

WITHAM THIRD DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Minutes of the one hundred and twenty fourth meeting of Witham Third District Internal Drainage Board, incorporating the Annual Public Meeting, held on Wednesday, 22nd November 2023 in Minting Village Hall at 09.30am.

Present:

Mr J Armstrong
Cllr T Ashton
Mr S Avison
Cllr J Barrett
Mr I Clark
Cllr I Fleetwood
Cllr M Foster
Mr R Hairsine
Mr M Harrison
Cllr G Hewson
Mr M Hoyes
Cllr R Longbottom
Cllr Mrs F M Martin MBE
Cllr P Morris
Cllr D Nannestad
Mr I Parker **Chairman**
Miss A Sayer
Mr M I Thomas **Vice Chairman**
Cllr P J Vaughan
Mr R Weightman
Mr T Williams

In attendance:

Mr. Ian Coupland	Director of Operations.
Ms. Jayne Flower	Executive Assistant.
Mrs. Jane Froggatt	Chief Executive.
Mr. Steve Larter	Director of Finance and Governance.
Mr. Martin Shilling	Director of Engineering & Technical Services.
Mr Henry Moreton	Observer
Mr Craig Dickson	Observer
Mrs Marcelle Coker	Observer
Mrs Victoria Burton	Observer

3070 Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr B Bushell, Mr J Davie, Cllr W Gray, Ms J Holland, Cllr N Jones, Cllr T Kemp and Mr D Sempers.

3071 Declarations of Interest.

Declarations of interest were received from members nominated by City of Lincoln, West Lindsey District and East Lindsey District Councils in matters relating to their respective Councils.

3072 Election of Chairman.

Mr Ian Parker was nominated and seconded and, there being no further nominations, duly elected as Chairman for the forthcoming year.

3073 Chairman's Announcements.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the November Annual Public Meeting and thanked Members for electing him once again as Chairman.

He advised Members that there was much to get through today and the agenda had been revised to accommodate discussion on Storm Babet whilst undertaking the necessary Governance for election of Chairman, Vice Chairman and members to the Standing Committee.

The Chairman thanked outgoing members for their contributions and introduced new members nominated by the 3 Special Levy paying councils, as follows:

- Cllr Jackie Kirk of City of Lincoln Council is replaced by CLLR REBECCA LONGBOTTOM, who attended the May Board meeting.
- Cllr Caralyn Grimble of WLDC is replaced by CLLR J BARRETT.
- Stan Avison remains a member, but as a LAY MEMBER nominated by ELDC, as he is no longer an East Lindsey District Councillor.
- Cllr Will Grover of ELDC is replaced by CLLR MARTIN FOSTER.
- Cllr Neil Jones is nominated by ELDC. Neil joined the 4 Boards' Annual Inspection in July.

The Chairman welcomed 4 Observers to the meeting.

Mrs Victoria Burton and her daughter Mrs Marcelle Coker attended with a view to understanding the role the Board played during the Storm Babet flood event. As residents they suffered the impacts of this heavy rainfall event of 20th October. The Chairman invited Mrs Burton and Ms Coker to speak to members, and they set out their experience of internal flooding to residential property, which had been referred to LCC as the Lead Local Flood Authority and would be subject to a Section 19 flood investigation.

Mr Henry Moreton and Mr Craig Dickson expressed an interest in joining the Board, to potentially fill two of the current three vacancies for Bardney, Langworth and Kirkstead.

Finally, the Chairman reminded Members who had not already done so to please confirm with Jayne Flower their attendance at the Members' Training Day on Tuesday, 05th December 2023, to be held at Whisby.

3074 Election of Vice Chairman.

Mr Max Thomas was nominated, seconded and, there being no further nomination, duly re-elected as Vice Chairman for the ensuing year.

3075 Election of Members to the Standing Committee.

All current 7 Members were re-elected en-bloc to the Standing Committee, namely the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Cllr Tom Ashton, Mr Ian Clark, Cllr Ian Fleetwood, Mr Roy Hairsine and Mr Terry Williams.

