

UPPER WITHAM INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Minutes of a Meeting of Upper Witham Internal Drainage Board held on Monday, 29th January 2024 in Witham House Boardroom, North Hykeham, Lincoln at 2pm.

<u>Present:</u>	Cllr D Armiger	
	Mr T Arnold	via video conference
	Cllr R Baker	via video conference
	Mr A Buckley	via video conference
	Cllr B Bushell	
	Cllr L Bushell	via video conference
	Cllr M Green	
	Cllr A Hagues	
	Cllr G Hewson	
	Mr J R Hollis	
	Mr E Jackson	
	Cllr R Longbottom	
	Cllr R Metcalfe	
	Mr F H Myers	Chairman
	Cllr D Nannestad	
	Cllr L Pennell	
	Cllr L Sanders	
	Mr J Scarborough	Vice Chairman
	Mr N Tobin	
	Cllr P Vaughan	Vice Chairman
	Mrs J Wilkinson	

In Attendance: Mr Ian Coupland, Director of Operations.
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.

52.23 Apologies.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr R Cozens, Cllr P Ellis, Mr P Knight, Cllr P Morris, Mr R J Phillips, Mr G Rawlings, Cllr I Stokes, Mr W Timmins and Cllr C Watt.

53.23 Declarations of Members' Interests.

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

54.23 Chairman's Announcements.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the January meeting and acknowledged Members would wish to focus heavily on the impact of Storm Babet and the recent Storm Henk. He reflected on a successful meeting hosted by the IDBs on 03.01.24 the day after Storm Henk, when the EA's Chief Engineer Ian Hodge had visited. Eddy Poll,

Chairman of the Anglian [Northern] RFCC and ADA's Chief Executive Innes Thomson had also joined the visit and the EA's Area Director, Leigh Edlin. The EA's Chief Executive subsequently visited Lincolnshire on Friday, 05th January, following which the Chief Executive hosted a short notice visit of the EA's Chairman and the Floods Minister Robbie Moore MP on Saturday 06th January. There are specific ongoing flooding and recovery issues in certain localities, thankfully mostly not within UW's drainage district. But they are important to all Boards, as it could well be UW drainage district and pumping station assets affected by the next storm.

The Chairman confirmed he had written to Mr Eddy Poll, Chairman of Anglian (Northern) RFCC following the meeting on 03rd January 2024, to thank him for his time and emphasize the need for fundamental changes in how the EA maintains the main river systems.

The Statement of Claim arising from the 4 Boards receiving water into watercourses and affecting IDB pumping stations emanating from EA main riverbank breaches, overtopping and seepage in Storm Babet had been completed to the 30th November, and was submitted on 18th December 2023.

Traditionally at the January meeting the focus is to set a financially balanced budget for the forthcoming new financial year from April. Boards have a legal duty to do so, to publicise this and their drainage rates and special levies by 15th February each year.

The Budget Estimates for 2024/25 were on the agenda today, this being inextricably linked to formally setting the Annual Value and Penny Rate, which in turn determines drainage rates for next year and the level of Special levies for the 5 Councils.

This year officers and the Finance & General Purposes Committee were recommending to the Board a 16% increase in the Penny Rate.

Members noted that there had been much discussion locally and national lobbying about the position in which this places IDBs across the Country, drainage rate payers and the Councils who pay Special levies. But the impact of Storms Babet and Henk highlighted how affected IDB systems are by the condition of EA main rivers, and Boards need to plan to bolster reserves to deal with flood events.

Finally, the Chairman reminded Members that 2024 is an election year for directly elected members. The final agenda item today was to agree the timetable for the elections, with the 3-year term of office for those directly elected members, commencing on 01st November 2024 and running to 31st October 2027.

55.23 Minutes of the Board Meeting & APM, 27.11.23.

The Minutes of the Board's meeting, incorporating the Annual Public Meeting, held on Monday, 27th November 2023 had been circulated with the agenda and were proposed by Cllr Metcalfe, seconded by Cllr Nannestad and APPROVED as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING:

55.23.1 Pyewipe Pumping Station (Minute 37.23.1 refers).

Works to refurbish the Board's pumping station commenced on 11th October 2022, with excavations for the foundation of the new control house.

Several issues at this site were being worked through, including use of the Board's access track and apparent disruption to the Canal & River Trust's licensed residents of moorings [who use the track on a regular basis, but whose designated parking is at the entry to the track]. Contact with the Canal and River Trust continued to be somewhat problematic. City of Lincoln Councillor and Board Member Cllr Gary Hewson had been in communication with residents and Officers and was briefed on the position.

Quotes were now being obtained for the stone track reinstatement works, which would be done at the completion of the main refurbishment project.

55.23.2 Railway footpath level crossings to Pyewipe Pumping Station (Minute 37.23.2 refers).

The Chief Executive highlighted to members that works on Network Rail's land, by Network Rail's contractors, to effect necessary tree and bushing works to improve access along the Board's access track to the pumping station had been halted at the request of the Canal & Rivers Trust (C&RT). The Board has requested that these works be completed as a prerequisite to surrendering the historical footpath access route the Board holds across the live railway line.

Members were reminded that at the November 2021 meeting the Board agreed to accept Network Rail's offer to pay the Board £5,000 compensation and professional fees of £2,000 to relinquish the historical access route of 2 footpath crossings. The agreement was completed but therefore currently on hold with the Board's solicitor, awaiting confirmation that the necessary tree and bushing works are completed to the Board's satisfaction.

In the meantime, repeated requests to meet representatives of the C&RT had been unsuccessful. This would now be escalated the area director Linny Beaumont as no contact had been forthcoming from C&RT*.

**Post meeting note: Contact has been made on Monday 05th February 2024.*

55.23.3 Engineering Report, Western Growth Corridor (Minute 43.23 refers).

At the Board meeting in June 2013 the Board confirmed its objection in principle to the proposed WGC development within a flood plain. However, it was agreed that Officers would continue to co-operate and take part in multi-agency meetings to safeguard the Board's interests and minimise the impact on the pumped drainage system maintained by the Board.

Enabling works for the WGC development began in June 2023 with the work to alter the road junction access on to Skellingthorpe Road beginning and programmed to take 12 months. Discussions have taken place to agree the route of the Board's access, so that maintenance of the main drainage channels through the site is not obstructed throughout the entire construction period of some 23 years.

