

UPPER WITHAM INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Minutes of a Meeting, incorporating the Annual Public Meeting, of Upper Witham Internal Drainage Board held on Monday, 25th November 2024 in Witham House Boardroom, North Hykeham, Lincoln at 2pm.

Present: Cllr D Armiger via video conference
Mr William Booth
Mr A Buckley
Cllr B Bushell
Cllr M Green
Mr J R Hollis
Mr P Knight
Cllr R Longbottom
Mr F H Myers **Chairman**
Cllr D Nannestad
Cllr L Pennell
Mr R Phillips
Mr M Porter
Cllr A Pritchard
Mr G Rawlings
Cllr L Sanders
Mr J Scarborough
Mr W Timmins
Mr N Tobin
Cllr P J Vaughan **Vice Chairman**
Mrs J Wilkinson **Vice Chairman**

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.

21.24 Apologies.

Apologies for absence were received from Mr T Arnold, Cllr R Baker, Cllr L Bushell, Cllr P Ellis, Cllr A Hagues, Mr E Jackson, Cllr P Morris, Cllr I Stokes, Cllr P Taylor, Mr A Ward and Cllr J Wells.

22.24 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).

23.24 Election of Chairman.

This being the Annual Public Meeting for 2024, nominations were sought for the role of Chairman. Mr Fred Myers was nominated by Cllr Pat Vaughan, seconded by Cllr Leigh Sanders and there being no further nominations, he was duly elected for the forthcoming year.

24.24 Chairman's Announcements.

Fred Myers welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked members for electing him once again.

Regarding Elections, the Chairman advised that the Board concluded the 2024 Elections process in October, with a 'Notice of No Poll' being advertised on the website. He thanked those directly elected members for standing once again as members of the Board. He then announced/welcome 3 new members to the Board:

- Michael Porter
- Andrew Ward
- William Booth

It was confirmed that there were 3 remaining vacant seats on the Board for directly elected members- for the wards of Grantham, Lincoln and South Witham.

The new term of office for those directly elected members runs for 3 years from 01st November 2024 to 31st October 2027. Membership for those nominated by the 5 Special Levy paying District Councils is unaffected by the election process

John Scarborough had informed the Chairman of his intention to step down as Vice Chairman after 8 years since November 2017, although he will remain a Board member. He was thanked for his service. John joined Upper Witham IDB 24 years ago in November 2000, upon the retirement of his father Mr R C Scarborough, a previous Chairman.

As a small token of appreciation for John's service, the Chairman presented John with a gift from the Board.

N&SDC's Leader had made a change to the representative on the Board from Newark and Sherwood District Council. The new representative is Cllr Paul Taylor, who was welcomed to the Board in his absence and thanks given to Cllr Rowen Cozens for her support over the last year.

Members were advised that the Board would receive updates on continued works to ensure recovery from storms Babet and Henk and the heavy rainfall events of last autumn and winter. The Board was amidst recovery works following the Statement of Claim made last December to the RFCC and from the IDB £75 million Fund announced in February. The Board had levered in £4.1 million in Tranche 1 from that fund, and members would be updated about the schemes which have a national completion deadline of 31st March 2025. Officers last week signed the funding agreements for several new Tranche 2 schemes from the IDB Fund, unfortunately these too must be delivered and paid for by 31st March 2025.

Members would also receive reassurance about the external auditor's closure of last financial year 2023/24, and an update on how the Board is trading financially at the end of October. The bottom line is the Board is in a healthy position. This is a one-off year of additional capital monies coming into the Board for recovery schemes, which is very positive news. But it does somewhat distort the underlying financial risks, as a lot of this income for schemes is for this year only.

Finally, the Chairman reminded Members that if they have not already done so, to confirm with Jayne Flower attendance at the Members' Training Day at Witham House

on Wednesday 04th December 2024. This will be a half-day on that morning, ending with a light buffet lunch and an optional tour of the depot.

25.24 Election of 2 Vice Chairmen.

Fred Myers and Andrew Buckley nominated and seconded Mrs Joanne Wilkinson as Vice Chairman, with Cllr Donald Nannestad and John Scarborough nominating and seconding Cllr Pat Vaughan as Vice Chairman. There being no other nominations, Joanne Wilkinson and Pat Vaughan were duly elected as the two Vice Chairmen for the ensuing year.

26.24 Election of up to 12 members to the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

The current 8 Members, being the Chairman, Vice Chairs, Cllr D Nannestad, Cllr L Pennell, Mr R Phillips, Cllr I Stokes and Mr John Scarborough were re-elected en-bloc to the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

27.24 Election of up to 6 members to the Works Committee.

The current 3 members, being the Chairman and Vice Chairs were re-elected en-bloc with the 3 vacant seats agreed to be co-opted to cover the issue concerned as and when required.

28.24 Election of Representative to ADA Lincs Branch Environment Committee.

It was agreed that this would again be an open position, no nominations being received.

29.24 Election of Representative to ADA Lincs Branch Pay & Conditions Committee.

Cllr Lance Pennell confirmed he was willing to stand as the 4 Boards' representative and, there being no further nominations, he was duly re-elected.

30.24 Election of 4 Members to the Joint Services Committee.

The current members, being the Chairman, Vice Chairs and Cllr D Nannestad, were re-elected en-bloc to the JSC. John Scarborough was nominated as deputy.

31.24 Calendar of Meeting Dates 2024.

Members approved the dates for the Board meetings and Committee meetings as follows:

Upper Witham Board Meetings (Witham House Boardroom, Meadow Lane, North Hykeham at 2pm):

- Monday, 27th January
- Monday, 19th May.
- Monday, 24th November (+APM).

Upper Witham Finance & General Purposes Committee Meetings (Witham House Boardroom, Meadow Lane, North Hykeham at 10am):

- Monday, 13th January.
- Wednesday, 07th May.
- Monday, 10th November

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

- Monday, 12th May.
- Monday, 14th July.
- Monday, 08th December.

Annual Inspection 2025

- Thursday, 17th July.

ADA 88th Flood & Water National Conference 2025

- Tuesday, 25th November

32.24 Register of Member's Interests

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Members were asked to complete the annual update of the Register of Members' Interests and hand forms to Jayne Flower at the end of the meeting or submit to them to Witham House later.

33.24 Minutes of the Board Meeting, 20.05.24.

The Minutes of the Board's meeting, held on Monday, 20th May 2024 had been circulated with the agenda and were proposed by Cllr Sanders, seconded by Cllr Nannestad and APPROVED as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING:

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

34.24 Minutes of the Joint Services Committee Meeting, 15.07.24.

The minutes of the Joint Services Committee held on Monday 15th July 2024 had been circulated with the agenda for noting.

MATTERS ARISING:

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

35.24 Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting, 11.11.24.

The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday, 11th November 2024 had been circulated with the agenda and were proposed by Cllr Vaughan, seconded by John Scarborough and APPROVED as an accurate record and the recommendations from the meeting on 11.11.24 were noted.

36.24 Chief Executive's Report.

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

36.24.1 EA Highland Water payments to IDBs, due in September 2024.

The Chief Executive updated Members on the money outstanding from the EA for processing water that comes from out of the 4 Boards' districts.

The Chief Executive wrote to Leigh Edlin, EA Area Director, on 02nd October concerning the lack of full payment of the IDB Highland Water claims by the EA by the 30.09.24 due date. These claims from the 4 W&HDBs totalled £840,251 [after downwards adjustment for monies received from other recovery sources post winter 23/24], were submitted on 01.05.24 and were due to be paid by 30.09.24, as has been usual practice since the early 1980s.

The EA has paid £530,726 leaving an in-year 24/25 cash shortfall and problem for the 4 IDBs of £309,525. The cash shortfalls are particularly acute for Witham Third DIB at £145,360 and for Upper Witham IDB at £103,776. The shortfall impact for NELDB is £48,392 and for Witham First DIB £11,997. Across IDBs in Lincolnshire, the shortfall is circa £0.5 million this year.

Although HW is a discretionary payment by the EA, it is made in recognition of IDBs having no choice but to accept and process water received from upland areas, and of course last winter 23/24 saw IDBs receiving considerable water from upland areas. The sums received are to a mutually agreed formulae, based on percentages on IDB pumping stations and drains, dating back some 40+ years. Concerns include:

- The in-year cash impact on the 4 IDBs [and others in Lincolnshire], as a proportion of total I&E this is a significant financial risk and too late in 24/25 to be covered from other sources.
- The uncertainty as to whether the shortfall monies will be paid at all in 2024/25, but with no further communications from the EA and 30.09.24 having passed, I assume not.
- The extremely short notice of non-payment of a claim submitted on 01.05.24 and the means of communication of intended non-payment. A short-notice MS Teams video conference call was arranged for Friday 13.09.24 and only then were IDBs informed of this intended EA non-payment.
- This had not been raised at any of the regular EA/IDB partnership liaison meetings as an issue, the claim having been live since May, the meeting was called a 2-days' notice and most IDBs managed to field representation. There was no prior notice, and nothing was received subsequently in writing.
- The potential precedent this sets for Highland Water payments for the future, Highland Water claims being one of the key IDB income streams in those IDBs which have no choice but to accept water from upland areas.