3076 Election of Members to the Joint Services Committee.

All current members were re-elected en-bloc to the Joint Services Committee, namely the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Mr Ian Clark and Cllr Ian Fleetwood. The deputies being Mr Terry Williams and Mr Ray Weightman.

3077 Calendar of Board and Standing Committee Meeting Dates 2024.

The following meeting dates were approved by Members:

Witham Third District Board Meetings (Minting Village Hall, at 09.30am):

- Tuesday, 30th January.
- Tuesday, 21st May.
- Tuesday, 19th November (+APM).

Witham Third District Standing Committee Meetings (W3rd Depot, Woodhall Spa at 10am):

- Tuesday, 16th January.
- Tuesday, 07th May.
- Tuesday, 05th November.

Joint Services Committee Meetings (at 10am, Witham House, Meadow Lane):

- Monday, 13th May.
- Monday, 15th July.
- Monday, 09th December.

Annual Inspection 2024

- Thursday, 26th September.

3078 Register of Members' Interests.

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Members were kindly asked to update the Register of Members' Interests form and return this to Jayne Flower at the end of the meeting or via post to Witham House.

3079 Minutes of the Board meeting held on 23.05.23.

The Minutes of the Board's previous meeting held on Tuesday 23rd May 2023 had been circulated with the agenda and were proposed, seconded and APPROVED as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING:

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

3080 Minutes of the Joint Services Committee held on 17.07.23.

The minutes of the Joint Services Committee held on 17th July 2023 were noted and there were no matters arising.

3081 Minutes of the Board's Standing Committee meeting held on 07.11.23.

The Minutes of the Board's Standing Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 07th November 2023 had been circulated with the agenda and were proposed, seconded and APPROVED as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING:

There were no matters arising and Members noted the minutes and actions of the Standing Committee.

3082 Chief Executive's Report.

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

3082.1 Storm Babet 20.10.23

Storm Babet was a significant event, with 2.5 months' worth of rain falling in 24 hours. Some of the issues raised included seven known breaches in main rivers in Lincolnshire and many sites of main river banks overtopping and significant bank seepage.

Although all 4 drainage districts were affected, with localised flooding in many locations (e.g., Westborough in UW, Brant Broughton in UW, Digby in W1st, Brant Road in Lincoln [UW], Horncastle in W3rd) the Boards' systems and assets were particularly hit hard in Witham Third DIDB and Witham First DIDB districts.

A presentation of the Storm Babet event and impacts was to follow, illustrating the impact on catchments and to facilitate discussion. It was emphasised that it was going to cost hundreds of thousands of pounds and take time to repair the damage. The following list summarises the impact in Witham Third DIDB's district, although it was noted that saturated catchments and continued flooding means that new issues are still arising:

- The Board's assets being inundated because of taking this third-party water into its systems and pumping stations. High costs of electricity in pumping this water away, not only during Storm Babet but for weeks afterwards.
- One of the bank breaches on River Bain at Coningsby has inundated the Board's Coningsby Ings Pumping Station. It remains inoperable and inaccessible to assess the damage incurred and start repair work. We need to know the EA's plan and timescale for breach repair work on the River Bain. But Ian Coupland has Paktronic coming to assess the MCC damage when possible, National Grid is to assess the damage to the incoming and assessment of the motors will be needed.
- EA's Horncastle Reservoir FAS asset and what happened on 20.10.23, when it appeared not to work as planned on this 14th occasion, having operated successfully on 13 previous occasions. This is subject to an internal EA investigation.
- Stainfield Pumping Station, the Board's pumping station which was inundated in November 2019 had once again been surrounded by water. Out of action, in that the pump has failed and we have needed to turn off

the two submersible pumps. Two EA national 12" mobile pumps in-situ. But barely holding their own, water levels remain static. Confirmed 15.11.23 that as flood water levels are not receding very quickly, a third 12" EA pump will be deployed to site. Still considerable flood waters on Stainfield Fen as of 15.11.23.