Other discussions have taken place with consultant engineers to clarify the Board's requirements regarding the route and layout of the main drainage

channels, and importantly their outfalls into the Skellingthorpe Pump Drain and Boultham Pump Drain.

During the early hours of the 20th October high rainfall event, it was reported that the contractor's temporary works on the Boultham Catchwater Drain [EA main river] had caused a breach in the defences. This breach/overtopping resulted in the flooding of land adjacent to the Catchwater Drain. The contractor and their client attended site to put in place remedial works and stem the breach.

Members requested an update from the progress meeting between the Board's officers, the EA and Lindum which had been planned for early December 2023 and it was AGREED that Lindum would be invited give a presentation to the May 2024 Board meeting.

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

56.23 Minutes of the Joint Services Committee Meeting, 11.12.23.

The minutes of the Joint Services Committee held on Monday 11th December 2023 had been circulated with the agenda for noting.

MATTERS ARISING:

56.23.1 Joint Services Budget Monitoring Report to 30.09.23 (minute 6 refers)

The approved JSC annual total budget for 2023/24 is £1,213,220. The profiled budget for Q2 to 30.09.23 is £639,823. Against this Q2 budget, expenditure of £610,437 had been incurred for the first 6 months to 30.09.23, so performance is broadly on target with a positive variance of (£29,386) or an underspend of (-4.59%).

An investment was made on 20th October 2023 on behalf of each of the 4 Boards of £250,000 with Chorley Building Society at a rate of 6% for 364 days (i.e., until 18th October 2024). This rate of 6% was achieved due to the overall total amount invested being £1m across the 4 Boards, otherwise the rate would have been @5.75%. This will generate @£15k interest for each Board.

It was intended to invest some funds on a shorter period, i.e., 1 to 2 months, but with Storm Babet happening the cash has been kept in the Nationwide accounts, for liquidity.

The impact of Storm Babet has been significant, particularly on W3 and W1 on this occasion. The financial impact will depend upon how much, if anything, can be recouped via a Statement of Claim submitted on 18.12.23 to the Anglian [Northern] RFCC for the recovery of the Boards' systems and Pumping Station assets inundated by water from EA maintained main rivers.

Members noted the financial performance on joint services to 30.09.23.

56.23.2 Proposed Joint Services Budget for 2023/24 and Estimates 2024/25 (minute 8 refers).

A revised Joint Services Agreement signed by all 4 Boards became operational from 01st April 2017 when NELDB joined the Group. This was reviewed and updated after 3 years, with agreed revised cost contribution arrangements of Upper Witham (UW) 30%, Witham First (W1) 20%, Witham Third (W3) 30% and North East Lindsey (NEL) 20%. These have been used from the 2020/21 Budgets onwards, and at present there is no suggestion that these rates are unrealistic.

The proposed 2024/25 Joint Services budget of £1,281,314 shows an increase of £68,094 (5.61%) * on the approved 2023/24 budget of £1,213,220. This increase is due to:

- Staffing costs - pay award (approved by each Board at 6.45% after consolidating £1,130 of the 2023/24 pay award) at £39k (including incremental point movements for some staff of £4k) and corresponding NI at £3k & Pension contributions at £11k, Essential User Allowances at £7k.
- General inflation on support contracts, insurance, ICT, utilities, etc, at £8k.

The JSC had supported these charges which were now therefore apportioned in each Board's Budget Estimates for 2024/25.

The preparation of individual Board's budget estimates included the following assumptions:

- Pay award (recommended 6.45% after consolidating £1,130 of the 2023/24 pay award).
- Fallout from Storm Babet requiring reserves to be replenished.
- Electricity increases (assumed 01st October 2023 unit price increase from 30p to 33.5p average per/KWH and a further 10% increase on the 01st October 2023 standing charges from 01st October 2024).
- Insurance costs are assumed at last year's actual renewal costs +10%.
- Servicing and Maintenance costs of plant and machinery, increased.
- General inflationary cost pressures.

*N. B: Post meeting note: This was revised marginally, when further budget work was completed, to £1,289,504, constituting a £76,284 (6.29%) increase from the approved 2023/24 JSC budget.

Members noted the JSC budget discussions, amendment and recommendation within the proposed Estimates for 2024/25.

Members NOTED the minutes of the Joint Services Committee held on Monday 11th December 2023.

57.23 Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting, 17.01.24.

The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday, 17th January 2024 had been circulated with the agenda and were proposed by Cllr Vaughan, seconded by Cllr Pennell and APPROVED as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING:

57.23.1 Draft Estimates 2024/25 and setting of the Penny Rate (minute 8 refers).

The Director of Finance had tabled at the F&GPC the DRAFT budget Estimates for 2024/25 and taken members through the assumptions made in constructing a financially balanced budget [e.g. approved pay award, National Insurance, incremental point movements where applicable, all movements up/down in budget headings, insurances at 2023 renewals cost +10% for 2024]. The Pump lifts budget was proposed at £35k, an increase of £20k on 2023/24- this budget heading had been reduced previously given a good programme of pumps refurbishment, but it was deemed necessary to increase it once more given the heavy rainfall events and the need to revert to 2 planned pump lifts/refurbishments given higher pumped hours. A £35k contribution to resilience/wet weather events had been built into the draft budget also, to make provision for the additional costs of flood events.

In addition to the revenue budget, on capital a proposed increase of £5k contribution to Capital Schemes was highlighted, from £50k in 2023/24 to £55k for 2024/25, to provide for the IDB partnership contribution to lever in external FDGiA grant monies toward pumping station renewals/refurbishments.

F&GPC had discussed financial risks, including the potential 31.03.24 year-end deficit which would have to be supported from Reserves, the risk of the Board's Statement of Claim for £74.6k not being reimbursed by the RFCC, further heavy rainfall events impacting upon assets, insurance costs and repairs & maintenance costs being more than assumed. Reserves were highlighted at £232k in the General Reserve, which is 11% of annual turnover, just within the Board's policy of holding 10-15% in the general reserve.

F&GPC Members had discussed the practicalities of setting the proposed balanced budget based on a 13% minimum increase in the Penny Rate if the £35k contribution to a wet weather reserve is taken out, or a 15%/16% increase in the Penny rate for 2024/25 if this is included. The Penny Rate determines the drainage rates paid by occupiers of land in the district and the Special Levies paid by the five relevant Councils. Each 1% on the Penny Rate represents £14.2k income to Upper Witham and that is the additional cost spread across landowners/occupiers and Councils.