If this is not resolved for this year and certainty given by January 2025 for budget setting next year, the potential impact in IDB budget setting for 2025/26 will be severe. It would seem unreasonable if IDBs are forced into covering shortfalls in EA Highland Water payments by increasing their Penny Rates for 2025/26, as this cost will fall to Drainage Rate account holders in lowland areas [not the beneficiaries of the water we are processing in upland areas] and to those Councils paying Special Levies in lowland areas.

This risk matter was raised by the Chief Executive at Lincolnshire Joint FRM & W Management Group meeting, colleagues agreed this is an issue to be escalated to the partnership's Strategy Group meeting on 11.10.24 and to the Lincolnshire Scrutiny Committee meeting on 14.10.24. Peter Bateson coordinated the data on the HW payments shortfall across all Lincolnshire IDBs, approximately 2/3 of the HW claims relate to the 4 W&HDBs.

Leigh Edlin, Area Director, was contacted again on 08th October 2024 to follow-up on the email of 02.10.24. He confirmed the EA was having internal discussion and with the RFCC Chairman to see whether the total shortfall of £309k to the 4 IDBs here will be met by the EA in 2024/25.

The relevant section 57 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 sets out the process both parties must adhere to, and the following summarises the position taken with the EA:

In effect, the 4 IDBs submitted individual "applications" for fair reimbursement of highland water costs on 01.05.24.

Although EA staff advised informally IDB staff on 13.09.24 in a videoconference call that the payment would not be made, to which the IDBs are "aggrieved" we have not received from the EA the 'formal resolution of the EA not to make the full payment of claim applications and the reasons for this'.

The Chief Executive requested the EA to action this, if their position remained not to pay the claims in 2024/25, as in the process described the IDBs have 6 weeks [from the date notified of the EA's said resolution] in which to register an appeal to the Minister against the EA formal resolution. The Minister may then determine there should be a public local inquiry.

The IDBs are aware of one case of this happening in 1983 and the Decision Notice from that public local inquiry, where the then NRA was directed to make full payment of highland water monies as per the application to the IDB concerned [Witham Third DIDB], was sent for information to the EA.

On Friday 18th October the Chief Executive attended the Anglian [Northern] RFCC where Highland Water Claims, and the financial shortfall on payments due to be paid to Lincolnshire IDBs by 30.09.24, was discussed by the Committee.

Three options were presented by Henry Hammond of the EA to the RFCC members regarding how to deal with the shortfall in payments to IDBs:

- EA Pay the full shortfall to IDBs out of the EA's maintenance budget, with consequent impact [£421,705.40 shortfall across Lincolnshire, of which £309,500 is to our 4 W&HDBs].
- Use the RFCC's Local Levy Fund to pay the IDB shortfall [with reduced funding for RFCC projects]
- Don't pay the IDB HWC shortfall- with the risk that IDBs Appeal the decision and there is a successful legal challenge.

There followed considerable discussion, much of which was supportive to the IDBs' position. Eddy Poll, RFCC Chairman, allowed the Chief Executive to speak for IDBs as part of this. The option of waiting to see if there is unallocated sum available in the IDB £75 million Tranche 2 monies was also discussed, as a potential fourth option and one which would avoid local funds being depleted.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the IDBs should be PAID IN FULL the shortfall of £421,705.40, this being from Local Levy before 31.03.25 [noting the payment is overdue now] if national funds are not forthcoming. EA staff will discuss with individual IDBs our in-year cash positions, so that where possible the Local Levy will not be used if there is a possibility of getting the money from the IDB Fund T2 or other national source.

But the reassurance is that that IDBs will be reimbursed that which we are owed, but there is no such reassurance yet for HW claims in 2025/26.

36.24.2 NFU Anniversary of Storm Babet Event, Monday 21st October 2024

An event was held at Riseholme College on the evening of Monday 21st October. The CEO was invited to attend by Rhonda Thompson, NFU County Advisor for Lincolnshire. The purpose was a meeting for farmers and landowners, with confidence levels low, for them to receive an update of any strategies for the county and importantly, find out where they can help. There was representation from LCC, Internal Drainage Boards, the EA and Louth & Horncastle MP Victoria Atkins joined the meeting online.

36.24.3 IDB Fund T1 Recovery Schemes:

Since the Boards met in May, the 4 W&HDBs submitted 23 Recovery schemes against the national IDB £75 million Fund, Tranche 1 being £25 million available for Recovery Schemes. We withdrew 1 scheme [alternative funding], had 2 declined and 20 schemes were approved totalling £4.1 million.

This is consuming considerable time and staff resource across the IDBs to implement these schemes by the deadline of 31.03.25. But it is a brilliant opportunity to undertake works not likely to be funded from alternative sources. Ian Coupland is project lead for the recovery works and will give a position update later in the meeting.

36.24.4 IDB Fund Tranche 2, Resilience & Asset Improvement Schemes:

The IDB Fund second tranche of bids for IDB asset improvement and resilience was submitted 28.06.24, and approvals were anticipated the

week commencing 22.07.24, as these too are all schemes which must be completed, invoiced and paid for by 31.03.25.

The 4 W&HDB bids total £11 million. To date, no approvals were given nationally prior to the Budget on 30.10.24 and Defra via the EA who are administering the IDB Fund, asked for an assessment of IDBs' own confidence levels of delivery on each scheme, to be submitted by 11.11.24 [low, medium or high confidence].

36.24.5 Breach Repairs on EA Main Rivers:

At the ADA Branch meeting on 17.10.24 it was confirmed by the EA that 7 of the 13 breaches in Lincolnshire main rivers had been repaired, two on Barlings Eau were a temporary 5-year period fix. An eighth repair, the 2 significant bank slumps on the River Witham at Fiskerton, had now started. Discussion followed on the apparent change in policy by the EA not to reinstate bank breaches with some urgency.

There was sympathy with no national Recovery monies being made available following winter 23/24, but it was a great concern to members that a major change in EA approach had been introduced with no consultation.

36.24.6 Pay Settlement for 2025/26:

UW's Board member Cllr Lance Pennell is the 4 Boards' representative on the ADA Lincolnshire Pay & Conditions Committee, supported by the CEO. Unison's pay claim for 25/26 was a cash sum of £500 consolidated, then application of the pay formula outcome used in recent years [that formula being: 12 months rolling average of changes in public sector Average Weekly Earnings from July to July, as published in September]. This year that formula result was 5.1%. After discussion, both management and staff sides to the Pay Committee agreed on 03.10.24 that the formula only was appropriate for the settlement, employers agreeing to recommend that to the ADA Lincolnshire Branch meeting on 17.10.24 and Unison agreeing to put the resulting 5.1% proposal to a ballot of their members with a recommendation of acceptance. ADA's Branch adopted the pay settlement on 17.10.24 and this will form the basis of the ADA White Book from 01.04.25. The Unison ballot result was notified 08.11.24 and on a turnout of 83% of members, 95% of returned votes supported the recommended pay settlement.

Pay awards and whether to adopt the ADA Lincolnshire Branch recommended settlement is a matter reserved to individual Boards.

Following discussion Members formally APPROVED the recommended pay settlement of 5.1% for 2025/26.

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

37.24 External Auditors' Notice of Closure (AGAR) 2023/24.

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

The Annual Return 2023/24 was agreed at the Board meeting on 20th May 2024, subsequently published on the Board's website for public inspection and despatched to the Board's appointed External Auditor PKF Littlejohn LLP on 07th June 2024. The public inspection period was from 10th June 2024 until 19th July 2024. The Board had until 30th June 2024 to approve and submit its Annual Return 2023/24.

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 06th September 2024.

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'. The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review: Section 2, Box 10 for the prior year is incorrect due to a typographical error and should read £1,089,709.

Under the section 'Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority' they have reported 'In the completion of the Annual Internal Audit Report, and their detailed report, the internal auditor has drawn attention to weaknesses in relation to out of date policies, risk management strategy and the debt recovery procedure. The smaller authority must ensure that action is taken to address these areas of weakness in a timely manner'.

This therefore completes the External Audit for 2023/24 and this Board, along with the other 3 Boards in the Witham & Humber Drainage Boards group, have all received similar Audit opinions except 2-2 above, which only relates to Upper Witham IDB.

The Notice of Conclusion of Audit was issued on 09th September 2024 and as required has been displayed on the Board's website and at Witham House depot/office.

Members NOTED the External Audit Notice of Closure on the IDB Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2023/24, which completes the financial year 2023/24.

38.24 Month 7 2024/25 Financial Monitoring Report as at 31.10.24.

A financial monitoring report for the month 7 period as at 31st October 2024 had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Finance.

The financial performance was summarised:

Profiled Budget P7 £	Actual (Surplus)/Deficit £	Variance £
(874,549)	(824,946)	49,603
<i>Highland Water owed</i>	<i>(103,776)</i>	<i>(54,173)</i>

The Board was showing a negative variance position against the profiled budget. This was solely due to the non-receipt of the full amount of Highland Water monies that were

due from the EA at the end of September 2024. Whilst the Board received the balance of 2023/24 actual Highland Water claim, it only received 54% of the 80% due for the estimated claim for 2024/25. This was a shortfall of £103,776 for this Board. If THIS IS received in full, then the position would move to a positive variance.

As it stands, once the outstanding Highland Water monies are received (as agreed by RFCC on 19th October 2024) then the Board is in a reasonable financial position for 2024/25. Some of this is due to the delivery of a significant amount of Capital Projects which means some current budgets may not be utilised in 2024/25 ONLY (e.g. Pump Lifts) therefore this is only a one-year 2024/25 benefit.

