamptonshire/river-slea-flood-resilience-project/>

Lower River Witham Resilience Review & Billingham Catchment System Review (FD-5336-2020-PRO)

Work to complete the hydraulic modelling of the lower Witham system continues and is due for completion in March / April 2023. In the meantime, officers of the Board are meeting with the EA, and their consultants, to discuss maximising benefits that may be available to claim as part of any future FDGiA bids. Officers are to meet with the EA on 24th November 2022.

Whilst this review is designed to address the long-term future of the system, its current condition and short-term work programme is of more concern. The reasons for this concern will become evident should the system be exposed to similar rainfall and catchment conditions as those experienced in Autumn 2019 and early 2020.

The Board's officers continue to raise issues of concern relating to the system's condition and ability to convey water with the EA and its consultants.

The EA have a web page for the Lower Witham Flood Resilience Project:
<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/lincolnshire-and-northamptonshire/lower-witham-flood-resilience-project/>

The first newsletter was published in July 2022.

Members received and NOTED the Engineering report and update.

2601 Planning and Consultations Report.

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

There were no issues to highlight to members.

Members received and NOTED the Planning and Consultations report.

2602 Consents and Enforcements.

A report had been circulated with the agenda; there was nothing to highlight to members on this occasion.

Members received and noted the report on Consents and Enforcements.

2603 Any Other Business.

Steve Cobb queried the attendance record of the Chairman and Vice Chairman at meetings. He stated in addition that he had never received a request to attend as Deputy for the JSC, despite the nonattendance of the Chairman or Vice Chairman at meetings.

It was confirmed that if no-one is asked/available to deputise at a JSC meeting it would usually be because apologies were received at short notice. However, in future Officers would remind all JSC members [by stating on the agenda] to give notice of intended absence as early as possible, and an email with the agenda and papers would be sent to all members,

including deputies. This would ensure they had sight of any papers in case they were asked to attend.

There were no further items of business and the meeting closed at 16:20.

2604 Date, Time and Place of the Board's Next Meeting.

The Board's next meeting was confirmed for Tuesday, 24th January 2023 at 2pm in Branston Booths Village Hall.

.....  Chairman  Date
W1st BM 22.11.22.