After discussion of UW financial risks and consideration of increased costs on Councils/ ratepayers, F&GPC members AGREED to recommend to the Board the balanced budget Estimates for 2024/25 based on a 16% increase in the Penny Rate and the Committee also recommended that the Board raises its General Reserves holding policy, aspiring to build a reserve of 15% to 20% of annual turnover [from 10-15% now].

Members received and NOTED the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes meeting and its recommendations from the meeting on 17.01.24.

58.23 Chief Executive's Report.

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

58.23.1 All 4 Witham & Humber Drainage Boards were in reasonable financial health as of 31st December 2023, month 9 of 2023/24, although the positions had moved from 30.11.23 surplus positions to a deficit position of £13,939 in UW, a deficit of £126,834 in W3rd, a deficit of £46,776 in W1st. Only NELDB remained in a marginal surplus position as of 31.12.23 at (£37.5k), which reflects the limited impact of Storm Babet in NELDB's drainage district.

The operational and financial impact of Storm Babet 20.10.23 on the drainage districts, particularly Witham Third DIB and Witham First DIB, was severe and continues. Electricity invoices for use of Pumping Stations in October, November and December 2023 have been received and paid, although the December costs are not included in the reported 31.12.23 financial positions, due to invoices being received in mid-January. There will be further costs to be incurred. Despite significantly uplifting electricity budgets for 2023/24, these have been exceeded and three of the 4 Boards [not NELDB] are now forecast to end the year on 31.03.24 with financial deficits, which will deplete reserves if Statement of Claim monies are not reimbursed. Storm Henk subsequently hit on 02.01.24 and already saturated catchments bore the impact of further heavy rainfall, with consequent further operational and financial impacts on the Boards.

58.23.2 **Complaints received following flooding events.**

The floods have led to a significant increase in communication from members of the public. This has been in waves, from initial emails and phone calls of support for the Boards' work, then a sense of people being distressed by the dreadful flood events which have affected homes, communities and businesses, followed now by a sense that someone must be to blame and resulting complaints.

This is understandable. The Boards' staff are dealing with several notable difficult situations. There have been Parish Council letters and request for our attendance at public meetings, e.g. at Washingborough on 28.11.23 and 13.03.24, Fiskerton on 11.01.24, Woodhall Spa on 25.01.24, Langworth on 07.02.24, Witham & Brant Cluster of Parishes on 26.02.24, Westborough on 13.03.24, Horncastle Flood Forum on 01.03.24 etc.

In addition, several complaints had been received. These are time consuming and due process is being followed for official complaints lodged in 2 cases, specifically within Witham Third. We are also dealing with issues at Washingborough [W1st], Goulceby [W3rd] and Minting [W3rd].

There was not the scale of flood issues within UW's drainage district, although individual villages had been flooded.

The Chief Executive provided an update, particularly on the Statement of Claim submitted to the Anglian [Northern] RFCC Chairman on 18.12.24 arising from the receipt of third-party water from the EA main river systems since Storm Babet on 20.10.23. A copy of the Statement of Claim totalling £1.5 million had been circulated to members and had been presented to the RFCC in informal afternoon session on 19.01.24. There had been support in principle for the Claim, although an Outline Business Case with detail of the 17 affected pumping station sites for £1.1 million of capital repairs was now to be prepared and submitted to the EA. It was noted that there had been no national award of recovery monies to either the EA or to IDBs, and the Belwin formula had not been invoked in Lincolnshire.

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

59.23 Storm Babet Event, Friday 20th October 2023 and Storm Henk, Tuesday 02nd January 2024.

Members took part in a lengthy discussion on the continuing impact of Storms Babet and Henk and the resulting Statement of Claim submitted to the RFCC on 18.12.23 and discussed at the RFCC meeting on 19.01.24.

Upper Witham drainage district had not experienced flooding on the same scale as Witham First and Witham Third districts. There were, however, some localities within the district which had suffered severe flooding, e.g., Westborough and Brant Broughton. The Board's pumping station assets and watercourses had not been inundated significantly, as had been the case in those 2 IDBs. The pumping stations had operated for more than usual, reflected in higher pumped hours and electricity costs.

A Statement of Claim was submitted on 18.12.23. This Claim for £1,559,235.36 + VAT across the 4 Boards was for additional costs incurred [actual and estimated repair costs] to 30.11.23 on Storm Babet was sent to Eddy Poll Chairman of the RFCC and EA Area Director Leigh Edlin. After discussion with the EA on 03.01.24, the claim was summarised into a 'funding proposal document' submitted on 09.01.24 to Morgan Wray. The Statement of Claim was included within today's papers, as an Appendix to the Financial Report to 31.12.23. It was presented to the RFCC on 19.01.24.

Before there was any time to recover completely from Storm Babet, Storm Henk hit on Tuesday 02nd January 2024. This only added to standing water in the districts. Fortunately, Upper Witham was much less affected this time. The additional costs of Storm Henk were not included in the Statement of Claim, and neither are December and January third-party costs of dealing with water from EA systems.

59.23.1 Meeting With the EA on Wednesday, 03.01.24 to showcase the extent of flooding and damage in Lincolnshire from Storms Babet & Henk.

With the support of ADA colleagues, a visit to the IDBs was arranged for 03rd January 2024, enabling the EA's Chief Engineer to see how interrelated the IDB and EA systems are in Lincolnshire and how recent events had overwhelmed two of our drainage districts, W3rd and W1st, the

impact being more severe than in the heavy rainfall events of Autumn 2019. Those who visited included:

- Innes Thomson, (ADA Chief Executive),
- Eddy Poll, Anglian (Northern) RFCC Chairman,
- James Brackenbury, (EA Recovery Manager),
- Leigh Edlin, (EA Area Director for Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire),
- Ian Hodge (EA Chief Engineer & Director, Asset Management & Engineering),
- Morgan Wray, (EA Flood and Coastal Risk Manager for Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire Area).