Income (£370k):

The main income streams have been posted in terms of Drainage Rates raised (not necessarily paid) at (£358k) and Special Levies received (£1.286m) for the full year payment from the 5 relevant councils. Ongoing action is taking place against unpaid drainage rate account holders.

Significant grant income has been received for both FDGIA Flood recovery works (£70k) and IDB Fund schemes (£557k).

Rechargeable Works are being undertaken, mainly for the EA through the PSCA. Invoices have been raised up to the end of September (£117k) for PSCA and (£23k) in other recharges, with expenditure incurred to date to offset this shown in the Rechargeable Works section.

Highland Water claims, as previously mentioned, were submitted to the EA for the balance of the 2023/24 actual costs incurred of (£49,772) and for the 2024/25 Estimated claim of (£282,000).

The issue has been raised in several forums including the RFCC which met on 19th October 2024. At this meeting, the RFCC agreed that the Highland Water claims would be paid in full by the end of the financial year 31st March 2025, and that discussions would take place with individual Boards on the cash flow impact and timing of these payments. At the time of writing this report the shortfall had not been paid. The impact for the 4 Boards is shown below:

Highland Water Payments September 2024					
	Balance of Actual 2023/24	80% of Estimate 2024/25	Amount Due to be received September 2024	Amount Received September 2024	Shortfall
NEL	£ 25,019.22	£ 105,200.00	£ 130,219.22	£ 81,827.22	£ 48,392.00
UW	£ 49,772.25	£ 225,600.00	£ 275,372.25	£ 171,596.25	£ 103,776.00
W1	£ 3,278.93	£ 26,080.00	£ 29,358.93	£ 17,362.13	£ 11,996.80
W3	£ 89,300.81	£ 316,000.00	£ 405,300.81	£ 259,940.81	£ 145,360.00
Total	£ 167,371.21	£ 672,880.00	£ 840,251.21	£ 530,726.41	£ 309,524.80

Contribution to/(from) Reserves £336k

Transfers will be made from reserves to fund the Capital schemes from previously received grant contributions held in Reserves. Any grant income received and not utilised in year is transferred to reserves. To not distort the financial monitoring report,

this income is currently shown as transferred to reserves less any expenditure incurred to date. Grant Income Received IS £384k, less expenditure to date OF £48k GIVES A net position £336k.

The current position of the Drainage Rates collected for 2024/25 including previous years' arrears as at 31st October 2024 was presented to Members. The collection rate stands at 90.7% (91.9% @P7 2023/24) so we are slightly below last year's collection rate. First reminders were despatched on 19th August 2024 and final reminders were despatched on 18th October 2024. A court date was set for 27th January 2025 at Boston Magistrates Court. All historical outstanding rating queries are now resolved and only land issues raised in-year are now being actioned.

The balances as at 31st October 2024 were shown for information. The current account (Lloyds) is high, due to receiving the Special Levy income.

Bank Balances & Investments

As at 31st October 2024 (P7)		Latest Interest Rate			
Lloyds Current (prior to investment of £0.5m on 05.11.2024)	£	759,008.98	0.00%		
Lloyds Deposit	£	5,000.00	0.60%		
Nationwide Instant Access	£	857,336.08	2.05%		
Nationwide 90 Day Notice	£	15,267.84	4.15%		
Total		£ 1,636,612.90			
Chorley & District BS	364 days	20/10/2023	18/10/2024	£ 250,000.00	6.00%
Vernon BS	33 days	02/10/2024	04/11/2024	£ 500,000.00	4.25%
Chorley & District BS	364 days	18/10/2024	17/10/2025	£ 250,000.00	4.50%
Principality BS	62 days	05/11/2024	06/01/2025	£ 500,000.00	4.78%
Principality BS	30 days	05/11/2024	05/12/2024	£ 500,000.00	4.83%

PWLB Loan - Balance Outstanding

2.68%	£ 1,045,226.43
<i>Original loan £1,200,000. Loan period 30 years from 18/01/2019. Maturity date 15th November 2048. Repayments made 15th May and 15th November each year.</i>	

A replacement £250k one-year fixed term cash deposit was made on 18th October 2024 with Chorley & District Building Society at 4.5% (previously 6%). This was in combination with the other 3 Boards (although 4 separate investments of £250k each Board) to achieve this rate with a combined investment of £1m. This will generate (£11.25k) interest for each of the Boards.

Due to the receipt of the grant income, further investments have been made to achieve an uplift on the Nationwide accounts the Board operates. The rates on these Nationwide accounts have reduced from 2.25% to 2.05% on instant access and 4.25% to 4.15% for 95-day notice account from 01st November 2024.

The additional investments were shown. Overall, for the 4 Boards investment income from fixed term deposits (so excluding Nationwide) is achieving (£133k) of income as set out:

Interest Earned Per Board from Fixed Term Deposits						Total
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	
NEL	£ 6,780.82	£ 15,289.73	£ 6,133.56	£ -	£ -	£ 28,204.11
UW	£ 6,739.73	£ 21,270.68	£ 6,133.56	£ -	£ -	£ 34,143.97
W1	£ 6,739.73	£ 15,289.73	£ 6,133.56	£ -	£ -	£ 28,163.01
W3	£ 6,739.73	£ 29,996.58	£ 6,133.56	£ -	£ -	£ 42,869.86
Total	£ 27,000.00	£ 81,846.71	£ 24,534.25	£ -	£ -	£ 133,380.96

Electricity:

Members were reminded of the significant increases in electricity rates from October 2022, via the ESPO Electricity Framework that the Board uses, with unit prices averaging 30p/KWH and Standing Charges increasing from £14k to £34k p.a. for the Board and from £51k to £128k for the Witham and Humber group. However, these unit rates did not increase as significantly as the market, where rates peaked at over 70p/KWH.

Due to the 'forward buying' model used by ESPO it did mean that further increases would feed through in the following year from 01.10.23 with average unit rates of 33.5p/KWH and standing charges increasing again to £44k p.a. for the Board and £200k across the Witham and Humber group.

Budgets for 2024/25 were calculated based upon these October 2023 rates, along with the new standing charges for 6 months and an anticipated plus 10% for the final 6 months. However, these budgets were predicated on an 'average' rainfall year/usage, not a 'dry' year or a 'wet' year such as 2019/20 and 2023/24 respectively.

The electricity Budgets approved for 2024/25 for the Boards were as follows [2023/24 and 2022/23 as a comparator]:

	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2023/24	Budget 2022/23
NEL	£ 90,000	£ 90,000	£ 15,000
UW	£ 192,000	£ 192,000	£ 48,000
W1	£ 335,500	£ 305,000	£ 69,000
W3	£ 220,000	£ 220,000	£ 69,000
Total	£ 837,500	£ 807,000	£ 201,000

For the period of this report (first 6 months for electricity, to 30.09.24) these budgets have not been sufficient, with some modest overspends experienced to the end of September invoices.

New rates had been received from ESPO applicable from 01st October 2024. The good news was that due to the buying strategy used by ESPO, the hourly rates are reducing to an average of 20p/KWH for day rates and 17.5p/KWH for night rates. This reflects the significant reduction in rates as seen in the market. Members were reminded that, due to the way that ESPO 'buy ahead' blocks of units of electricity there has been a lag in the reduction. However, when looking across the last 2 years, unit rates have peaked at 33.5p which is far less than the large increases seen over the last 24 months.

Day Rates (p/KWH)

	Oct-24	Oct-23	Oct-22	Oct-21	Oct-20	Oct-19	Y-O-Y Change				
							24 to 23	23 to 22	22 to 21	21 to 20	20 to 19
Min	18.4123	31.7739	27.9015	12.4119	11.0647	12.8496	-42.05%	13.88%	124.80%	12.18%	-13.89%
Max	20.7269	35.3702	32.1291	16.8755	22.2900	22.2900	-41.40%	10.09%	90.39%	-24.29%	0.00%
Avg	20.0778	34.2874	30.6964	14.9267	13.6598	14.7974	-41.44%	11.70%	105.65%	9.27%	-7.69%

Night Rates (p/KWH)

	Oct-24	Oct-23	Oct-22	Oct-21	Oct-20	Oct-19	Y-O-Y Change				
							24 to 23	23 to 22	22 to 21	21 to 20	20 to 19
Min	16.7177	31.2170	27.0600	11.6027	9.9769	10.3882	-46.45%	15.36%	133.22%	16.30%	-3.96%
Max	17.8229	33.1785	28.9451	12.3624	17.6400	17.6400	-46.28%	14.63%	134.14%	-29.92%	0.00%
Avg	17.4477	32.5520	28.2408	12.0977	10.6157	10.8729	-46.40%	15.27%	133.44%	13.96%	-2.37%

For standing charges there is a slight reduction overall from 01.10.24. However, this is offset (and more) by increases KVA allowance charges. The following table showed how standing charges are reducing by (£17k) after 3 years of significant increases. Four years ago, in October 2020 the 4 Boards' standing charges were £14,989.73 compared with an increase to £199,862.78 from 01.10.23:

W&H Pumping Stations

	Oct-24	Oct-23	Oct-22	Oct-21	Oct-20	Oct-19
NEL	£ 14,750.78	£ 16,119.75	£ 10,670.12	£ 4,678.99	£ 1,378.84	£ 1,147.12
UW	£ 40,836.67	£ 44,481.50	£ 28,820.22	£ 12,244.51	£ 4,124.13	£ 3,803.99
W1	£ 76,169.02	£ 84,851.25	£ 54,622.95	£ 20,361.68	£ 5,173.69	£ 5,218.87
W3	£ 51,031.49	£ 54,410.29	£ 33,803.27	£ 14,099.40	£ 4,313.06	£ 3,521.91
Total	£ 182,787.96	£ 199,862.78	£ 127,916.57	£ 51,384.58	£ 14,989.73	£ 13,691.90

Increase

NEL	-£ 1,368.97	£ 5,449.63	£ 5,991.13	£ 3,300.15	£ 231.73	
UW	-£ 3,644.83	£ 15,661.27	£ 16,575.71	£ 8,120.38	£ 320.14	
W1	-£ 8,682.22	£ 30,228.30	£ 34,261.27	£ 15,187.99	-£ 45.19	
W3	-£ 3,378.80	£ 20,607.02	£ 19,703.87	£ 9,786.34	£ 791.15	
Total	-£ 17,074.82	£ 71,946.21	£ 76,531.98	£ 36,394.86	£ 1,297.83	

Min	£ 246.75	£ 214.47	£ 189.04	£ 168.49	£ 73.00	£ 72.31
Max	£ 13,692.21	£ 15,188.94	£ 9,411.86	£ 3,092.10	£ 756.37	£ 735.38
Average	£ 3,808.08	£ 4,163.81	£ 2,664.93	£ 1,070.51	£ 312.29	£ 285.25

Unfortunately, this year we have seen an increase in the KVA allowance charges which more than offset the reduction in standing charges. This is a result of another 'cost shift' from unit rates and standing charges for elements of the network and distribution costs.

KVA Rates						
	Oct-24	Oct-23	Oct-22	Oct-21	Oct-20	Oct-19
NEL	£ 2,014.80	£ 1,076.40	£ 1,076.40	£ 1,048.80	£ 1,146.84	£ 1,119.24
UW	£ 15,772.32	£ 9,998.88	£ 8,905.92	£ 8,406.24	£ 8,240.28	£ 7,934.28
W1	£ 35,955.36	£ 21,903.84	£ 19,424.16	£ 18,184.32	£ 17,268.84	£ 18,197.88
W3	£ 19,778.40	£ 13,762.80	£ 12,171.60	£ 11,595.60	£ 11,403.60	£ 11,143.20
Total	£ 73,520.88	£ 46,741.92	£ 41,578.08	£ 39,234.96	£ 38,059.56	£ 38,394.60
Y-O-Y Increase						
NEL	£ 938.40	£ -	£ 27.60	-£ 98.04	£ 27.60	
UW	£ 5,773.44	£ 1,092.96	£ 499.68	£ 165.96	£ 306.00	
W1	£ 14,051.52	£ 2,479.68	£ 1,239.84	£ 915.48	-£ 929.04	
W3	£ 6,015.60	£ 1,591.20	£ 576.00	£ 192.00	£ 260.40	
Total	£ 26,778.96	£ 5,163.84	£ 2,343.12	£ 1,175.40	-£ 335.04	
Net Increase in KVA & Standing Charges						
	Oct-24	Oct-23	Oct-22	Oct-21	Oct-20	
NEL	-£ 430.57	£ 5,449.63	£ 6,018.73	£ 3,202.11	£ 259.33	
UW	£ 2,128.61	£ 16,754.23	£ 17,075.39	£ 8,286.34	£ 626.14	
W1	£ 5,369.30	£ 32,707.98	£ 35,501.11	£ 16,103.47	-£ 974.23	
W3	£ 2,636.80	£ 22,198.22	£ 20,279.87	£ 9,978.34	£ 1,051.55	
Total	£ 9,704.14	£ 77,110.05	£ 78,875.10	£ 37,570.26	£ 962.79	

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

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

OFGEM believes the most effective way to make sure everyone contributes fairly is through a fixed per/day charge (standing charge). In 'normal' times the day/night unit rates will have reduced, due to these charges coming out of the unit rates and into the standing charges. Unfortunately, we are not seeing this increase in standing charges with corresponding reduction in unit rates due to the increases in day and night unit rates for other reasons. The level of charge paid is determined by the TCR Band each site is allocated, an allocation that is carried out by the distribution networks. ESPO's flexible energy contract meant that customers started to see the changes from 01st October 2021, with the beginning of the new scheme starting in April 2022 onwards.

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

These standing/KVA charges put significant pressure on the 4 Boards' cost of electricity based on a 'normal usage' year. After two years of large increases in the penny rates to accommodate the significant electricity increases, it is pleasing that further increases in Standing Charges have not been experienced again but that this is offset by

increases in KVA allowance rates. Further information will be supplied on this issue in the Budget Report to the Board in January 2024.

We have raised our concerns regarding this further significant increase in Standing/KVA Charges with both ESPO as the Framework provider and ADA, the IDBs' membership body, who nationally is aware of the pressures this place on IDBs and have been lobbying OFGEM on this issue.

Write Off Report:

Members were requested to review the write-off of drainage rates proposed in the report, comprising accounts under £2.50 where it is not economical to send out an invoice, uncollectable accounts and those relating to land transferred to Special Levy.

Under £2.50	£22.96
Uncollectable 0588	£31.78
Uncollectable 0721	£151.91
Special Levy 0324	£45.74
Special Levy 0755	£31.33
TOTAL	£283.72

Following discussion, Members AGREED the write off of accounts and NOTED the month 7 2024/25 financial position as at 31.10.2024.

39.24 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.

Between the 4 Boards, there have been 10 reported Incidents, with 4 being within UW:

- (UW) – damage to EA Manhole cover, with slight damage to the casting.
- (UW) – LDO didn't raise the roller shutter door far enough and reversed a vehicle into roller shutter (c£2K repair damage). Incident reviewed and updated risk assessments.
- (UW) – LDO exited the Volvo 150e wheeled excavator, 'missed' top step. No damage on vehicle at the time of investigation, investigation report provided. Not RIDDOR as returned to work before 7 days.
- (UW) – LDO raised damage report but was recorded as an incident. Known risk when moving under low bridge, moved the plant equipment to get under bridge and it struck the floor, damage to the equipment which required repair, and potential spillage on the highway.

The annual vegetation maintenance programme commenced in late June and was well underway. The challenge this year had been the number of new starters in the last year, starting the season with 9 Operatives for whom this was their first season. The challenges had been met head on, with the annual vegetation maintenance and also an improved position and estimated completion of this year's programme by early January.

Contractors had been employed to work in each Board's district through the season, to start the bank slip repair work needed following the flood events of last October and January. When the vegetation maintenance season is complete, teams of Board

Operatives will ensure as many bank slips are repaired as possible whilst the national IDB funding is available.

Annual Maintenance:

The Board was on target to finish the annual maintenance programme by Mid-December/early January. The Long-reach machine had started to undertake some bushing works and as with the other Boards a team would be assembled to tackle more bank slip repairs.

Staffing:

LDO Ian Moore left the Board in September. Ian operated the JCB 180 tracked machine but was versatile on any machine. A replacement LDO started on Monday 11th November who comes with a lot of plant machinery experience. There is an UW Operative on long-term illness absence. Unfortunately, a further member of staff left the Boards without notice at the beginning of November, but this position will be held vacant until the New Year before a recruitment process is commenced.

Plant and Machinery:

A Big-Ab trailer body was stolen from Burton pumping station on the 19th August 2024. Further unwanted visitors were received to the JCB excavator during the night of Friday 01st November, near Gainsborough. They stole approx. 200 litres of fuel and some tools. Both incidents have been reported to Lincolnshire Police, but no claim made on the insurance as the loss does not meet the policy excess level.

Invitations to Tender for the replacement of the long-reach excavator as per the Board's approved plant replacement programme have been issued. The new machine is to be delivered before the start of the vegetation season in July 2025.

Fleet Vehicles and 4x4's:

Officers will review the current fleet vehicles. Some are owned and some are leased from different sources. There are 20 vehicles due to be returned in May 2025 and currently we have 9 vehicles off the road, broken down and awaiting repair.

Double Cab Taxation:

The Director of Operations raised the issue of the triple tax on Double cab pick-ups announced on 30.10.24 in the Budget; and the problems this will give the Boards and Staff. Across the group there are 20 Double-cabs and 14 are taken home by the Operatives (for example the pump Operatives who respond to issues at the stations), who may suddenly be hit by a tax liability that is 3 times the current tax payable. If Operatives can no longer afford to take vehicles home the Boards will lose operating time by potentially having to change working practices, i.e. when an Operative has to come to the depot to pick up a vehicle instead of going from home to site. But the biggest impact will be the speed Operatives can react during a flood event if staff have to come to a depot to pick up vehicles. This will also have a cost implication to the Boards, as these vehicles will no longer be classed as 'light commercials', meaning the road tax payable could double or more. Officers will review the type of vehicles within the fleet. No changes nationally will take effect before 2029.

Public Sector Cooperation Agreement [PSCA] works:

The PSCA work the 4 Boards undertake for the EA has gone better than anticipated this year. There have been some areas incomplete due to main river bank breaches or unsafe banks but we have completed the majority of works the EA commissioned from the Boards. NELDB have completed their PSCA works, Witham Third have completed

their works and Witham First only have Farroway to finish. Upper Witham only have the short stretches of Skinnand and Cardinal drains to finish.

