

WITHAM THIRD DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Minutes of the one-hundred-and-twenty-seventh meeting of Witham Third District Internal Drainage Board held on Tuesday, 19th November 2024 in Minting Village Hall at 09.30am.

Present:

Cllr T Ashton
Cllr J Barrett
Mr I Clark
Mr C Dixon
Cllr I Fleetwood
Cllr M Foster
Mr M Harrison
Cllr G Hewson
Mr M Hoyes
Cllr R Longbottom
Cllr D Nannestad
Mr I Parker
Mr D Sempers
Cllr P J Vaughan
Mr R Weightman
Mr T Williams

Chairman

In attendance:

Mr. Ian Coupland	Director of Operations.
Ms. Jayne Flower	Executive Assistant.
Mrs. Jane Froggatt	Chief Executive.
Mr. Steve Larter	Director of Finance and Governance.
Mr. Martin Shilling	Director of Engineering & Technical Services.

3134 Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Mr J Armstrong, Mr S Avison, Cllr B Bushell, Mr J Davie, Cllr W H Gray, Mr R Hairsine, Ms J Holland, Cllr N Jones, Cllr F M Martin MBE, Cllr P Morris, Mr H Moreton, Miss A Sayer, and Mr M I Thomas (Vice Chairman).

3135 Declarations of Interest.

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

3136 Election of Chairman.

Mr Ian Parker was nominated by Cllr Pat Vaughan, seconded by Mr Terry Williams and, there being no further nominations, was duly elected as Chairman for the forthcoming year.

3137 Chairman's Announcements.

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

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

Regarding the agenda, the Chairman informed Members that the Board would receive updates on what was happening, particularly continued work to ensure recovery from storms Babet and Henk and the heavy rainfall events of last autumn and winter. The Board was in the midst of recovery works following the Statement of Claim made last December to the RFCC and also from the IDB £75 million Fund announced in February. The Board had levered in additional monies and updates on the schemes that are progressing would be received, with a national completion deadline of 31st March 2025.

Members would also receive reassurance about the external auditor's closure of last financial year 2023/24, moving on to this year and how the Board is trading financially at the end of October. The bottom line is the Board is in a healthy position, but it is an unusual year of additional capital monies coming into the Board for over 20 recovery schemes, which does somewhat distort the underlying financial risks, as a lot of this income for schemes is for this year only. We need to look beyond this year to the financial risks facing the Board for the future, notably risks like Highland Water monies for receiving and processing water from upland areas.

Finally, he reminded Members if they had not already done so to please confirm with Jayne Flower their attendance at the Members' Training event to be held for the morning on Wednesday, 04th December 2024 at Witham House.

3138 Election of Vice Chairman.

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

3139 Election of Members to the Standing Committee.

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

3140 Election of Members to the Joint Services Committee.

Mr Ian Clark confirmed his intention to stand down from the JSC with all remaining current members being re-elected en-bloc, namely the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Cllr Ian Fleetwood. Deputy Mr Terry Williams was nominated to become a full member, replacing Mr Ian Clark. The remaining deputy was Mr Ray Weightman.

3141 Election of Member to ADA Lincolnshire Branch Environment Committee.

It was AGREED to keep this current position as an open position, allowing members to attend the bi-annual meeting if they so wished. Dates, agendas and papers would be circulated and any member wanting to attend would inform the secretary, Mr Nick Downing.

3142 Calendar of Board and Standing Committee Dates 2025.

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

- Tuesday, 28th January.
- Tuesday, 20th May.
- Tuesday, 25th November (+APM).

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

- Tuesday, 14th January.
- Tuesday, 06th May.
- Tuesday, 11th November.

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

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

Annual Inspection 2024

- Thursday, 17th July.

The proposed calendar of meetings was approved for 2025.

3143 Register of Members' Interests.

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

3144 Minutes of the Board meeting held on 21.05.24.

The Minutes of the Board's previous meeting, held on 21st May 2024 had been circulated with the agenda and were proposed, seconded and APPROVED as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING:

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

3145 Minutes of the Joint Services Committee held on 15.07.24.

The Minutes of the JSC held on 15th July 2024 had been circulated with the agenda and were NOTED, with no matters arising.