The purpose of the day was:

- To provide a picture across Lincolnshire in the wake of Storm Babet from 20.10.23 onwards, showcasing as examples the impact on IDB systems and Pumping Stations, on villages and communities, residential properties and businesses and on agricultural land and businesses. And we started 2024 with Storm Henk 02.01.24, an example of a live situation impacting further on already saturated catchments.
- To jointly recognise the current risks and unsustainability for IDBs in the future, operationally and financially, of those IDBs regularly receiving and dealing with third party water from EA main watercourses, which was not designed to enter IDB systems, and which inundates assets.
- To outline, as an example, the W&HDBs' December 2023 Statement of Claim to the Anglian (Northern) RFCC of £1.5 million. Claims by similarly affected IDBs like that from colleagues in Witham Fourth District IDB were outlined and that the dilemma is there is no alternative source of funding nationally.
- To discuss options for FRMAs working differently and innovatively together to better use public monies and existing national guidance not on recovery but on preventive maintenance (a) maintaining better the systems to maximise the conveyance of water and then (b) when we are in a recovery situation to build back with better resilience, to an improved level of flood defence.
- To explore the available mechanisms at our disposal, e.g. PSCAs, IDB precept payments to the EA.

The meeting was positive, followed by afternoon site visits bringing clarity to the seriousness of the event. It was indeed a sobering journey around, with only time to view a few of the many affected locations. Following Storm Henk, those we visited looked worse, indeed as we looked around a second breach on the EA main river Barlings Eau was observed to be happening, later confirmed. The EA mobiles at Stainfield were moved onto Stainfield bridge but were inundated, including the generator.

Colleagues could see just how fragile the situation is. It was clear we have deployed everything we have, e.g. 27 mobile pump assets, and we were struggling. We have no remaining capacity.

59.23.2 EA visits of 05.01.24 and 06.01.24 and issues arising.

Late on Thursday 04th January the Chief Executive took a call advising of a short notice informal visit by the EA's CEO Philip Duffy on Friday 05th January. He did not want any special arrangements, or a programme. Midmorning to midafternoon he made a low-key visit to understand our current position.

On Saturday, 06.01.24 the EA's Chairman Alan Lovell and Defra's Floods Minister Robbie Moore MP were visiting Lincolnshire [e.g. the flooded Primary School in Heighington]. At short notice the Chief Executive had the opportunity to meet them that lunchtime at Branston Delph in Witham First's district, to outline the challenges that IDBs are facing.

Following 3 national EA visits to our districts and IDBs, on Wednesday, 03.01.24 the EA's Chief Engineer Ian Hodge, on Friday 05.01.24 the EA's CEO Philip Duffy and on Saturday 06.01.24 the EA's Chairman Alan Lovell & Defra Floods Minister Robbie Moore MP, Ian Hodge made contact looking at options for Defra potentially funding the £1.1 million capital repair costs of the £1.5 million claim, but not giving assurances at present. This is subject to internal EA/Defra discussion.

The Witham Third DIDB repairs element of the Statement of Claim is £800k and we feel these works could be done by 31.03.24, by spreading work amongst a limited number of providers [at some of the inundated stations, we have already taken out pumps for repair at Stainfield & they are on the bench, at Coningsby the motors are at Rundalls, Paktronic could do the comparatively small MCC, Shortferry Pumps to DXB could be done by 31.03.24, Greetwell PS transformer EME and looking at National Grid current lead times this is possible, 2 submersibles at Stainfield, Bardney Abbey, Bardney Fen, Southrey PS motor is already out and away for repair, Duckpool, Stixwould, Woodhall PS needs pumps and civils works].

The Witham First DIDB repairs in the claim totals £280k. A quick assessment is we can complete works by 31.03.24. Heighington is our big focus at present, to keep the operational capacity [Sandhill being inundated and out of action]. So that's an estimated £90k of that claim. Sandhill pump at £45k is out and away now for repair, as the station is inoperable. Blankney we have assessed for repair. We would aim to get a realistic programme of circa £280k works done by 31.03.24 if money is forthcoming.

The Upper Witham repairs claim is smaller, at £15k. This could be done through existing provider capacity by 31.03.24.

In terms of the estimated repairs total, the Chief Executive had confirmed to Ian Hodge that the total £1,095,000 repairs of the circa £1.5 million total Statement of Claim could be completed by 31.03.24 if money is made available [and the remainder of the claim would stack up if ANRFCC supported it via other budget means like Highland Water, PSCA emergency/reciprocal works budget headings].

59.23.3 Cllr Pennell suggested that the number of obstacles being put in the way of making the claim should be added to the claim itself. Officers' time spent

on the Claim and now production of an OBC has delayed time spent working on recovery. He also asked if the claim would allow the Board to build back better or to the same defence standard, which would be futile. Recovery works and whether there could be betterment was discussed at length, a point made to the Floods Minister when he visited.

Cllr Nannestad asked about the pumping stations that had been inundated, particularly the plan to future-proof them. Martin Shilling advised that all options were considered, whether that be building them two storeys, moving the physical location of the PS, using different pumps. All this takes time with the EA for submitting paperwork and planning meetings.

59.23.4 Visit to Lincolnshire by Shadow Floods Minister Emma Hardy MP, 22.02.24.

Through Cllr Tom Ashton, W3rd & W4th Board Member and RFCC Member, it was confirmed that a visit had been arranged for Shadow Floods Minister, Emma Hardy MP [constituency Hull West & Hessle] on Thursday, 22nd February at 10.00am. The visit to Witham House will be for approximately 90 minutes.

Members were asked to confirm their attendance asap with Jayne Flower. Issues to be raised would include concerns to the EA about repeated flooding and flood risk in some communities like Westborough from EA River Witham, and it was noted that Elliott Jackson had escalated this with the EA, likewise land affected near Bardney/Fiskerton/Stainfield Fen in W3rd on repeated occasions. And Sandhill/Heighington issues for W1st, from 3 sources of water from EA main river systems. Other items to highlight in the brief time available would be possibly capital programmes, recovery works but to existing flood defence levels not 'building back better' with improved resilience and the need to do so.

Peter Bateson at W4th, Matthew Harrison at LCC and Innes Thomson at ADA, would be invited, as the Chief Executive suggested the Boards take the opportunity to maximise the issues and make the visit as inclusive as practicable.

59.23.5 Potential Reconstitution of the Board.

Two City of Lincoln Councillors raised the possible reconstitution of the Board. There are currently 9 members of City of Lincoln Council appointed to UWIDB, due to the special levy process. It was highlighted that this is one third of the total of Council membership, and a big commitment of their time. Cllr Metcalfe suggested that it may be a potential conflict of interest, given when attending Board meetings members had a duty to act in the best interests of the IDB. However, it was also recognised that the seats on Boards in relation to financial contributions was part of the Board's democratic transparency to have members from Councils who pay Special Levy and landowners/occupiers who pay drainage rates in the appropriate proportions of seats.