Officers do not anticipate undertaking any winter PSCA work for the EA this year. Operatives will concentrate on bank slip repairs on Board maintained watercourses.

It is not clear what next year will hold for EA PSCA work as the EA have reduced maintenance budgets and may not know until January what monies they have for maintenance works from April. Officers wait to hear what quantity of work EA want IDBs to quote for undertaking in the coming year 2025/26.

Other rechargeable works:

Upper Witham have undertaken work for WLDC in Gainsborough, Caenby Corner and for NKDC works have been done around Waddington and Brant Road, also de-silting to undertake on Long Leys Road for City of Lincoln Council. We are waiting to hear about work quoted for at Stapleford on behalf of LCC. This is at the western end of the roadside ditch which is to be flailed / bushed and desilted and also culverts jettied.

Members received and NOTED the Operations report and update.

40.24 Capital Programme Report

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

Following the programme refresh in June 2024, the EA reviewed all the bids for funding across the country and gave an indicative allocation for the remaining two years of the 6-year capital programme. There had been a significant reduction in the number of projects funded across the country and the EA national team had reduced the amount of over programme local areas are allowed. In Lincs & Northants the over programme has always been in the region of 35%, however this has now been reduced to 5%.

This has resulted in a number of projects being delayed and pushed back into the next 6-year programme, which starts in April 2027. Individual Boards had been given an allocation of funding and a target of OM2's (residential properties) for the next two years, the directive from the EA is not to go above the monetary allocation or below the target number of OM2's, but it is allowed to move funding around between projects within the individual Board's allocation.

A schedule of projects was presented.

Members were informed that some funding bids did not receive funding in the indicative allocation, and they would therefore be delayed until the next 6-year programme. Officers would continue to discuss with the EA the need for these projects and to determine if any could be brought into the current programme over the next two years.

Upper Witham:

Saxilby Pumping Station Refurbishment

IDB No

EA National Project No

ANC501E/000A/205A

GIA Claim No

TBC

GIA Approval Amount

£65,000 (awaiting approval)

Project Stage

Outline Business Case Development

An FCERM 7 has been submitted to the Environment Agency to allow the development of the project, this will allow for the pump feasibility and specification, asset inspection and ecological and topographic surveys to be procured.

Development of the Outline Business Case will commence once the asset inspection has been undertaken.

Only staff time has been incurred on this project to date with no direct income/expenditure.

Pyewipe PS Refurbishment:

IDB No	UD 220-2013-PRO
EA National Project No	ANC403I/002A/010A
GIA Claim No	IDB 0464
GIA Approval Amount (contributions)	£557,517 (+ Board £15k and developer £154k)
Project Stage	Delivery

All outstanding defects and snagging to the new building have been completed. Demolition of the old switch room has also been completed, with a portion of the existing wall remaining in-situ to act as a pedestrian barrier to leave the remaining footprint of the building in a safe condition.

Discussions are ongoing with the Canals and Rivers Trust [CRT] to agree the repairs and timings of the works to the access track, although this is now progressing. CRT have proposed measures to restrict unauthorised access to the track. A height limiting barrier is to be installed adjacent to their depot with a locked barrier across the track at the limit of their residential moorings. All residents will have an allocated car parking space at their depot car park. Whilst the Board is willing to comply with the agreement which saw the construction of the track, by the Board in 1999, it is not willing to maintain an asset that others allow unrestricted access to the public. Once these access controls are in place the remedial works can be completed.

At the site meeting held on 16th Network Rail agreed to complete vegetation control works to clear the remaining obstructions to the access track. These works have now been undertaken. Members were reminded that the Board agreed to surrender the pedestrian footpath access right across the blind bend on the Network Rail track, in exchange for a payment of £5k plus £2k towards legal fees (actual legal fees £1,759). This matter has now been concluded.

Income and spend as at 31st October 2024:

Pyewipe PS FDGIA Scheme	Budget	Actual	Variance
Income	(£713,171)	(£722,374)	(£9,203)
Expenditure	£713,171	£684,799	(£28,372)
Net	£0	(£37,574)	(£37,574)

This scheme will be close to the budget allocation, upon completion.

Telemetry (UW):

IDB No	JA-1583-2014-ASS
EA National Project No	ANC501E/000A/190A
GIA Claim No	IDB 0554

GIA Approval Amount
Project Stage

£118,224 (+ Board contribution £1k)
Delivery

All telemetry software has been updated. The only sites left for new telemetry hardware are the 3 level monitoring bollard sites.

Storm Babet Recovery – FDGIA Schemes:

Following Storm Babet recovery work to 18 locations across three Boards was approved via the FDGIA funding route, this was summarised as follows:

Statement of Claim FDGIA Capital Works Monitoring Sheet

Asset	Grant Approval Number	Board	Cost	60%OB	Total Cost	Grant Received	
						Received in Bank	Balance to Receive (Excl Contingency)
Blankney	IDB 0598	W1IDB	£ 111,000	£ 67,000	£ 178,000	£ 111,000	£ -
Farroway	IDB 0597	W1IDB	£ 59,000	£ 36,000	£ 95,000	£ 59,000	£ -
Sandhill Beck	IDB 0596	W1IDB	£ 49,000	£ 30,000	£ 79,000	£ 49,000	£ -
Heighington	IDB 0590	W1IDB	£ 111,000	£ 67,000	£ 178,000	£ 111,000	£ -
SUB TOTAL W1			£ 330,000	£200,000	£ 530,000	£ 330,000	£ -
Stamp End	IDB 0895	W3IDB	£ 10,000	£ 6,000	£ 16,000		£ 10,000
Greetwell	IDB 0589	W3IDB	£ 95,000	£ 57,000	£ 152,000	£ 95,000	£ -
Stainfield	IDB 0587	W3IDB	£ 100,000	£ 60,000	£ 160,000	£ 100,000	£ -
Bardney Fen	IDB 0593	W3IDB	£ 35,000	£ 21,000	£ 56,000	£ 35,000	£ -
Southrey	IDB 0601	W3IDB	£ 140,000	£ 84,000	£ 224,000	£ 140,000	£ -
Duckpool & Stixwold	IDB 0599	W3IDB	£ 85,000	£ 51,000	£ 136,000	£ 85,000	£ -
Marsh Lane	IDB 0600	W3IDB	£ 90,000	£ 54,000	£ 144,000	£ 90,000	£ -
Dogdyke	IDB 0591	W3IDB	£ 10,000	£ 6,000	£ 16,000	£ 10,000	£ -
Coningsby Ings	IDB 0602	W3IDB	£ 210,000	£126,000	£ 336,000	£ 155,000	£ 55,000
SUB TOTAL W3			£ 775,000	£465,000	£1,240,000	£ 710,000	£ 65,000
Coulson	IDB	UWIDB	£ 20,000	£ 12,000	£ 32,000	£ 70,000	£ -
Boultham		UWIDB	£ 50,000	£ 30,000	£ 80,000		
SUB TOTAL UW			£ 70,000	£ 42,000	£ 112,000	£ 70,000	£ -
Sub Total Schemes Approved			£1,175,000	£707,000	£1,882,000	£1,110,000	£ 65,000
Schemes Now Funded via IDB Fund							
Short Ferry	IDB 0588	W3IDB	£ 100,000	£ 60,000	£ 160,000		
Stainfield (new)	IDB 0592	W3IDB	£ 25,000	£ 15,000	£ 40,000		
Bardney Abbey	IDB 0594	W3IDB	£ 30,000	£ 18,000	£ 48,000		
Sub Total Schemes Approved			£ 155,000	£ 93,000	£ 248,000	£ -	£ -
Overall Total			£1,330,000	£800,000	£2,130,000	£1,110,000	£ 65,000

Three schemes have been withdrawn (shaded in the table) from this funding route, as they are being funded via the IDB Fund.

Boultham Pumping Station:

The 2 x motors at Boultham need refurbishing, one is due out imminently and the second will be done following the reinstatement of the first. A gantry is to be constructed to allow easier access to the Southern weed screen deck.

Coulson Road Pumping Station:

The 2 x Submersible pumps at Coulson Road need refurbishing and work will start before Christmas.

Income and spend as at 31st October 2024:

Telemetry FDGIA Scheme	Budget	Actual	Variance
Income	(£119,224)	(£98,353)	£20,871
Expenditure	£119,224	£57,238	(£61,986)
Net	£0	(£41,115)	(£41,115)

IDB Recovery Fund:

In February 2024 the government announced a £75m fund to assist IDBs in recovering from the flooding over the winter of 2023/24. This fund is provided through DEFRA and is being administered by the Environment Agency.

The funding was allocated to two tranches, the first of approximately £25m being focused on recovery works to assets damaged by the storms and the second of approximately £50m to the improvement of assets to provide better resilience to flooding. The original timescales for bids and approvals are set out below:

21 May	Issue of funding prospectus & EOI forms & Application window opened.
7 June	Application deadline Tranche 1
28 June	Application deadline Tranche 2
End June	Award of Tranche 1 projects
End July	Award of Tranche 2 projects
End March 2025	Completion of Works

Witham & Humber Boards bid for 22 projects totalling £4.4m in tranche 1 and a further 13 projects totalling £10.7m in Tranche 2.