3146 Minutes of the Board's Standing Committee meeting held on 05.11.24.

The Minutes of the Board's Standing Committee meeting held on Tuesday 05th November 2024 had been circulated with the agenda and were proposed by Terry Williams, seconded by Ian Clark and APPROVED as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING:

There were no matters arising. Members noted the recommendations and actions from the Standing Committee.

3147 Chief Executive's Report.

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

3147.1 Election and Board Membership.

The 4 Boards each concluded the 2024 Elections process in October, each with a 'Notice of No Poll' being advertised on the website, there being no more candidates in each electoral ward than available seats.

The new term of office for directly elected members runs for 3 years from 01.11.24 to 31.10.27. Membership from 01st November 2024 is as follows:

Elected members [15 seats]: James Armstrong, Ian Clark, John Davie, Craig Dixon, Michael Harrison, Mark Hoyes, Henry Moreton, Roy Hairsine, Jill Holland, Ian Parker, Alexandra Sayer, Dean Sempers, Max Thomas and Ray Weightman

There remains one vacant seat for the Langworth Electoral District.

3147.2 EA Highland Water Payments

Highland Water 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.

On Friday 18th October the CEO 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 CEO to speak for IDBs. 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.

Cllr Tom Ashton thanked officers for their work on this issue. Terry Williams stated that although he was not able to provide legal advice he believed that it was imperative to present a normal budget for 2025/26 that was not assuming the HWC in 2025/26 will not be paid; the Boards' position must be clear.

3147.3 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 had been repaired, two on Barlings Eau of a temporary 5-year period. An eighth repair of 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, i.e. not to reinstate bank breaches with some urgency. There was sympathy with no national Recovery monies being made available to Lincolnshire following winter 23/24, but it was a great concern that a major change in EA approach had been introduced with no consultation.

3147.4 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 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. Therefore, each Board was asked to formally approve the recommended pay settlement for 2025/26.

Members APPROVED the pay settlement of 5.1% for 2025/26 from 01.04.25.

After full discussion, members received and NOTED the Chief Executive's report and update.

3148 Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2023/24.

A summary and copy of the External Auditor's Report and Certificate, part of the 2023/24 AGAR, had been circulated with the agenda and was presented.

The Annual Return 2023/24 was agreed at the Board meeting on 21st 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 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'.

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.

The Notice of Conclusion of Audit has as required been displayed at the Board's depot, on the Board's website and at Witham House office.

It is recommended that Witham Third District IDB notes the External Audit Notice of Closure on the IDB Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2023/24.

Members NOTED the report and that this concludes the 2023/24 financial year AGAR process.

3149 Month 7 2024/25 Financial Report to 31.10.24.

A report on month 7 of 2024/25 to 31.10.24 had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Finance. The financial performance was summarised as:

Profiled Budget P7	Actual (Surplus)/Deficit	Variance
£	£	£
(691,970)	(644,756)	(47,214)

The Board was currently showing a negative variance position against the profiled budget. However, 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 is a shortfall of £145,360 for this Board. If this is received in full, then the position would move to a positive variance.

The main income streams have been posted in terms of Drainage Rates raised (not necessarily paid) at (£275k), and Special Levies received at (£1.222m) for the full year from the 3 relevant councils. Ongoing action is taking place against unpaid drainage rate account holders.

Significant grant income has been received for both FDGIA schemes (Woodhall (£500k),

Flood recovery works (£710k), Telemetry (£24k)) and IDB Fund schemes (£1.117m). Rechargeable Works are being undertaken, mainly for the EA through the PSCA. Invoices have been raised up to the end of September (£174k) for PSCA works completed and (£34k) in other recharges, with expenditure incurred to date to offset this shown in the Rechargeable Works section.

Highland Water claims have been submitted to the EA for the balance of the 2023/24 actual costs incurred of (£132,044) and for the 2024/25 Estimated claim of (£395,000). The EA was due to pay 80% of the estimated claim for 2024/25 (£316,000) along with the balance for 2023/24 actual costs incurred (£111,600), i.e., a total of (£427,600). Correspondingly, the balance adjusted for actual 2024/25 costs incurred will be payable by the EA in September 2025.