The Chairman asked that the potential reconstitution of the Board, to reduce the size of membership, be on the agenda for the May 2024 Board meeting. The Chief Executive advised that the process to change the

Board's constitution was potentially a lengthy one, based on feedback from those Boards which had gone through a reconstitution exercise.

Members received, discussed and NOTED the current position.

60.23 Corporate Risk Register.

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

The purpose of the Corporate Risk Register (CRR) report is to provide the Board and the Public with an update of the Corporate Risk Register for Witham and Humber Drainage Boards. The CRR provides a strategic oversight of the corporate risk management process and the key risks to which W&HDBs are exposed.

The CRR is submitted to each Board to ensure that Members are aware of the strategic risks which affect the four statutory Boards.

The CRR details those risks that are significant enough to warrant management and/or oversight by a member of the Management Team. Providing detail of the risk control measures in place to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of a risk occurrence where this is felt to be practicable /appropriate.

Witham and Humber Drainage Boards continue to have a robust risk management process, which enables consideration of external and internal risks.

By establishing a systematic approach to identification, assessment and management of risk, W&HDBs intend to continually improve the four Boards' governance, increase accountability and enhance overall performance.

The CRR was reviewed and updated following Storms Babet, Ciaran and Debi from October to the end of 2023, and further reviewed following Storm Henk in January 2024.

A new risk has been added into the Corporate Risk Register, to reflect the significant impact that Storm Babet (October 2023), Ciaran, and Debi had upon the main rivers, which led to inundation to IDB watercourses, and assets. This was further compounded during Storm Henk (January 2024) where already saturated ground reacted to a further heavy rainfall event, in addition to pre-existing and new breaches, overtopping and significant seepage of EA main rivers.

Additional mitigation has been added to the risk to reflect the short/medium term changes to the FDGiA schemes.

Additional notes regarding the media publicising of Public Services pay, and the notable increase in other Public Service Industrial Action, including that within the Environment Agency. The trend remains upwards as it was in January 2023, to reflect current uncertainty within Public Services.

A new risk has been added into the Corporate Risk Register, to reflect the Drainage Rating System (DRS) future changes. Whilst this is nationally within the IDB industry, it features to allow ongoing monitoring due to the significance of the risk. The Director of Finance and Governance is a member of the Association of Drainage Associations

(ADA) relevant sub-committee, which is supporting ADA to find a solution given the support for the current ratings system is withdrawn from April 2025.

The 2 new risks are risks which have trend movement on the 'residual risk changes infographic', due to being new risks.

Members noted the Corporate Risk Register and two new risks that had been included.

61.23 2023/24 Financial Monitoring Report as at 31.12.23 [Month 9].

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

The financial performance as at 31st December 2023 was summarised as:

Profiled Budget P9	Actual (Surplus)/Deficit	Variance
£	£	£
(411,843)	(397,904)	13,939

The Board was currently showing a negative position against the profiled budget. This position includes the financial impact of the 20th October 2023 Storm Babet event and subsequent rainfall events until the end of December 2023. Some of the 'high risk' spend areas may recur (especially electricity high costs) and inflationary increases across many budget heads will impact on the remainder of this financial year. Electricity price increases were implemented from 01st October 2023 which will have a further impact on the Board's financial position over the remainder of this financial year.

Most of the income raised through Drainage Rates had been collected at (£309k) and Special Levies had been received at (£1.102m) for the full year from the 5 relevant councils. Ongoing action is taking place against unpaid drainage rate account holders.

Rechargeable Works were being undertaken, mainly for the EA through the PSCA. Invoices have been raised up to the end of September (£168k) for PSCA works and (£9k) in other rechargeable works.

Highland Water claims had been submitted to the EA for 2022/23 actual costs with a further balance of (£31,207) paid in September 2023, and for the 2023/24 Estimated claim of (£257,000). The EA has paid 80% of the estimated claim for 2023/24 (£205,600) along with the balance for 2022/23 actual costs incurred (£31,207), i.e., a total of (£236,807). Correspondingly, the balance adjusted for actual 2023/24 costs incurred will be payable in September 2024.

The developer contribution for the costs of a new automated weedscreen cleaner at Pyewipe Pumping Station had been received from City of Lincoln Council on behalf of the Western Growth Corridor scheme. A total contribution of (£154,202) was received with (£129,693) accounted for in 2022/23, resulting in a net amount of (£24,510) in this financial year 2023/24.

A contribution of £20,000 from reserves had been provided for in the 2023/24 estimates, to smooth the additional depot borrowing costs. This will be actioned at 31.03.24 year end, if it is required. Transfers will be made from reserves to fund the

Pyewipe scheme from previously received grant contributions held in Reserves. Any grant income received and not utilised in year is transferred to reserves.

It was hoped that a contribution to the Emergency Events reserve could be made on 31.03.24 based on any underspend on the electricity budget, but this is unlikely after the recent flooding events from October onwards.

The collection rate for Drainage Rates stands at 95.8% (98.1% @P9 2022/23) so is slightly below last year's collection rate. First reminders were despatched on 15th August 2023 and final reminders were despatched on 05th October 2023. A court date had been set for 15th January 2023 at Boston Magistrates Court but was subsequently cancelled due to only a few low value cases outstanding. Any unpaid amounts at year end 31.03.24 will roll forward and be collected in 2024/25. All historical outstanding rating queries are now resolved and only land issues raised from in-year queries and changes are being actioned.

The increase in electricity unit rates and standing charges from 01st October 2023 was reported to the Board at the November meeting. The October and November electricity invoices had now been paid, including these new rates as well as the additional usage resulting from Storm Babet. Significant rainfall events have continued through December and January, which are not included in these figures.

Members were reminded of the inflationary pressures that the country has experienced over recent months, although pleasingly the rate of inflation is now reducing. Electricity, fuel, plant and vehicle maintenance, insurance and mobile phones costs had significantly increased over the last couple of years. 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 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 still causing additional downtime and delays.

Following Storm Babet in October and subsequent rainfall events, Witham and Humber Drainage Boards have incurred significant additional costs dealing with additional water resulting from bank breaches, overtopping and excessive seepage from EA main rivers. The claim was submitted to the ANRFCC Chairman and EA colleagues on 18th December 2023 and was considered at the RFCC meeting on 19th January 2024.