- RHB bank breach on Barlings Eau- affecting Max Thomas's land. Going to have to operate the penstocks and then presumably W3rd will be asked to evacuate the water. If the breach is left open, going to have to close Engine Drain penstock. Potential future site for pointing doors. Need to know EA's plans for closing the breach and potential timescales.
- Southrey PS motor has come out and gone to Doncaster for assessment of repairs. Looks like a specialist, expensive repair. More assessment to do in the station- the domestic electricity supply there was inundated.
- Bardney Fen PS is inoperable and still not accessible to assess the damage from inundation.
- Stixwould diesel PS was out of action due to water inundation- it is now operational once more.
- Assessments of damages to do at the Board's Bardney Manor PS, Duckpool, Marsh Lane PS [likely to be civils work at Marsh Lane] and Woodhall PS [at Woodhall two submersible pumps to lift].
- Shortferry PS has both pumps running, but they are very noisy [motors/pumps or both] following weeks of running 24/7.
- Greetwell PS will need to be assessed properly, as the transformer was wet. The AWC here has been failing intermittently.
- The bank slump on the LHB of the River Witham at Fiskerton was a significant issue and led to the Lincolnshire LRF declaring a Major Incident. The Board's three pumping stations had operated 24/7 shifts of LDOs since the weekend of 20.10.23. Those being Short Ferry PS, the adjacent Fiskerton Diesel PS and at Greetwell PS to collectively evacuate 6,600 litres of water per second. This was aimed at evacuating water from the flood cell, which at one point was a risk to 81 residential properties in Fiskerton.
- Good cooperation with IDBs and EA staff operationally and LRF across agencies during Storm Babet event.
- Louth & Horncastle MP Victoria Atkins chaired a meeting in Horncastle on Friday 03.11.23 of the EA, NFU, IDBs and landowners. This arose from the impact of Storm Babet.

The Lincolnshire LRF convened 20.10.23 and the SCG, TCG and supporting Pump Cell met daily, sometimes more frequently, for a couple of weeks. No emergency was declared, but a major incident was declared in relation to the River Witham bank 2 slumps at Fiskerton [to which W3rd responded with its 3 pumping stations at Short Ferry, Fiskerton Diesels and Greetwell evacuating water].

In summary, the event has caused more damaging impacts to two of the Boards' assets than the series of rainfall events in 2019/20. The Boards are still dealing with the impact and the full recovery costs and additional pumping costs are not yet known. These costs will be collated, as known.

The 4 Witham & Humber Drainage Boards' Chairmen had collectively written to Mr Eddy Poll, Chairman of the Anglian [Northern] RFCC to advise of the severe impact, to highlight that there is no national or local funding mechanism for the IDBs to use for necessary recovery works and to meet third-party excess water

pumping electricity costs. A similar approach was being taken by other IDBs, including W4th.

Members requested that thanks to the Operatives be recorded for working 24/7 to evacuate the water, especially in Fiskerton for two and a half weeks.

There followed discussions with the Members of The Public present regarding Horncastle Flood Alleviation Scheme.

Ian Clark commented that he allowed his land to be flooded as one of the landowners party to the FAS and did ask the EA Operatives at the time if he could have access to the operation of Horncastle FAS. This request had been refused. He asked for the support of the Board to pursue this request for land owners to have access. However, it was explained that this would be an issue that landowners would need to raise individually as a private matter and was not something that the Board could support, and they were urged to think carefully before asking to take on such a liability.

Mr Terry Williams noted that the Board had a duty to residents. They should be taking independent legal advice he suggested, if it was felt once the EA's investigation was published that the EA had been negligent through acts or omissions.

Cllr Fiona Martin advised that the EA had committed to holding a public meeting, requested by Horncastle Town Council, once the EA's internal investigation report is finalised.

Cllr Ian Fleetwood asked for details from the attending Members of the Public as to the specific location of the flooding. This would be provided after the meeting under Data Protection guidance.