However, the EA has only paid 54% of the 80% of the 2024/25 Estimate (so £145,360 underpayment). This is a key risk for the Board, not just in this financial year but for future financial years. The issue has been raised in a number of forums including the RFCC which met on 18th 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. The impact for the 4 Boards is:

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

Drainage Rates 2024/25

The collection rate stands at 98.4% (99.1% @P7 2023/24), so slightly down on last year's collection rate at the same point. 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.

Plant & Machinery Replacement Programme.

The Ford Ranger has been sold, achieving (£5k). The tilt rotator for the long reach excavator is on order. The trailer bodies have been received but will be funded via the IDB Fund grant rather than internal Plant & Machinery Fund resources.

Bank Balances.

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

A replacement £250k 1-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 (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 had 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 from 4.25% to 4.15% for 95-day notice account from 01st November 2024.

Overall, for the 4 Boards investment income from fixed term deposits (so excluding Nationwide) is achieving (£133k) of income:

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

The Board recalled 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 £54k 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 +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.

The electricity Budgets approved for 2024/25 for the Boards were [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 first 6 months of 2024/25 for electricity to 30.09.24, these budgets have not been sufficient with some modest overspends to the end of September invoices.

New rates have 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 have reduced to an average of 20p/KWH for day rates and 17.5p/KWH for night rates. This reflects the significant reduction in rates seen in the market. Members were reminded that, due to the way that ESPO 'buy ahead' blocks of units of electricity there had been a lag in the reduction. However, when looking across the last 2 years, unit rates have peaked at 33.5p which are

far less than the large increases seen over the last 24 months.

Day Rates (p/KWH)

	<u>Day Rates (p/KWH)</u>						<u>Y-O-Y Change</u>				
	Oct-24	Oct-23	Oct-22	Oct-21	Oct-20	Oct-19	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)

	<u>Night Rates (p/KWH)</u>						<u>Y-O-Y Change</u>				
	Oct-24	Oct-23	Oct-22	Oct-21	Oct-20	Oct-19	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 shows how standing charges are reducing by (£17k). However this follows 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.

Inflation

Members were reminded of the inflationary pressures that the country has experienced, over recent years but pleasingly this is now subsiding (CPI 1.7% in September 24). However, the recent budget and world events may stimulate inflation again going forward. More information will be provided in the budget report at the January Board meeting.

Write Off Report

Members were requested to review the write-off of drainage rates proposed in the report attached, comprising accounts Under £2.50 where it is not economical to send out an invoice and those relating to unregistered land where no owner/occupier has been identified.

Members APPROVED the Write-Off of drainage rates as set out:

Under £2.50	£17.44
Uncollectable 1503	£56.25
Special Levy	£824.24
TOTAL	£897.93

Members noted the 2024/25 financial position for the period 01.04.2024 to 31.10.2024.

3150 Operations Report, including the Health & Safety Update.

An Operations report had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Operations.

Between the 4 Boards, there have been 10 reported Incidents, including 4 within Witham Third DIDB staff:

- (W3) – LDO cut finger when manual handling. Finger trapped between metal and the floor. Injured person was not wearing gloves.
- (W3) – LDO was lifting/ moving rock, which was in the way, and pulled themselves. No time off work.
- (W3) – Foreman noted smoke from the front of guarding on tractor. Rapid action pouring water over with smoke. Fire extinguisher deployed and fire brigade called. No damage to tractor.
- (W3) – LDO was cleaning screen on watercourse, early in the morning, pulled top of back. No time off, but the Injured Person noted to warm up a little when cold to reduce risk of reoccurrence

The annual vegetation maintenance programme started in late June and was well underway. The challenge this year had been the number of new starters in the last year. This season started with 9 operatives for whom this was their first season. Despite these challenges Operatives are well on with the annual vegetation maintenance and in an improved position to complete the year's programme by early January.