The claim has been compiled on the same basis as the one submitted in Autumn 2019. The overall claim is summarised in the following tables:

Witham Third District IDB	£985,918.08
Witham First District IDB	£492,215.47
Upper Witham IDB	£74,583.15
North East Lindsey IDB	£6,518.66
Total	£1,559,235.36

This has been split into those costs incurred already up to the end of November 2023 (Actuals) and those likely to be incurred from December onwards (Estimates) to reflect the additional pumping costs and to rectify damage caused to the Boards' pumping station assets.

Actuals the following costs have already been incurred and therefore prompt reimbursement was requested on 18.12.23 via the RFCC Chairman:

	Electric Oct/Nov	Staff to date	Fuel	Emergency Repairs	Sub Total Actuals
W3	£ 84,572.18	£ 62,219.69	£ 3,691.11	£ 5,435.10	£ 155,918.08
W1	£ 141,325.76	£ 30,379.72	£ -	£ 510.00	£ 172,215.47
UW	£ 28,439.95	£ 16,078.20	£ -	£ 65.00	£ 44,583.15
NEL	£ 5,418.66	£ -	£ 600.00	£ -	£ 6,018.66
	£ 259,756.54	£ 108,677.61	£ 4,291.11	£ 6,010.10	£ 378,735.36

Estimates. The estimated costs are likely to be incurred in the coming weeks/months to continue to deal with the ongoing event (electricity and staffing) and to repair the IDB assets damaged by the excessive water received from main rivers.

	Electric Dec	Xmas Staff Refuelling, etc	Planned Repairs	Sub Total Estimates
W3	£ 25,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 800,000.00	£ 830,000.00
W1	£ 40,000.00		£ 280,000.00	£ 320,000.00
UW	£ 15,000.00		£ 15,000.00	£ 30,000.00
NEL	£ 500.00		£ -	£ 500.00
	£ 80,500.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 1,095,000.00	£ 1,180,500.00

Total claim **£1,559,235.36 +VAT** across the 4 Witham & Humber Drainage Boards.

Following some discussion Members:

- NOTED the 2023/24 financial performance for the period 01st April 2023 to 31st December 2023 (Period 9).
- NOTED the Capital Programme update.
- NOTED the Governance update.
- NOTED the verbal update on the Statement of Claim submitted to the ANRFCC on 18.12.23.
- REVIEWED AND NOTED the Schedules of Expenditure incurred for the 2 months to 31.12. 23.

62.23 Estimates for 2024/25, including the Joint Services Budget.

A report setting out the proposed Budget Estimates for 2024/25 had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Finance.

Preparing the 2024/25 Revenue Budget Estimates had been challenging following the wet weather events since October 2023, including Storms Babet and Henk which mean the Boards are likely to finish 2023/24 with deficits, depleting reserves. Dealing with the significant additional water entering IDB systems resulting from EA main river breaches, overtopping and excessive seepage has given significant financial uncertainty to the Boards. Electricity usage has been very significant with some pumps running 24/7 for several weeks and at higher unit rates than those paid in the last major wet weather event in Autumn 2019. Pumping stations have been inundated or running excessively resulting in repairs required of £1.1m across the 4 Boards.

Another significant increase is the electricity standing charges which in cash terms have risen as much (£72k) across the 4 IDBs, a similar level of increase as last year (£76k). This charge is incurred whether the pumps are running or not.

Other cost pressures due to inflation, market changes and contractual arrangements have been addressed in proposed budgets and include:

- Pay £83k – The Board is facing significant retention and recruitment issues. A 2024/25 pay award of 6.45% has been agreed based on the ONS average uplift in public sector pay, as previously approved by the Board in November 2023. An additional Land Drainage Operative post has also been included, to reduce the use of other Board's staff to deliver its maintenance programme and complete PSCA works.
- JSC/Engineering £48k.
- Insurance costs £8k. The Boards are facing very significant challenges in procuring suitable insurance cover at realistic prices, and this will increase following the recent storms. We have assumed the renewal costs budget for July 2024 will be the costs as of July 2023 plus 10%. However, some covers may be reduced or withdrawn so we are looking at detail into our insurance arrangements with our advisors, The Risk Factor.
- Fuel £0k. Fuel costs have stabilised, so no additional budget increases have been included.
- Pump Lifts, Repairs & Maintenance (R&M)/Servicing £34k increase. Further budget increases on R&M/servicing of plant budgets have been included for 2024/25, to reflect the reality of increasing costs. Furthermore, pump lift budgets have also been uplifted due to increasing costs of components and the need for more frequent pump lifts following the storms.
- General inflation £8k. Whilst overall inflation has reduced from its peak in 2023, it is still higher than the Bank of England 2% target, so we are still experiencing increased costs in many areas of the 4 Boards' spend which will feed into ICT, mobile phone and other CPI based contracts from April 2024 onwards.

Other changes included in the budget include:

- Election costs £1k - included for election costs due in October 2024.
- Depreciation £12k – budget established to depreciate depot/office and build a reserve for future repairs/replacements.
- Contribution to Reserves £55k – due to the likely 31.03.24 deficit for 2023/24 and the need for building further resilience into the Board's reserves for future wet weather events. The Finance & General Purposes Committee (F&GPC) has recommended a £50k contribution be included in the proposed budget. The Capital Programme contribution has also been uplifted by £5k from £50k pa agreed in January 2023 to £55k pa from April 2024.

To mitigate some of these cost pressure increases where possible, we have frozen budgets. Significantly, we have also deferred where possible major plant purchases, which will have a further impact on our service and maintenance costs. Where capacity allows, we are also sharing staff and machines across the Boards to reduce external costs. We have reviewed our main spend areas and achieved savings for items such as mobile phones and by standardising supplier base across the 4 Boards. In terms of back-office functions and costs as a proportion of turnover, the 4 Boards have worked together in a voluntary partnership now since April 2017, considerably reducing management costs for each Board.

After much discussion between Officers and Members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee at the meeting held on 17th January 2024, a balanced budget position can be achieved for 2024/25 based on these assumptions and a recommended 16.00% penny rate increase.