IDB Recovery & Resilience Fund Applications

Version 6 - 10/10/2024

RECOVERY & RESILIENCE PROJECTS		Application Number	Recovery Projects		Asset Improvement		Cost
			Tranche 1		Tranche 2		
Witham & Humber Boards Bank Slip Reinstatement	All Boards (W3)	AT1-068	£ 1,500,000	Approved			£ 1,500,000
Mobile pump replacement	All Boards (W3)	AT1-063	£ 225,500	Approved (Condnl)	Withdrawn		£ 225,500
North East Lindsey IDB Storm Recovery Costs	North East Lindsey IDB	AT1-067	£ 20,900	Approved			£ 20,900
Aubourn PS Replace Submersible Pumps	Upper Witham IDB	AT1-049	£ 84,000	Approved (Condnl)	Withdrawn		£ 84,000
Sandsyke PS Replace Submersible Pumps	Upper Witham IDB	AT1-050	£ 84,000	Approved (Condnl)	Withdrawn		£ 84,000
Torksey Syke PS Refurbishment & Pump Replacement	Upper Witham IDB	AT1-061	£ 445,000	Approved (Condnl)	AT2-0009 Withdrawn		£ 445,000
Burton Pumping Station Pump & Motor Refurbishment	Upper Witham IDB	AT1-052	£ 83,000	Approved (Condnl)	Withdrawn		£ 83,000
Pyewipe Automatic Weedscreen Cleaner Repair	Upper Witham IDB	AT1-053	£ 42,000	Approved	Withdrawn		£ 42,000
Hykeham PS Refurbishment	Upper Witham IDB	AT1-054	£ 240,000	Approved (Condnl)	Withdrawn		£ 240,000
Upper Witham IDB Storm Recovery Costs	Upper Witham IDB	AT1-066	£ 120,975	Approved			£ 120,975
Farroway Pumping Station Weedscreen deck reinstatement & weedscreen repairs	Witham First District IDB	AT1-060	£ 158,000	Approved			£ 158,000
Timberland Pumping Station Pump refurbishment	Witham First District IDB	AT1-062	£ 84,000	Approved (Condnl)	Withdrawn		£ 84,000
Witham First DIDB Storm Recovery Costs	Witham First District IDB	AT1-065	£ 215,663	Approved			£ 215,663
Short Ferry PS Refurb	Witham Third District IDB	AT1-047	£ 160,000	Approved (Condnl)	Withdrawn		£ 160,000
Bardney Abbey PS Refurb	Witham Third District IDB	AT1-048	£ 48,000	Approved (Condnl)	Withdrawn		£ 48,000
Replacement Tilting Weirs at Dogdyke & Marsh Lane	Witham Third District IDB	AT1-055	£ 208,000	Approved			£ 208,000
Stainfield New Pumping Station Pump Replacement	Witham Third District IDB	AT1-056 AT2-0024	£ 84,000	Approved (Condnl)			£ 84,000
Kirkstead Pumping Station AWC Replacement	Witham Third District IDB	AT1-057	£ 105,000	Approved			£ 105,000
Marsh Lane (Old) Pumping Station Pump Refurbishment	Witham Third District IDB	AT1-058	£ 25,000	Approved	Withdrawn		£ 25,000
Witham Third DIDB Storm Recovery Costs	Witham Third District IDB	AT1-064	£ 166,053	Approved			£ 166,053
Total Projects Approved (DEFRA)		20	£ 4,099,091	-	£ -	20	£ 4,099,091
Heighington PS Refurb	Witham First District IDB	AT1-046	£ 111,000	**Withdrawn**			£ 111,000
Total Projects Withdrawn (but in FDGIA)		1	£ 111,000	-	£ -	1	£ 111,000

Branston Pumping Station Syphon Breakers	Witham First District IDB	AT1-061 AT2-0011			£ 79,000		£ 79,000
Coningsby Ings Automatic Weedscreen Replacement	Witham Third District IDB	AT1-059 AT2-0019			£ 175,000		£ 175,000
Total Projects NOT Approved		2	£ 254,000	2	£ 254,000	2	£ 254,000
Additional Mobile Pump Capacity	All Boards (UW)	AT2-0055			£ 1,128,000		£ 1,128,000
Replacement Archamedies Screw Pumps at Fen Lane, North Kyme & Decoy Pumping Stations	All Boards (UW)	AT2-0042			£ 1,725,000		£ 1,725,000
Water Level Control Structures & Penstock Automation at various locations	All Boards (W1)	AT2-0051			£ 675,000		£ 675,000
Automatic Weedscreens	All Boards (UW)	AT2-0052			£ 1,415,000		£ 1,415,000
Total 'All Boards' Projects		-	£ -	4	£ 4,943,000	4	£ 4,943,000
Access Platforms & weedscreen	North East Lindsey IDB	AT2-0040			£ 82,000		£ 82,000
Total NEL Projects		-	£ -	1	£ 82,000	1	£ 82,000
Coulson Road	Upper Witham IDB	AT2-0039			£ 1,050,000		£ 1,050,000
Total UW Projects		-	£ -	1	£ 1,050,000	1	£ 1,050,000
Sandhill Beck Pumping Station additional pump	Witham First District IDB	AT2-0038			£ 1,220,000		£ 1,220,000
Total W1 Projects		-	£ -	1	£ 1,220,000	1	£ 1,220,000
Shortferry Pumping Station additional pump	Witham Third District IDB	AT2-0032			£ 800,000		£ 800,000
Southrey Pumping Station additional pump	Witham Third District IDB	AT2-0031			£ 550,000		£ 550,000
Bardney Fen relocate MCC to Bardney Abbey	Witham Third District IDB	AT2-0036			£ 240,000		£ 240,000
Gantry Installation at Coningsby Ings and Duckpool Pumping Stations	Witham Third District IDB	AT2-0037			£ 74,000		£ 74,000
Marsh Drain Breach Repair (PSCA)	Witham Third District IDB	AT2-0033			£ 400,000		£ 400,000
Fiskerton & Stixwold replacement electric motors (1 each of 2)	Witham Third District IDB	AT2-0035			£ 1,335,000		£ 1,335,000
Total W3 Projects		-	£ -	6	£ 3,399,000	6	£ 3,399,000
		23	£ 4,464,091	15	£ 10,948,000	36	£ 15,158,091

Summary	Recovery Projects		Resilience Projects		All Projects	
Approved Schemes (DEFRA)	20	£ 4,099,091	-	£ -	20	£ 4,099,091
Withdrawn (but FDGIA)	1	£ 111,000	-	£ -	1	£ 111,000
Unapproved Schemes (but	-	£ -	-	£ -	-	£ -
	21	£ 4,210,091	-	£ -	21	£ 4,210,091
OUTSTANDING SCHEMES						
All Boards	-	£ -	4	£ 4,943,000	4	£ 4,943,000
Schemes NOT Approved T1	2	£ 254,000	2	£ 254,000	2	£ 254,000
North East Lindsey	-	£ -	1	£ 82,000	1	£ 82,000
Upper Witham	-	£ -	1	£ 1,050,000	1	£ 1,050,000
Witham 1st	-	£ -	1	£ 1,220,000	1	£ 1,220,000
Witham 3rd	-	£ -	6	£ 3,399,000	6	£ 3,399,000
	2	£ 254,000	15	£ 10,948,000	15	£ 10,948,000
Total	23	£ 4,464,091	15	£ 10,948,000	36	£ 15,158,091

We have been successful in gaining approval for 20 projects with a total of £4.1m. The full approval for 10 of these projects where repairs to pumps or new pumps were

required was delayed until October, due to the requirement for the Eel regulations compliance to be approved by the EA. One project was withdrawn, and this scheme (Heighington) has remained under the FDGIA funding, due to concerns of completion by 31st March 2025. Two other Tranche 1 schemes were not approved but have been resubmitted for consideration for Tranche 2 funding.

We have yet to receive approval for the tranche 2 asset resilience & improvement works. Due to these delays in awarding the Tranche 2 funding, submissions have been made to the IDB Fund to update the status on each scheme and whether each scheme can still be deliverable by 31st March 2025. Progress on each project was detailed as follows:

Storm Recovery Costs:

Witham First DIDB Storm Recovery Costs	AT1-065	£215,663
Witham Third DIDB Storm Recovery Costs	AT1-064	£166,053
Upper Witham DIDB Storm Recovery Costs	AT1-066	£120,975
North East Lindsey IDB Storm Recovery Costs	AT1-067	£ 20,900

These schemes were to reimburse the Boards for additional costs incurred during the storm events over and above 'business as usual'. The Witham & Humber Boards also had to offset the income they had received via the Statement of Claim and those costs they would receive via the usual Highland Water claim. As these costs had already been incurred then the full grant amount has been received.

Slip Repairs:

Slip repairs are currently being undertaken by contractors on all the Boards. On North East Lindsey we have Carnaby's (their current main contractor), on Upper Witham we have Steve Hill contracting and Will Timmins Contractors, on Witham First we are using Main Agri and Spence Bros and on Witham Third Mill Farm Services. We are supplying all the materials and currently have in stock, timber 5' stakes, 10' & 14' fir piles, back boarding, frost proof lump stone, clay and top soil. In addition to the stock we hold in the depot, we have had deliveries direct to site. We will soon be in a position where we can add our own teams into the mix to ensure more slips get repaired.