A contractor has been employed to work in each Board 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, some teams of Board staff will be redirected to ensure as many bank slips are repaired as possible while the national IDB funding is available.

Annual Maintenance

With the exception of the North Delph and a few watercourses alongside fields to catch, Witham Third will be finished vegetation maintenance by the middle of December to early January, allowing them to start on desilting and bushing works, with a team being put together to undertake more bank slip repairs.

Staffing

Gordon Hodson had joined Witham Third in a peripatetic role, replacing Nathan Curtis who transferred to Witham First. Gordon worked for Witham First DIDB over 20 years ago and is an experienced wheeled excavator operator. There was still one W3rd Operative on long term illness absence.

Plant and Machinery

The John Deere tractor and flail combination had a fire behind the exhaust guarding, which was dealt with by the operator using the on-board powder extinguisher. The fire brigade was called out as a precaution, no damage caused. A decision has been made to add a water extinguisher to the flailing equipment, and it will be carried on the front of the machine via a bracket. The operators of flails regularly use air lines to blow out dust and grass cuttings. Tractors with air brakes have an airline that can be plugged into the onboard air tank to use when out on site, however with all the guards and the use of regeneration techniques the exhaust systems run hotter than before, and this is a problem.

Witham Third have a tilt rotator on order to go on the Volvo long reach excavator, to aid the recovery work and bank slip repairs. Also on order are 3 x Big Ab flat trailer bodies and 2 x bodies with sides, to assist with the movement of mobile pump equipment.

Invitations to Tender had been sent to suppliers for a replacement flailing machine, for delivery in 2025/26 as per the Board's approved plant replacement programme.

The Board's 2013 Ford Ranger was sold by Tender for £5,089.00.

Stamp End Pumping Station

There was still a delay in the legal work to transfer this station from LCC (Lincolnshire County Council) to Witham Third DIDB. This was mainly due to a change of land ownership to land adjacent to the pumping station and an easement agreement needs to be arranged National Grid. The Board's legal fees are being met by LCC.

Woodhall Spa Depot

It had been almost 18 months since Woodhall Depot became a joint operating base for Witham First and Witham Third Boards. This was agreed by the Boards on a 12-months basis and was working very well. There was notable good team dynamics with everyone helping each other out, and without a doubt during the storms of October 2023 and January 2024 the two workforces joined together to assist with the fuelling, moving and setting up of the mobile pumps. Considering there were 27 mobile pumps in operation and using Fiskerton Diesel station which needed 6 x operatives to run it over each 24-hour period it would have been problematic to be operating from the two previous separate depots. With the two Foremen and Pumping Station Foreman now working out of the same office steps to back fill if operatives are ill or on leave was an effective and efficient process, utilising the operatives between the 2 Boards.

The recommendation by Officers was to make this move permanent, allowing the versatility and flexibility to continue as it works well. **This was AGREED by Members.**

Witham First's old depot was costing the Board in terms of business rates. An estate agent would be instructed to assess the rental prospects and quotes sought for taking down the sheds and reassembling them at the Woodhall Depot to increase shed capacity.

Fleet Vehicles and 4x4's

Officers would in the coming months review the current fleet vehicles. Some were owned and some leased from different sources. There were 20 vehicles due to be returned in May 2025 and currently at the time of reporting, 9 vehicles off the road, broken down and awaiting repair.

Double Cab Taxation

The Operations Director raised the issue of the triple tax on double cab pick-ups which was announced on 30.10.24 in the Budget; and the problems this will give the Boards and Staff. Across the group there were 20 Double-cabs and 14 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 could lose operating time by potentially having to change current 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. The biggest potential impact will be the speed to which Operatives and Officers can react during a flood event if required to travel to a depot to collect vehicles. There would be cost implications to the Boards, as these vehicles would no longer be classed as 'light commercials' meaning the road tax payable could significantly increase. Officers will review at the type of vehicles held within the fleet.

Public Sector Cooperation Agreement [PSCA] works.

The PSCA work the 4 Boards undertake for the EA had gone better than anticipated this year. There had been some areas works were not completed due to main river bank breaches or unsafe banks, but the majority of works the EA commissioned from the Boards were completed. Witham Third have fully completed their PSCA works.