Whilst the proposed penny rate increase is significant, without this proposed 16.00% increase the Board will not be able to set a balanced budget and secure financial stability. Additionally, there will be the land movements from agricultural land to 'other developed land' under the Land Drainage Act 1991, which impact on each individual Special Levy paying Council. These land movements were set out in the report which followed on the agenda, and which was cross-referenced in discussion.

The Board has an agreed policy of holding a 'Revenue Reserve' for emergencies of 10% to 15% of turnover, with the balance held in 'earmarked reserves' for requirements. The F&GPC had recommended that this policy be increased to holding 20%, as resources allow.

It was proposed the fund balances be allocated on the following basis:

Reserve	Actual 2023/24 b/f £	Estimated 2023/24 c/f £	Estimated 2024/25 c/f £
Revenue Reserve*	(238,558)	(218,558)	(248,558)
Emergency Event	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)
Pumping Stations	(21,826)	(29,101)	(36,376)
Commuted Sum	(49,500)	(49,500)	(49,500)
Depot	(0)	(0)	(12,000)
One Off Projects**	(382,443)	(0)	(0)
Capital Programme Funding			
Plant & Machinery	(258,365)	(353,178)	(440,837)
Pumping Station Refurbishments	(0)	(50,000)	(105,000)
Balance	(975,692)	(725,337)	(917,271)

*Assumes year end deficit position of £20,000 for 2023/24.

** Assumes all FGDGIA schemes completed in financial year.

This is the general 'contingency' reserve and will be utilised for any unexpected or emergency purposes which cannot be contained in the revenue budget. This assumes a budgeted deficit position of £20,000 on the Revenue Account at the end of this financial year 2023/24 on 31.03.24 (this is likely to be higher).

The 2024/25 balance is estimated to be 12.07% of estimated turnover, so is within the Board's current approved Policy on Reserves at 10% to 15% of turnover. The F&GPC recommendation that this increases to 20% as resources allow will be reviewed when the actual position for 2023/24 at 31st March 2024 year-end is known.

The Emergency Event reserve can be used for funding emergency expenditure incurred if a flooding event takes place, additional electricity usage is incurred at the pumping stations or for preventative/remedial action to help deal with emergency events. During 2019/20, due to the significant rainfall events, the reserve was fully depleted. However, it was fully replenished to the agreed £25k level in 2020/21. If the

Board is not successful with its Statement of Claim for additional costs arising from the 2023/24 storms, then this reserve may be fully utilised again.

Members were reminded that they can reallocate resources between these reserves at any time, should the need arise.

Following discussion Members:

- **APPROVED** the financially balanced Estimates for 2024/25 based upon a 16.00% increase in the penny rate.
- **NOTED** this 16.00% increase will determine the level of penny rate and Special Levy to be set for 2024/25.

63.23 Annual Value, Drainage Rates and Special Levies 2024/25.

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

The Annual Values must be formally approved by the Board each year. These start with those brought forward from last year's rate setting as of 31st December 2022, with required land movements during the calendar year for land that has been developed or is no longer used for agricultural purposes. This land transfers out of Drainage Rates and is allocated to the Special Levy for the appropriate Council [there being 5 relevant funding Councils for UW].

The Annual Values as of 31st December 2022 were:

	Pumped £	Gravity £	Total £
Drainage Rates	796,557	1,527,030	2,323,587
City of Lincoln	11,251	6,530,829	6,542,080
North Kesteven DC	238,629	2,723,235	2,961,864
South Kesteven DC	0	1,986,846	1,986,846
West Lindsey DC	215,146	160,798	375,944
Newark & Sherwood DC	41,596	50,534	92,130
Total	1,303,179	12,979,272	14,282,451

The land movements between 01.01.23 and 31.12.23 that require transfer from Drainage Rates to Special Levy were summarised as:

Account	Area ha	Parish	Council	Developed for	Pump/ Gravity
0001	-0.714	Long Bennington	NKDC	Residential	G
0451	-0.060	Westborough	SKDC	Highway	G
0613	-1.169	Upton	WLDC	Holiday lets	G
0324	-0.500	Saxilby	WLDC	Residential	G
0098	-1.751	Lincoln	COL	Western Growth Corridor	P

This results in the following Annual Values as of 31st December 2023:

	Pumped £	Gravity £	Total £
Drainage Rates	798,973	1,526,001	2,324,974
City of Lincoln	36,830	6,530,829	6,567,659
North Kesteven DC	238,628	2,725,982	2,964,610
South Kesteven DC	0	1,987,207	1,987,207
West Lindsey DC	215,146	163,211	378,357
Newark & Sherwood DC	41,596	50,534	92,130
Total	1,331,173	12,983,764	14,314,937

Penny Rates:

The following 'penny rates' are applicable, given the impact of a 16.00% increase:

	Pumped (pence)	Gravity (pence)
Current	22.1978	8.6441
Proposed	25.7494	10.0272

This will increase, net of the listed land movements, the amount generated from Drainage Rates from income of £308,816 to £358,746 (+£49,930) in 2024/25.

Special Levies:

The 16.00% increase in Penny Rate will have the following impact on Special Levies, including the rebasing of the Annual Values for the land transfers, for each Council as follows:

	Current £	Proposed £	Difference £	Increase %
City of Lincoln	567,028.86	664,342.69	97,313.83	17.16
NKDC	288,369.42	334,785.04	46,415.62	16.10
SKDC	171,744.99	199,261.20	27,516.21	16.02
WLDC	61,657.31	71,764.43	10,107.12	16.39
N&SDC	13,601.61	15,777.87	2,176.26	16.00
Total	1,102,402.19	1,285,931.23	183,529.04	16.65

In summary, income to the Board increases by a total of £233,459 (being an increase of £183,529 in Special Levy and a net increase in Drainage Rates of £49,930 including transfers of agricultural land to other developed land).

After discussion, Members were content to:

- APPROVE The transfer of land from Drainage Rates to Special Levy as set out.
- APPROVE The land valuations as of 31st December 2023 upon which Drainage Rates and Special Levies are calculated be set at £14,314,937.

- APPROVE that the 'penny rate' is increased by 16.00% to 25.7494 pence for Pumped and 10.0272 pence for Gravity/Urban catchments.
- APPROVE The Special Levies 2024/25 be agreed for each of the 5 Councils as:

City of Lincoln	£664,342.69
North Kesteven District Council	£334,785.04
South Kesteven District Council	£199,261.20
West Lindsey District Council	£71,764.43
Newark & Sherwood District Council	£15,777.87

The Chairman and Chief Executive were duly AUTHORISED to sign the 'Rate Book', apply the seal of this Board and publicise the revised penny rates, estimated Drainage Rates and Special Levies before 15.02.24.