Cllr Tom Ashton informed Members that he was aware that LCC as the LLFA was doing its own scrutiny on Section 19 investigations, and responsibilities of all relevant agencies. It would not be a quick investigation, but it would be detailed. He further commented that it would not yet be known what the long-term solutions would be, but all evidence suggested that the River Bain could not cope. He was aware that another IDB (reference Hob Hole PS business case in W4th) had been given a dispensation to enable capital replacement not as is but with betterment and greater flood resilience.

The Observers Mrs Burton and Mrs Coker left the meeting at this point, as did Mr James Armstrong.

Mr Mike Harrison commented that there so far had been no mention of the village of Minting, where several properties had been flooded and he asked why it had been omitted. The Flood alleviation scheme behind the church was overwhelmed, it appeared to him that the culverts caused the flooding further down. The road culverts could simply not take the storm flow.

He was reassured that Minting had not deliberately been omitted, localised flooding had occurred in many locations and the outline so far to the Board was focussed on the damage to the Board's pumping station assets.

Ian Coupland advised that the culverts referred to at Minting mostly pre-date the Board. The Chief Executive acknowledged that the culvert probably would not cope given the rainfall levels of over 100mm in the 24 hours period to 9pm on 20.10.23 in the Horncastle/Woodhall Spa area. It had been suggested several years ago by the now retired Engineer, Mr Alan Gardner, that an upstream storage lagoon before the water enters the watercourses is the preferred option to resolve this specific issue. This would be a multi-agency project and beyond the Board's remit. It would however need to be assessed in the usual way for the costs/benefits in terms of the additional flood protection afforded and to how many properties.

The Board had adopted the short stretch of watercourse adjacent to Y-NOT property, and maintains the watercourse, but it receives water from a large catchment and the rainfall event overwhelmed the capacity there. Officers are aware of the issues and indeed have a site meeting with LCC Officers, and the flooding referred to will be subject to an LCC Section 19 independent flood investigation.

3082.2 Pay Award 2023/24.

On Thursday 21st September Lance Pennell and the Chief Executive attended the Lincolnshire ADA Branch's Pay & Conditions Committee meeting. Employers and staff side representatives Unison reached agreement on a proposed pay settlement for 2024/25 from 01st April 2024.

This is a consolidation of £1,130 [of the 2023/24 unconsolidated hardship sum of £1,800] as stage 1 and then, as stage 2, 6.45% applied to the new baseline. This 6.45% is in keeping with the pay formula used previously [of 12 months rolling average change in public sector Average Weekly Earnings July 2022-July 2023, as published in September 2023].

Both parties sought ratification of the proposed pay settlement proposal for 2024/25. Unison Lincolnshire IDB Branch put the proposal to their members, those employed only by the 7 relevant IDBs, and undertook respond to Employers with a yes/no result before 19.10.23. Employers put it for ratification to the ADA Lincolnshire Branch meeting on 19th October 2023.

The pay claim presented initially by Unison was for 11% [being 9% RPI related, and a 2% catch-up inflation claim]. Employers rejected the pay claim and counter-offered a deal of consolidation of £1,000 + 6.45%, this offer was rejected by Unison.

Unison then submitted a counterclaim for £1,130 + 6.45% [an impact which increases the LDO role salary on SP15 by 11.06%, increasing the salary from £26,376 in 2023/24 to £29,292 in 2024/25]. This was accepted as a fair and reasonable compromise which meets a key pay objective of narrowing pay differentials within IDBs and gives a larger proportionate pay increase to those staff on lower pay scales and less to those on higher pay scales.

Unison committed to come back before 19.10.23 and ADA Lincolnshire Branch met on 19.10.23, in time to take the proposed pay settlement to the November Board meetings.

As a reminder, the £1,800 paid as an unconsolidated hardship sum in 2023/24 is in our W&HDB baseline revenue budgets. This is therefore already in our baseline to offset the cost impact of the £1,130 consolidated sum element as is therefore part of the 6.45%. So, for employers we have a deal which is fair to staff, narrows internal IDB pay differentials in line with a key pay objective and which in our budget setting for 24/25 will hopefully be palatable to Drainage Rate payers and Special Levy Paying Councils.