It is not anticipated that the Boards will be asked to quote for undertaking any winter PSCA work from the EA this year. Therefore, Operatives would concentrate particularly on bank slip repairs on Board maintained watercourses.

EA PSCA work in the future is uncertain, they have reduced maintenance budgets and Officers were waiting to hear what quantity of work the EA requested quotes for in the coming year 2025/26.

Other rechargeable works.

Witham Third have quoted for some work for LCC and have undertaken some work for ELDC in Louth and for WLDC in Market Rasen.

Members received and NOTED the Operations Report and update.

3151 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 had reviewed all the bids for funding across the country and have given 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, that 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 try to determine if any could be brought into the current programme over the next two years.

Woodhall PS Refurbishment:

IDB No	TD-1251-2014-PRO
EA National Project No	ANC403I/003A/017A
GIA Claim No	IDB
GIA Approval Amount	£1,704,400 Construction
	£1,013,640 Contingency
	£2,718,040 Total
Project Stage	Detail Design / Tender

Work to progress the refurbishment of Woodhall pumping station continued.

Stantec were undertaking the detailed design of the new pumps and the relocation of the control building. The work was ongoing and anticipated to complete in December 2024.

A CCTV survey had been undertaken of the discharge pipes which confirmed suspicions that the pipe breach was caused by the installation of a double pole mounted transfer installed by National Grid in close proximity to the buried pipe. The transformer was installed in April 2023, with the pipe defect only coming to light during storm Babet. The survey clearly showed the pipe had been penetrated from the outside inwards at a location that corresponds with a void visible from the ground level. National Grid was approached for discussion relating to this, and the matter was with their claims team.

The works to provide a suitable access track across the board owned field have been completed, along with the renewal of the culvert at the field entrance. It was also necessary to undertake remedial works to the 3rd party owned track that accesses the site. The completed works have provided a suitable access to the site for all likely plant and equipment accessing the site for the main refurbishment programme.

Income and spend as at 31st October 2024:

Woodhall PS Refurbishment	Budget	Actual	Variance
Income	(£2,718,040)	(£500,000)	£2,218,040
Expenditure	£2,718,040	£11,347	(£2,706,693)
Net	£0	(£488,653)	(£488,653)

Telemetry (W3):

IDB No	JA-1583-2014-ASS
EA National Project No	ANC501E/000A/189A
GIA Claim No	IDB 0553
GIA Approval Amount	£112,500 (including £18,750 contingency)

Project Stage

Delivery

The installation of the new radar level monitoring heads has been completed and the installation of the Nexicon telemetry panels is also near completion. Once installation of the hardware is complete, Xylem will be able to configure and commission the panels.

An FCERM 4 for additional funding has been submitted to the EA to release the contingency and increase the value of the project as the quotations received were slightly above the estimated value.

FCERM 4 value:	£ 18,750	contingency release
	£ 5,550	additional GIA Funding
Revised total Project cost	£118,000	

Income and spend as at 31st October 2024:

FDGIA - Telemetry	Budget	Actual	Variance
FDGIA Grant	(£118,000)	(£93,750)	£24,250
Equipment & Installation	£118,000	£41,259	(£76,741)
Total Expenditure	£0	(£52,491)	(£52,491)

Greetwell Pumping Station:

The Board owned transformer here is past its best and is being replaced with a new one, the work to remove the old one started on 04/11/24. The plinth the transformer sits on is also being replaced as it had started to lean towards the watercourse @ a cost of £64,660 for both elements of work. Work will hopefully be completed within 10 days. The track has also been levelled.

Stainfield Old Pumping Station:

The pump and motor have been refurbished and have had some resilience built in, this is in the form of a pedestal between motor and pump to hopefully keep the motor out the water, it has also had an external grease point fitted all @ a cost of £29,450. There is a fairly large slip close to the mouth of the pumping station but also very close to the highway, talks are ongoing to engage highways in the repair of this slip.

Bardney Fen Pumping Station:

The panel at Bardney fen had water ingress and needed repairs, these have all been undertaken @ a cost of £4,456 and we are looking at how we can raise the cabinet further to prevent this occurring again. The access track has also been levelled.