Council nominated Members Green, Hagues and Sanders left the meeting.

64.23 Operations Report, including the Health & Safety and Risk Update.

An Operations report, including the Health and Safety update had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Operations.

There had been 7 reported incidents across all the Boards, with minor injuries reported. Two had occurred on this Board:

- Machine slipped off bank top – self rectified.
- Self-Propelled Flail Vehicle (SPV) Slipped off the bank top – recovery required.

Both incidents were due to the poor ground conditions, but neither machine entered the watercourse.

Operatives are still undertaking weed cutting, as the weather allows. The annual maintenance planned for the early part of the new year will not go ahead due to the amount of recovery work needed to get pumping stations back up and running and to allow work to commence on bank slips on Board maintained watercourses.

Officers are investigating producing a list of priority watercourses for each Board to be cut first each season. This would be an exercise undertaken during the coming weeks and bring a suggested list to the Boards later in the year. To undertake this cutting work would need the support from landowners, as it would certainly mean running through some crops.

The time frame for Tillbridge Lane works has changed due to recent rainfall events. The bank slip reported previously has not yet been repaired, the engineering team has devised a solution, and this will be undertaken in a drier month possibly May or June 2024. Operatives will be culverting the short section that has slipped.

Quotes had been provided to the EA for the temporary repair of 3 of the main river breaches, including Burton Catchwater for £107,007.25. This would have been an enormous job requiring many staff and input from the Engineering team for arranging equipment and access. The work is being undertaken by volunteers at the Carholme Golf Club on land owned by City of Lincoln Council.

UW have quoted for bushing works for Cargill seeds @ an estimated £48,000.00. + VAT and a quote for Gainsborough town council £3,700.00. Priority will always be given to the Board's own work first.

Members received and NOTED the Operations report and update.

43.23 Engineering Report.

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

Pyewipe Pumping Station (UD-220-2013-PRO).

This project is virtually complete with some site/roadway works outstanding. The Board continues to try to meet with the Canal & Rivers Trust to clarify the responsibilities for the maintenance of the Board's access track and its use by others. An FCERM 4 has been submitted on 11th October 2023 to the EA, to release the contingency sum for this project and we are awaiting approval of this.

Western Growth Corridor, WGC (UD-128-2013-PLN) (UD-4618-2019-PLN).

At the Board meeting in June 2013 the Board confirmed its objection in principle to the development within flood plain. However, it was agreed that Officers would continue to co-operate and take part in multi-agency meetings to safeguard the Board's interests and minimise the impact on the pumped drainage system maintained by the Board.

Enabling works for the WGC development began in June 2023 with the work to alter the road junction access on to Skellingthorpe Road beginning and programmed to take 12 months. Discussions have taken place to agree the route of the Board's access, so that maintenance of the main drainage channels through the site is not obstructed throughout the entire construction period of some 23 years.

Other discussions with consultant engineers clarifying the Board's requirements regarding the route and layout of the main drainage channels, and importantly the outfalls into the Skellingthorpe Pump Drain and Boultham Pump Drain have taken place.

During the early hours of 20th October 2023 high rainfall event, it was reported that the contractor's temporary works on the Boultham Catchwater Drain [EA main river] caused a breach in the defences. This breach/overtopping resulted in the flooding of land adjacent to the Catchwater Drain. The contractor and their client attended site to put in place remedial works and stem the breach.

Further temporary works have been required but these have been for short durations and on the understanding that they have access to sufficient capacity over pumping and emergency removal 24hr a day. These works are monitored by the EA.

The Board's officers meet on a regular basis [every 3-4 weeks] with Lindum and City of Lincoln Council who are the developers for the WGC project. These meetings relate specifically to the design of the surface water drainage system, access to it for its future maintenance and operation and being able to comment on elements of detailed design. Recent topics covered are proposed changes to routes, widths of access required and the planting of trees, maintained water levels and the format of bridge crossings [clear span rather than multi-pipe layout]. These meetings will continue throughout the design process.

It was suggested it would be good timing for an update from the WGC developer to be provided to the May 2024 Board meeting.

Members received and NOTED the report and update.

66.23 Consents and Enforcements Report.

The Director of Engineering & Technical Services introduced the Consents and Enforcements Report, which had been circulated with the agenda and set out the position, both within the drainage district and in the extended rainfall catchment where the Board acts for and on behalf of LCC, as the LLFA.

Pleasingly, many cases had been closed since the last report and there was nothing of particular note to highlight on this occasion.

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

67.23 Planning and Consultations Report.

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

There were no recommendations to the Board on this occasion, the information within the report was for information.

The Board had received several consultations and commented on various planning applications to the different Local Planning Authorities [LPAs]. A full schedule was provided.

Members NOTED the report.

68.23 Environment Annual Report.

A report had been circulated with the agenda and was presented to the Members by the Director of Engineering.

Members noted the contents of the Update.

69.23 Timetable for the 2024 Elections.

A brief on the 2024 Elections and accompanying timetable was circulated with the agenda. The Chief Executive reminded Members that Elections to each of the four Boards are held every three years.

The next elections are due in October 2024, for revised membership to run from 01st November 2024 to 31st October 2027 for all four Boards (Upper Witham, Witham First, Witham Third and North East Lindsey).

Members APPROVED the list of actions and timetable to complete the elections process within the required timelines.

Members AGREED to appoint the Chief Executive as the Returning Officer.

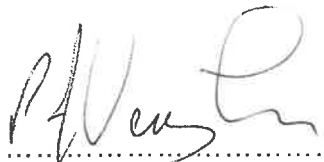
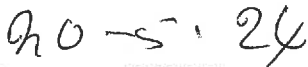
Members were asked to note that Nomination Papers are due to be issued on 02nd September 2024 and returned by 04th October 2024. If any members have a problem with these dates (e.g. abroad on holiday) please alert the office in advance on 01522 697123 to make suitable arrangements.

70.23 Any Other Business.

There were no further items of business and the meeting closed at 15.55.

71.23 Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Board was confirmed for Monday, 20th May 2024 at 2pm in Witham House. Video Conference attendance would be available for a hybrid meeting.

 Chairman  Date
UW BM 29.01.24.