On Tuesday 17th October we received notification of a clear Unison ballot result of YES for the proposed 2024/25 pay settlement from 01st April [consolidation of £1,130 of the £1,800 23/24 lump sum + 6.45%, that % being the 12-months average of the AWE for the public sector July 22 to July 23, as published 12.09.23]. The proposed settlement with staff-side endorsement went to the ADA Lincolnshire Branch where it was endorsed and adopted as the recommended pay settlement for 2024/25 on 19.10.23.

Members were asked to formally APPROVE the recommended ADA Lincolnshire Branch pay settlement for 2024/25, from 01st April 2024, as set out.

The Chief Executive placed on record her thanks to Cllr Lance Pennell, UW member, who serves on the ADA Lincolnshire Branch's Pay & Conditions Committee as the 4 Boards' representative. Lance has indicated his willingness to serve on the Committee for a further year, if asked to do so at the November APMs, but should another member be interested in taking the role from November 2024, then he and/or I would welcome expressions of interest.

Members APPROVED the pay settlement for 2024/25, from 01st April 2024.

Members received and NOTED the Chief Executive's report and update.

3083 Presentation on Storm Babet.

A detailed presentation was given by Martin Shilling, Director of Engineering & Technical Services, on the impacts of Storm Babet. This was the focus of the meeting.

The presentation provided a detailed summary of the events over the initial 7-10 days from when the storm landed on Friday 20th October 2023, noting that there had already been some significant rainfall to many areas in the days leading up to this heavy rainfall event.

Numerous alerts had been issued by the EA in the 24 hours leading up to the storm and it had been widely reported and predicted by weather and news agencies. 14 alerts which recommend "be prepared" and 17 warnings which advise the public to "Act Now" had been issued.

One months' worth of rain fell in 24 hours on 20th October. Amounts greater than 100mm were recorded upstream of Woodhall Spa and Horncastle in the 24 hours to 9pm on Friday 20.10.23.

This event gave the highest ever recorded rainfall in most EA river gauges, since their installation during the 1950's and 1960's.

Thanks were placed on record specifically to Adrian Skelton, Pumps Foreman, for his efforts during this time.

Discussion took place on planning applications, Sustainable Drainage systems (SuDs) and the anticipated results of the Section 19s.

An example of the enormous extra workload placed upon pumping stations was given:

Pumped Hours		
PS	Sep-23	Oct-23
Bardney Abbey	4	204
Barndey Moor	35	453
Kirkstead	17	446
Shortferry	49	550

Members asked to record and convey their thanks to all Operatives. A request was submitted for the presentation to be made available to the public on the Board's website.

Members noted the position and thanked Officers for the detailed summary.

Ray Weightman left the meeting.

3084 Operations Report, including the Health & Safety Update.

A report, prepared and introduced by Ian Coupland, had been circulated with the agenda.

Incidents (as of 11th November 2023):

Between the 4 Boards, there had been 7 reported Incidents, with minor injuries reported:

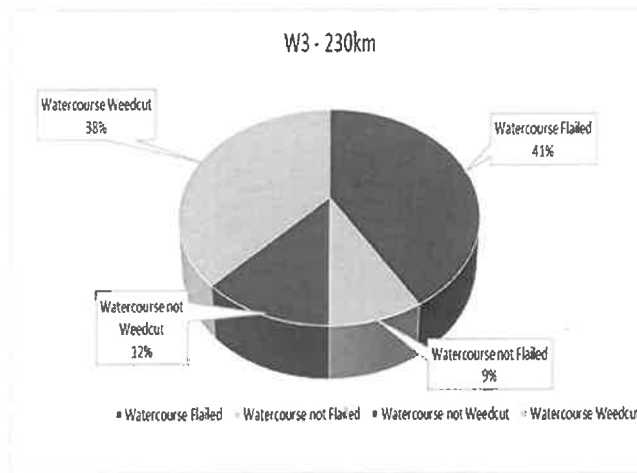
- (UW) Staff Member leaving Witham House Car Park, when vehicle on carriageway was overtaking a cycle, the Staff Member stopped – Near Miss Road Traffic Collision.
- (W1) Operative tripped up step (no defect to the step), landed awkwardly and hurt rib. Reported to RIDDOR as an over 7-day incident.
- (W3) Operative caught door track with teleporter pallet tine.
- (W3) Operative 'tripped' over capping stone when they were walking backwards.
- (W3) RTC.
- (W3) Operative trapped thumb when setting down ladder.
- (W1) Operative caught stay line of over-head power lines. Rectified with power company, no loss of power, rapid response. Internal investigation completed.