There are some larger repairs to undertake from this £1.5 million bank slips funding- including Minting Village, also on Minting /Gautby Beck [W3rd], All Hallows Drain [W3rd], Tillbridge Lane [UW] and Stainfield roadside[W3rd].

Mobile Pumps:

We have placed an order for some additional mobile pumps, for 1 x 4" pump, 1 x 6" pump and 1 x 8" pump on road towable trailers in quiet canopies, with telemetry, all required hoses and fittings and 2 x fish /eel baskets. We have also purchased some flat big-ab roll on roll off trailer bodies to put our older pumps on and 2 x 900 litre fuel cubes to assist with running the pumps during an event. All this at a cost of £197,215.

Upper Witham Tranche 1schemes:

Aubourn Pumping Station.

We are replacing the 2 x cannister pumps with new pumps following a lot of discussion with EA fisheries at a cost of circa £70,000. A final surveyed quote will be with us soon and work will then start.

Sandsyke Pumping Station

We are replacing the 2 x cannister pumps with new pumps following a lot of discussion with EA fisheries at a cost of circa £80,000. A final surveyed quote will be with us soon and work will start soon afterwards.

Burton Pumping Station

1 x Pump and motor are out for refurbishment, the second will follow. Weed screen has been replaced with new due to damage and the outfall pipe is to be relined due to seepage when used - quoted at £35,798 (subject to survey).

Pyewipe Pumping Station

The old automatic weed screen cleaner is having a full refurbishment, due to start mid-November.

North Hykeham Pumping Station

We are installing a new motor and inverter drive @£36,268 and a new control panel @ £35,711. This station also needs the outfall pipe relining due to seepage, which is quoted at £25,774 (subject to survey).

Torksey Syke Pumping Station

We are replacing the canister pumps with new @ circa £90,000, a new control panel @ circa £125,375 and a new automated weed screen cleaner @ circa £148,000.

Tranche 2 Asset Improvement Applications

Below is a summary of the asset improvements projects applied for in Tranche 2. We are currently waiting for approval for these bids which were submitted on 28th June 2024.

All Boards			
Additional Mobile Pump Capacity	All Boards (UW)	AT2-0055	£1,128,000
Replacement Archimedes Screw Pumps at Fen Lane, North Kyme & Decoy Pumping Stations	All Boards (UW)	AT2-0042	£1,725,000
Water Level Control Structures & Penstock Automation at various locations	All Boards (W1)	AT2-0051	£675,000
Automatic Weedscreens	All Boards (UW)	AT2-0052	£1,415,000
Witham First DIB			
Branston Pumping Station Syphon Breakers	Witham First District IDB	AT1-061 AT2-0011	£79,000
Sandhill Beck Pumping Station additional pump	Witham First District IDB	AT2-0038	£1,220,000
Witham Third DIB			
Coningsby Ings Automatic Weedscreen Replacement	Witham Third District IDB	AT1-059 AT2-0019	£175,000
Shortferry Pumping Station additional pump	Witham Third District IDB	AT2-0032	£800,000

Southrey Pumping Station additional pump	Witham Third District IDB	AT2-0031	£550,000
Bardney Fen relocate MCC to Bardney Abbey	Witham Third District IDB	AT2-0036	£240,000
Gantry Installation at Coningsby Ings and Duckpool Pumping Stations	Witham Third District IDB	AT2-0037	£74,000
Marsh Drain Breach Repair (PSCA)	Witham Third District IDB	AT2-0033	£400,000
Fiskerton & Stixwold replacement electric motors (1 each of 2)	Witham Third District IDB	AT2-0035	£1,335,000
<i>Upper Witham DIB</i>			
Coulson Road	Upper Witham IDB	AT2-0039	£1,050,000
<i>North East Lindsey IDB</i>			
Access Platforms & weedscreen	North East Lindsey IDB	AT2-0040	£82,000

There is a substantial amount of work being delivered across a small team of Officers, and all teams are involved in its delivery, over and above the usual maintenance works and PSCA works which are also ongoing. The Boards have been very successful in securing this level of funding and Tranche 2 approval is still awaited. There is a reliance on external suppliers and contractors who are required to deliver within the timescales, particularly on the IDB Fund projects, but this also brings in a risk in that the Boards are reliant on these suppliers and contractors to deliver.

Members noted the Capital Programme Report.

15.24 Engineering Services Report.

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

Flood Events:

The Boards' staff are still working on the Statement of Claim and IDB Fund Tranche 1 Recovery schemes, with completion dates on assets of 31st March 2025.

Section 19 Flood Investigations:

The Boards have received the final reports for the following Section 19 investigations from flooding incidents which occurred in Storms Babet [Oct 23] and Henk [Jan 24].

Location	S19 Code
Butt Lane, Goulceby	S19-786
Brecks Lane, Stapleford	S19-833
Welbourn	S19-907
Boston Road, Horncastle	S19-873
Langworth	S19-708
Minting	S19-731

Lincolnshire County Council:

Following the high rainfall events on 20th October 2023 and 02nd January 2024 the Flood & Water Team at Lincolnshire County Council received 800+ reports of internal flooding to residential properties within the County. In accordance with LCC's role as the Lead Local Flood Authority [LLFA] for Lincolnshire, these have been assessed, prioritised and investigated where appropriate within local timescales, as Section 19 Investigations under the Flood & Water Management Act [2010]. LCC's Flood Team was in the process of reducing the number of outstanding Section 19 cases. There was an intention to undertake the investigations in-house but given the scale of recent reports there was the need to involve external consultants. The reports on prior instances of flooding have been revised, and the recent cases have been much shorter, concise and timelier.

Further information on Section 19 investigations, including an interactive map and spread sheet, can be found on the LCC website:

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/flood-risk-management/flood-investigations>

Beyond the geographical boundaries of LCC, North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council have the role of Lead Local Flood Authority in Greater Lincolnshire.

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.

Officers have recently been in discussion with the developer regarding the discharge of surface water from the temporary haul road and the culverting of a Network Rail drain to allow ease of inspection and maintenance of the new Tritton Road Access Bridge. This led to 2 consents being issued by the Board in accordance with the submitted documents.

The 4 Boards' officers meet on a regular basis [every 3-4 weeks] with Lindum and City of Lincoln Council who are the developers for the project. These meetings relate specifically to the design of the surface water drainage system, access to it for future 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.

North Hykeham Relief Road, NHRR (Southern Bypass Link) (UD-3579-2017-PLN)

This is a proposed new highway to complete the Bypass around Lincoln from the A46 to the A15. Meetings have been held with Lincolnshire County Council's consultant engineers, who are designing the road and the associated structures. These meetings have discussed the arrangements required by the Board for continuity of the maintained watercourses and access for maintenance access. Also, the Board's requirements for consenting of both temporary and permanent works.

The detailed design has now commenced, and the Board continues to work closely with the developer to protect the Board's interests. The Board's latest correspondence regarded the consenting requirements for the various works involved within the project.

Skellingthorpe Pump Drain Cable Route:

Head of Terms have been agreed with a developer to allow the installation of a cable in land occupied by Upper Witham IDB adjacent to the Skellingthorpe Pump Drain. This cable is to connect a proposed solar farm to the national grid.

The cable shall be laid in such a manner so as to not interrupt the Board's maintenance activities or future access. The Board has agreed a sum of £40,000 for this easement.

Lincoln Water Transfer:

Abstraction began in the sixth week of this season from the week commencing 08th May. From then on usage greatly varied throughout the season with 3 weeks spread across the season having zero usage. The members abstracted a total of 307,569m³ of water out of the 581,437m³ available, 6,994m³ more than last year. There was no pool water available during the season as this had been absorbed into licences prior. This year the Board's Pumping Stations were operated as follows:

Summer settings March/April - Mid-October/Early Nov

Transfers

Oxpasture transfer pipe was opened 3 times this season whilst Saxilby pipe remained shut due to sufficient water within the system.

	m3
Fosdyke Nav to IDB system	
Oxpasture PS	87,833
Saxilby PS	0
Total	87,833
 R Trent to Fosdyke Nav	
Torksey	1,038,000

Licence Returns

The licence return was completed early November. The Board asked members to be diligent whilst taking meter readings during the season as there were a number of discrepancies between the weekly return totals and end of year return totals.

Abstraction Rates

Abstraction began week commencing 06th May and ended in the week commencing 07th October, with 3 weeks spread across the season with zero usage. We saw our largest abstraction in the week commencing 02nd August with 38,729m³. There was no pool water once the season started as it had been absorbed into allocations prior. One member moved water between allocations they were a secondary user. However, no water was given to the pool during this season nor requested. There was a total of 5

members using their own allocations this year and 2 secondary users using a total of 4 other members' licences.

A breakdown of abstraction from each area within the scheme from the last 7 years was provided:

Catchment	Amount Abstracted (2018) m3	Amount Abstracted (2019) m3	Amount Abstracted (2020) m3	Amount Abstracted (2021) m3	Amount Abstracted (2022) m3	Amount Abstracted (2023) m3	Amount Abstracted (2024) m3
Oxpasture Outfall	77,928	127140	129398	106685	140045	97440	87470
Oxpasture	225,155	140632	271461	239393	292409	154853	169599
Burton	43,140	45500	42110	63220	88910	40360	50500
Skellingthorpe / Saxilby	4,246	0	7936	0	1595	7922	0
Total	350,469	313,272	450,905	409,298	522,989	300,575	307,569

Potato Brown Rot

Boat spraying was conducted this year over 2 days at the end of June to remove Woody Nightshade from the Fosdyke Canal. One litre of Ecoflex was used for this. It was agreed that the Board conduct bi-annual spraying going forward therefore, there will be no spraying conducted in 2025. The cost of spraying for the 2024 season was set to £3000 and will be increased in line with CPI in subsequent years. The cost will be agreed at the February meeting, prior to the season beginning.