Southrey Pumping Station:

The motor on no:2 pump has had to be refurbished @ a cost of £43,000 and is back in and running, the Board owned transformer has been replaced, and a new plinth has been constructed at bank top level for resilience @ a cost of £103,650 for both elements of work. These works are complete.

Duckpool Pumping Station:

Duckpool needs the pump and motor refurbishing, this work is programmed in when a supplier becomes free.

Stixwould Pumping Station:

Stixwould needed repairs to the weed screen, these turned out to be minor repairs and have been completed.

Marsh Lane Pumping Station:

Marsh Lane currently has had one pump and motor out for repair @ a cost of £25,500 and the second one will follow shortly. The steps to the weed screen has been undermined by the water and are dangerous, these are due to be replaced @ a cost of circa £12,000.

Coningsby Ings Pumping Station:

This station was completely flooded from the Coningsby River Bain breach. The control panel currently being built at a cost of £87,407 this includes repair to our domestic electrics. The motors have been repaired at a cost of £3,252, one of these and one of the pumps are currently away having a pedestal manufactured to give some resilience in the future, they are also building a pedestal for the second one while they are at it. The pumps are having full refurbishment while they are out as well. The automated weed screen is also being replaced with a gantry version to protect from future flooding @ a cost of £143,000 (this weed screen is also in tranche 2 and may yet be funded from there). National Grid also have to replace their incoming infrastructure, this work started on the 04/11/24. The Breach is now repaired.

IDB Recovery Fund:

In February 2024 the government announced a £75m funding pot to assist IDB's 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:

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	AT1-051	£ 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 D/DB 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 D/DB 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 T1 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 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 and are waiting for the outcome of the autumn budget for this approval. 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 is 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 (the 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. On top of 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 funding in Minting Village, also on Minting /Gautby beck, All Hallows Drain, Tillbridge Lane and Stainfield roadside.

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

Witham Third DIDB Tranche 1

Kirkstead Pumping Station:

Installation of new trolley and components to automated weed screen cleaner at a cost of £141,745

Short Ferry Pumping Station:

Refurbishment of both pumps and motors at a cost of £67,299, we are also replacing damaged fascia and gutters on the building at a cost of £16,608. There is also a penstock to replace on new cut drain and install a gantry to allow access during high water levels.

Bardney Abbey Pumping Station:

Pump and Motor need to be lifted and refurbished, currently working and programmed in.

Stainfield [New] Pumping Station:

The 2 x small submersibles here are beyond economical repair and following a lot of discussion with EA fisheries we have an exemption to allow the installation of 2 x new submersibles @ a cost of £20,000.

Marsh Lane Old Pumping Station:

We have purchased a 10' mobile pump to put here during high level events at a cost of £32,000. We are going to convert the old redundant station to enable the pump to be connected direct to the existing pipework that is installed through the river bank.

Structure replacements at Dogdyke and Marsh Lane:

We currently control water levels at these sites by installing or removing stop log boards. We are installing a tilting weir at Dogdyke @£59,075 and a double leaf penstock at Marsh Lane @£48,335 at these sites that will enable us to alter levels via telemetry from a laptop. This project is being led by Mark Kettley.

Tranche 2A Asset Improvement Applications to the IDB Fund:

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

<i>All Boards</i>			
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
<i>Witham First DIB</i>			
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
<i>Witham Third DIB</i>			
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 & Stixwould replacement electric motors (1 each of 2)	Witham Third District IDB	AT2-0035	£1,335,000
<i>Upper Witham DIDB</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 was 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 2A is still awaited. There is a reliance on external suppliers and contractors which 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 and the volume of work underway this year.

3152 Engineering Report.

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

The Boards' staff were 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 2nd January 2024 the Flood & Water Team at Lincolnshire County Council has 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.

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

A letter was sent to the developer to confirm the Board's requirements with regard financial contribution to allow the resilience measure at Greetwell Pumping Station to progressed. Further discussions with them in relation to this will continue.