Work Programmes.

July saw the start of our annual flailing and weed cutting maintenance programme. This has proven to be a very challenging season, with the late and sporadic harvest and the weather that has worked against us, followed by Storm Babet. Across the group we have had other challenges this year, including unfilled vacancies, long-term illness absence and Operatives having to take time to care for seriously ill family members. Even with all these issues and pressures, three of the four Boards would have finished the vegetation maintenance by Christmas 2023 and the fourth Board, W1st DIDB, by late January 2024, until Storm Babet impacted and seriously disrupted everything.

Vegetation Works Position.

A chart provided a visual guide to the maintenance works that are described and gave members a feel for what has been completed and what works remain to be done. Operatives flail first and then the excavator drivers follow-on with weed cutting. The chart maps out the November position regarding vegetation maintenance, as of 31.10.23:



As part of the annual programme of de-silting, reforming and bushing notices had been sent out ready for this work to begin in the new year. Following the heavy rainfall, we have seen numerous new bank slips and issues arise. Operatives will deal with all problems as promptly as possible. It is anticipated that some planned winter works maintenance will necessarily be postponed, accommodating urgent bank slip repairs.

Plant and Machinery

The rear flail purchase the Board approved to bring forward at the last meeting has been purchased for the Aebi at a cost of **£12,480.42**. This has been up and running this season. A new lease work van has been ordered to replace one that sees its lease end in January. We have also purchased a second-hand van and a second hand 4x4 vehicle to keep up with the demand on vehicles.

A new lease 4x4 has also been ordered to replace Wayne Bourne's (Works Supervisor) vehicle, as the lease ends in early February.

A second hand 8" mobile pump has also been ordered to boost our mobile pump capacity; this last event has seen us struggle to keep up with mobile pumps required. Having to borrow from other Boards and getting as many as we can from the EA. The cost is £26,500 [+ VAT] and a further circa £2k for associated pipes.

There have been some window breakages in our plant and machinery from stones being thrown up when flailing. This is unavoidable during the maintenance season.

The Herder grenadier fitted to the 09 plate Massey Ferguson tractor sheared the king post holding the main flail arm on.

One outstanding purchase as approved in the plant budget remains; this is for a tilt rotator to fit our Volvo long reach excavator. This will allow more versatility when using flails etc on the excavator dipper.

Greetwell Pumping Station

There was no update to report to Members at this meeting, the position remains unchanged.

No update at present on the transformer slab repairs, this being on-hold pending the outcome of the EA/W3rd/developer funded Greetwell and Shortferry catchment study to advise on optimum pumping station requirements for the future, if Cherry Willingham Fen marina development progresses.

Stamp End Pumping Station

There is still a delay in the legal work to achieve the transfer of this pumping station from LCC to the Board, due to change in ownership of land adjacent to the pumping station and an easement agreement is now needed with Cadent / National Grid rather than Western Power, say respective solicitors. The Board's legal fees are being met by LCC.

Short Ferry Pumping Station

Both pumps in short ferry station have become noisy whilst pumping the excessive water lately as part of the response to Storm Babet. One was due to be lifted this year as part of our on-going regular pump lift rota, but both will need to be lifted and refurbished soon.

Bardney Fen Pumping Station

Bardney fen pump cabinet became submerged during the recent flooding from Storm Babet, it is now accessible and will be inspected and a quote obtained to replace parts.