Flowmeters

Both the Oxpasture and Saxilby Pumping Stations' flow meters will need to be calibrated before the season starts in 2026.

Upper Witham IDB is currently going through a process of upgrading its telemetry system, which will allow the new Saxilby flow meter to be viewed remotely.

The flow meter at Oxpasture was not giving an output to the Board's telemetry system this year therefore figures had to be taken manually every week. The Board had the meter repaired in October 2024 at the cost of £1700 to the LWT Ltd.

Upper Witham IDB Administration Fees

Administration fees had been agreed for the 23/24 and 24/25 season in January 2024 and were set as:

23/24 - £5319 + VAT

24/25 - £5585 + VAT

The Board has settled a pay award of 5.1% for the forthcoming 25/26 financial year. The proposal is to increase the LWT administration fees for the 25/26 LWT season to £5870, to keep in line with this award.

It was noted this was another successful year for the Lincoln Water Transfer Scheme, with all members utilising their own allocations without the need for pool water.

All members utilising their allocations this year sent in their returns in a timely manner before 4:30pm on Thursdays.

There followed general discussion and Roger Hollis reported that on the River Brant EA works had finally commenced, mainly due to the efforts of William Booth. Members were keen to see these works completed.

Members received and NOTED the Engineering report and update.

42.24 Consents and Enforcements Report.

The Director of Engineering & Technical Services presented 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.

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

43.24 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.

18.24 Environment Annual Report.

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

Surveys:

With the increase in works during late summer/early autumn (particularly bank slip repairs) many of the Board's maintained watercourses had ecological surveys carried out prior to the works starting. The surveys looked to identify and species that would be at risk due to works and develop a methodology to mitigate these. Due to most of the works including slip repairs the notable species at risk are badgers and water voles but the Environment Officer also looked to identify other UKBAP species.

The watercourses surveyed include but is not limited to:

- Thorpe Catchwater
- Pasture Drain
- Broxholme Pump Drain West
- Oxpasture Outfall
- Green Lane Drain

- Hykeham Pump Drain North
- Saxilby Pumping Station
- Pike Drain
- Burton Pump Drain South
- Parkers Drain
- Throops Drain
- Cammeringham Drain

Potential Enhancements:

Within the Board's capital programme there is funding available for ecological enhancements to pumping stations and the surrounding compound. The environment officer will work closely with the operational team to look for opportunities that do not hinder operational activity. These may include but will not be limited to artificial nesting habitats, grass snake nesting habitat and pollinator opportunities.

Barn Owls:

As previous years the Board continues to monitor and maintain a network of Barn Owl and Kestrel boxes across the district. During the summer the environment officer along with the Wildlife Conservation Partnership surveyed 20 boxes. The species found during the box inspection that were of appropriate size were ringed and recorded. A condition assessment of the box was used to inform the Board's replacement programme. This year has been a difficult one for much of Lincolnshire's wildlife due to the exceptional rainfall experienced through the winter. Despite this, the Board recorded 20 Kestrel and Barn Owls ringed this year which is a more than respectable number. The condition assessment identified three boxes requiring replacement which have been ordered and will be replaced during the winter months.

Mink:

The eradication project has now been expanded to cover the whole of Greater Lincolnshire (previously it was just the South of the county). Since January 2024 there have been a total of 411 mink captured in the County of Lincolnshire, this makes Lincolnshire the highest county in terms of captures and makes up 26% of all captures across England and Wales. Within the Board's district the number of Mink trapped as of 04/11/2025 is 55 Mink across 29 active traps. This is a large increase from previous years with 4 minks in 2023 and 2 the year before. In past eradication schemes, a good metric for measuring the success is the sex ratio of captures. At the start of these schemes the catch rate is dominated by males (~90%) and this begins to drop as trapping efforts increase. This has been seen in Norfolk who have completely eradicated breeding Mink with the graph showing a rapid decrease in Male captures. The male sex ratio in Lincolnshire has shown the first signs of reduction with this trend expected to continue in the coming years, this shows the Mink trapping project has been a success thus far. The Board has taken the stance to not do any trapping or dispatching in house but to support the project where we can through education and using our close ties with landowners to assist the project in recruiting volunteers. The Remoti traps used by the Waterlife Recovery Trust send a text message when active meaning the traps do not need to be regularly monitored and only need to be checked once triggered. If anyone would like to become part of the project and host a Mink raft on their land, please contact the Boards Environment Officer.

Beavers:

Following the releases of Beaver into an enclosed 70-acre enclosure in Northern Lincolnshire (outside the Boards boundaries) ADA have been pursuing guidance with

regards to training and licensing for when Beavers interrupt IDB routine operations in the future. A two-day training event has been scheduled by ADA in association with the EA, Natural England and the River Stour IDB. The training will look at the opportunities and challenges the species presents and the legislation around the animal's management. The Boards' Environment Officer will be in attendance and will feedback learnings.

Species Recording:

Over the recent summer season, the Board has trialled a new species recording system to replace the previous iRecord due to better integration with our mapping system. The new recording system utilises QR codes to allow Operatives to quickly fill out information about the sighting as well as automatic location data. The trial has had a positive response from many operational staff with constructive feedback to improve the system in readiness for the summer maintenance in 2025. The reporting system has identified, 9 badger setts, 7 water voles, 2 grass snakes as well as a number of bird species that have been added to the Boards historical species records that will be fed in to the Lincolnshire species record centre. In addition to the operative recordings, sightings from walkovers of drains have been recorded by the Environment Officer, including UKBAP species, reed bunting, water vole, skylark and lapwing. Incidental sightings of barn owl, new badger setts and mink sightings had also been recorded. The records presented to Members showed species recordings from within the Boards' area that are stored within the Lincolnshire species records centre hosted by the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership. This is just a selection showing the species that appear on the Boards' nature strategy or are common in or around maintained watercourses. There was a general downward trend of species sightings across the district with Water Voles continuing to be a concern. There is evidence to suggest that the decline in Water Vole populations is due to the increased presence of Mink. There is hope that thanks to increased trapping across the county that Water Vole number will begin to rebound.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and the 4 Boards' Nature Strategy (formerly BAP):

LNRS are designed as tools to drive more coordinated, practical, and focussed action to help nature. The Board has been involved in the consultation for the strategy with the current Nature Strategy (formally BAP) providing guidance and direction for the LNRS. The strategy is due to be released in the Spring 2025 and will directly influence the update to the 4 Boards' Nature Strategy. The Board will use the LNRS to prioritise and target certain areas to work towards the goals that the strategy will provide. The Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership who are developing the LNRS are hosting their annual conference in November where it will become clearer with regards to the impact on the Boards' Nature Strategy. With the renewal of the Boards' current Nature Strategy required by the end of 2026 the development of the strategy is currently ongoing with the Board looking into options for enhancements through physical changes or the development of maintenance strategies at key environmental areas.

ADA Lincolnshire Branch Environmental Committee:

During the ADA committee meeting in April there was a lack of representation from Board members. One of the actions from the meeting was a call for IDBs to have Board members attend the meeting. The committee is used to discuss anything environmental related to IDB's and is held twice annually. Following the request for Board member the subsequent meeting pleasingly had an improved share of members in attendance. If any members would like to attend the group or receive meeting minutes, members were reminded to please email the committee secretary [Nick Downing].

Following the successful placement of a second year Lincoln University student earlier this year, the Board has offered to host another student this year. Although not finalised, the student's project will be based on historical flooding and the impacts this, and future events have on IDB assets. Assuming a suitable student applies for the place they will be joining us for 12 weeks (one day a week) from January to May 2025.

Depot Orchard:

After a good growing this summer the juvenile trees that were planted in March 2024 on the land across the road from the depot have flourished. Phase two of the project will begin shortly which includes planting rarer varieties of fruit trees to fill in the space between the two rows of trees that are on the outside of the orchard. These trees will be a variety of apple, pear and berries that originate from Lincolnshire.

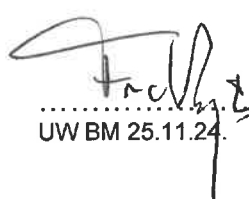
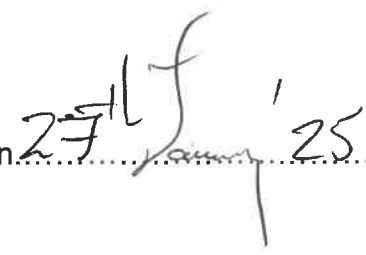
Members noted the contents of the report.

45.24 Any Other Business.

There were no further items of business, and the meeting closed at 16.05.

46.24 Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Board was confirmed for Monday, 27th January 2025 at 2pm in Witham House. Video Conference facilities will be available to enable attendance at a hybrid meeting.

 Chairman  Date
UW BM 25.11.24. 27th Jan '25