River Witham & South Delph Embankment Repairs:

Following the high-water levels experienced in the 'top pond' reach of the Witham system [upstream of Bardney and downstream of Stamp End Sluice] this last winter, the EA have commissioned various repairs to the raised embankments protecting the adjacent land.

Two locations where water overtopped the embankments, in Branston Fen and Sandhill Fen, are being reinstated following the discovery of damage to the embankment. This work is being undertaken by a contractor on their behalf, Turner & Townsend of Nottingham. The water overtopping the embankment caused the removal of sward and underlying earth material causing the bank to crack and slump.

This work will include the excavation of failed material and the reinstatement by the installation of compacted layers of suitable backfill material.

Two reaches of the landward side of the River Witham embankment slumped back in November 2023. These two reaches are being reinstated by Jackson Civil Engineering, the Agency's main framework contractor. This work also involves the replacement of failed embankment with the installation of compacted material and, in this instance, the inclusion of ground reinforcing material.

Due to the presence of archaeological finds in nearby sites, the work on this site is being closely monitored.

At the site of the downstream failure, at the request of the Board, the Agency have instructed their contractor to install a permanent vehicular crossing of the North Delph. This will initially be used by the contractor to access the site but will be left in place for the Boards future use during its maintenance operations.

It is being constructed to the Board's agreed specification to allow access for both tracked machines as well as tractor mounted flails. The Board has agreed to adopt responsibility for the structure upon completion.

Members received and NOTED the Engineering & Technical Services Report.

3153 Consents and Enforcements Report.

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

There was nothing to highlight to Members on this occasion.

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

3154 Planning and Consultations Report.

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

There was nothing to highlight to Members on this occasion.

Members NOTED the report.

3155 Environmental Annual Report.

A report had been prepared by Nick Downing, Environment & GIS Officer, 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 included but is not limited to:

- Minting (Phase 2, 3 and 4)
- Torrington Beck
- All Hallows Drain
- New Drain
- Minting/Gautby
- Wispington Beck
- Woodhall Pumping Station
- Sambre Beck
- Snakeholme
- Reeds Beck
- Stixwould Engine Drain South
- Old Reeds Beck

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 23 boxes. The species found during the box inspection that were of appropriate size were ringed and recorded. A condition assessment of the box used to inform the Board's replacement programme. This year has been a difficult one for much of Lincolnshire's wildlife thanks to the exceptional rainfall experienced through the winter 2023/24. Despite this the Board recorded 4 Kestrel and Barn Owls with the bonus of one Tawny Owl ringed this year. The condition assessment identified no boxes that require replacement. With the works taking place at Woodhall Pumping Station the decision has been made to close off the box for the duration of the works, reinstating it post work. Members were advised that this box had not been used by Barn Owls since installation in 2018.

Mink:

The Mink 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 captures 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 24 across 16 active traps. This is a large increase from previous years with 1 in 2023 and no Mink trap records 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. 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 landowner to assist the project in recruiting volunteers. The remote 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.

Released Beavers in Lincolnshire:

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. Members were presented with schedules that 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 was just a selection showing the species that appear on the Boards' nature strategy or were common in or around maintained watercourses. It could be seen there was a general downward trend of species sightings across the district with Water Voles continuing to be a concern. There was evidence to suggest that the decline in Water Vole populations was due to the increased presence of Mink. There is hope that thanks to increased trapping across the county that the number of water vole will rebound in the coming years.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and the 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 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 unfortunately a lack of representation from Board members. One of the actions from the meeting was a call for IDB's 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 this request for Board members the subsequent meeting had an improved share of members in attendance. If any members would like to attend the group or receive meeting minutes, please email the committee secretary: nick.downing@witham3idb.gov.uk

Lincoln University Placement:

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

Members received and NOTED the Environment Report.

3156 Any Other Business.

There being no further items of business, the meeting closed at 12:10.

3157 Date, Time and Place of the Board's Next Meeting.

The Board's next meeting was confirmed for Tuesday 28th January 2025 at 09:30am in Minting Village Hall.

.....
..... Chairman Date
W3rd B.M. 19.11.24.