Southrey Pumping Station

One of the motors failed in Southrey pumping station and was removed by Coulstock and Place Engineering. It is being assessed for repair and the cost estimate should be received shortly.

Stainfield Pumping Station

The pump at this location failed, this is the station that was flooded previously in November 2019/20. The pump failed due to overuse and will be investigated once arrangements are in place with a contractor to attend site.

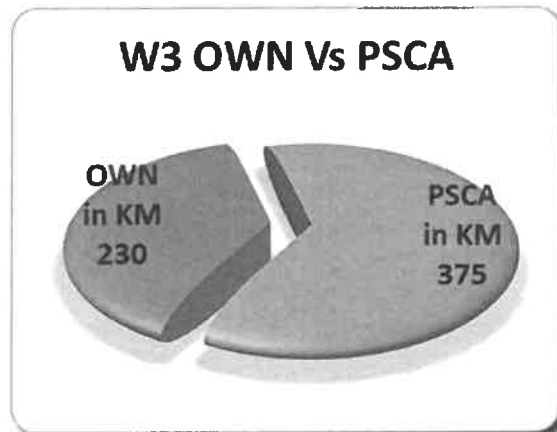
Coningsby Ings Pumping Station

This station is located within the area of the Coningsby River Bain breach. Once alerted to the breach and whilst it could be accessed safely, the pumps off were turned off and the supply isolated. Water still entered the motors, and it may be necessary to replace the top bearings in the pumps. It is hoped that more serious repairs and expense have been avoided.

PSCA Works 2022/23 and 2023/24 for the EA.

As previously advised to Members, the quotes given to the EA for PSCA works were: NEL £169,670.89, UW £200,944.02, W1 £124,071.49 and **W3 £306,668.35** [the actual/recovery costs of completed works may differ].

These amounts of work/income will not now be achieved this year due to the extreme weather and not being able to access the banks. Quotes have been issued for winter bushing maintenance across the W&HDBs group and a meeting will take place to discuss the possibility of more work.



3085 Engineering Report.

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

Willingham Fen Marina Project (TD-3733-2017-PLN).

Willingham Fen Marina Project is also known as Cherry Marina. There has been no substantial progress with this project, relevant to the Board since the last meeting in May 2023.

Woodhall Pumping Station Refurbishment (TD-1251-2014-PRO)

The condition of Woodhall PS has been assessed by the Board's engineers and options developed for the refurbishment. These are currently being costed.

The benefits for this project have been calculated by the Lower Witham Flood Resilience project which is being led by the EA. There have been delays in getting this information as the do-nothing scenario was set inappropriately within the various flood compartments, Feedback from the Board's officers has been used to determine the most appropriate do-nothing scenario. We are still waiting for the outputs of this work so have not been able to progress the development of the OBC as quickly as we would have liked.

An OBC is being written by the Capital Grants Manager and will be finalised when the benefits data is received from the EA. The indicative programme will be finalised once the data has been received.

Members noted the Engineering & Technical Services Report.

3086 Consents and Enforcements Report.

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

There was nothing to highlight to Members on this occasion.

Members received and NOTED the report on Consents and Enforcement cases.

3087 Planning and Consultations Report.

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

The Board had received several consultations and had commented on various planning applications to the various planning authorities. A full schedule was provided where responses included no objections or minor standard comments referring to soakaways the requirement for consents.

There was no issue highlight to members on this occasion.

Members NOTED the report.

3088 External Auditors' Notice of Closure on the IDB AGAR 2022/23.

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

The Annual Return 2022/23 was agreed at the Board meeting on 23rd May 2023, subsequently published on the Board's website for public inspection and despatched to the Board's appointed External Auditor PKF Littlejohn LLP on 09th June 2023. The public inspection period was from 12th June 2023 until 21st July 2023. The Board had until 30th June 2023 to approve and submit its Annual Return 2022/23.

The External Auditor has a statutory deadline of 30th September to complete their external audit and publish the formal Completion of Audit Certificate (Section 3 of Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)). This was issued and received on 8th September 2023.

Part 2 of section 3 of the AGAR has been completed as follows; 'On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met'.

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

This therefore completes the External Audit for 2022/23 and this Board, along with the other 3 Boards in the Witham & Humber Drainage Boards group, have all received the same clean Audit opinion, with no issues to report to the Board.

The Notice of Conclusion of Audit was issued on 20th September 2023 and has been displayed at the Board's depot, on the Board's website and at Witham House office.

Members NOTED the External Audit Notice of Closure on the IDB Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2022/23, with no issues arising.

3089 Governance & Corporate Risk Report.

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

Members were advised that the Corporate Risk Register would be brought before Members for approval in January. It was confirmed that the appropriate insurance was in place, discussions would commence on 29th November looking at the insurance renewals for 2024, due in July 2024.

Members NOTED the summary.

3090 2023/24 Financial report to 31.10.23.

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

Members were presented with a revised Financial report that included:

1. Summary Financial Position 2023/24 as at 31st October 2023 (P7).

2. Schedules of Expenditure 01st April 2023 to 31st October 2023
3. Drainage Rate Write-Offs report.

Members were advised that No Storm Babet costs were included in this report as they will impact 30.11.23 P8 onwards. Therefore, while this was a positive report and a healthy financial position – the details were historical and looked back at the previous 7 months. At the point of this meeting the exact costs of Storm Babet incurred from 20th October were unknown.

Income includes:

- Special Levies received from the 3 relevant Councils on or before 01st November 2023
- Highland Water contributions (balance due on 2022/23 and 80% of 2023/24 claim).
- PSCA income invoiced to end of August 2023 (September & October to be invoiced).
- Bank/investment interest received to date.

Expenditure includes:

- Electricity to 30th September 2023. New rates/standing charges due from 01st October will be in future reports.
- JSC recharges to Q2, 30th September 2023.
- Invoices paid as per schedules of expenditures.
- New IT Server at office £8k, yet to be recharged via JSC.
- First payment for damaged septic tank at Woodhall depot £4k – insurance claim with Biffa.

Approved Capital purchases and sales completed, except the excavator Tilt Rotator.

Capital Schemes – Greetwell Catchment study completed. Telemetry scheme progressing.

Regarding Drainage Rates collection, this was on target and similar in comparison to previous years. Final reminders had been issued during October for all outstanding debts.

Bank/Nationwide Balances £1.386m as at 31th October 2023. A one-year investment of £250k was made on 20th October 2023 with Chorley & District Building Society (totalling £1m across 4 Boards) @6% = £15,000 interest per Board. Nationwide is currently paying 3.80% on 95 Day Notice and 2.25% on instant access accounts. Maintain liquidity for Storm Babet costs.

Schedules of expenditure that showed transactions over £500 were included within the report. Those under £500 have been consolidated into a summary table.

Write-offs of drainage for approval, a matter reserved for the Board, were highlighted. Following discussion members **APPROVED** the write off amounts totally £250.80 as follows:

Under £2.50	£24.64
Uncollectable 1503	£226.16
TOTAL	£250.80

Financial Position 2023/24 as at 31st October 2023 (P7).

Overall Position

Profiled Budget P7 £	Actual (Surplus)/Deficit £	Variance £
(514,091)	(553,317)	(39,226)

Following discussion Members NOTED the 2023/24 financial performance for the period 01st April 2023 to 31st October 2023, also recognising that this would change significantly as we know better the cost of the impact of Storm Babet.

3091 Environmental Annual Report.

A report had been prepared by Nick Downing, circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Engineering & Technical Services. There were no issues to highlight to Members at this time.


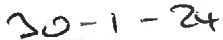
Members noted the Environment update.

3092 Any Other Business.

There being no further items of business, the meeting closed at 12:00.

3093 Date, Time and Place of the Board's Next Meeting.

The Board's next meeting was confirmed for Tuesday 30th January 2024 at 09:30am in Minting Village Hall.

.......... Chairman..... Date
W3rd B.M. 22.11.23.

