

NORTH EAST LINDSEY DRAINAGE BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of North East Lindsey Drainage Board held on Wednesday, 21st May 2025 in Stallingborough Grange Hotel at 2pm.

Present: Cllr P Clark
Mr E Faulding
Mr J Finch
Mr J Fussey
Mr L Grooby
Cllr S Harness
Mr P J Hoyes
Cllr S Holland
Mr R Kirk
Cllr M Patrick

Chairman
Vice Chairman

In Attendance: Mr Ian Coupland, Director of Operations.
Ms. Jayne Flower, Executive Assistant
Mrs. Jane Froggatt, Chief Executive
Mr Chris Harris, Internal Auditor, Lighthouse UK Consultancy Ltd
Mr. Steve Larter, Director of Finance & Governance
Mr Martin Shilling, Director of Engineering & Technical Services

1. Apologies.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr R Hannigan, Mr J F D Hargreaves, Cllr D Humphrey, Cllr E Kaczmarek, Cllr N Pettigrew, Mr S Shepherd and Cllr D Wells.

2. Declaration of Members' Interests.

Members nominated by North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire Councils declared interests relating to their respective Councils.

3. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed members to the May meeting of the Board, traditionally a busier meeting of the year and focussed on closing the previous financial year. A particular welcome was extended to Chris Harris, Internal Auditor, who would present his audit report on 2024/25 and his audit certificate, which forms part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

The Chairman repeated his appeal for a third member of the Board to join the Joint Services Committee, he and Rob Kirk attend as Chairman and Vice Chairman but the Board does have a third vacant seat.

He was pleased to note that the Board ended 2024/25 on 31st March 2025 with an underlying surplus position of £157,929 or £37,929 net after the proposed transfers to Reserves. This is reassuring given the range of financial risks faced last year, and undoubtedly this surplus had been bolstered considerably by the one-off national IDB Fund monies, which took pressure off usual budget expenditure.

Members would receive an update on the Capital Programme and the IDB Fund schemes. The 4 Witham & Humber Drainage Boards have been awarded £17.4 million of what is now a total of £91 million nationally available IDB Fund monies. All remaining schemes, in addition to the 22 schemes delivered by 31st March 2025, need to be completed by 31st March 2026, so it is a second challenging year for staff, suppliers and contractors.

4. Minutes of the Board meeting, 29.01.25.

The minutes of the Board's previous meeting, held on Wednesday, 29th January 2025, were proposed, seconded and APPROVED as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING:

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

5. Minutes of the Joint Services Committee Meeting 12.05.25.

The minutes of the Joint Services Committee Meeting held on Monday, 12th May 2025 had been circulated with the agenda.

MATTERS ARISING:

5.1 2024/25 Joint Services Budget Monitoring Report as at 31.12.25.

The financial position for the Joint Services Committee (JSC) for the period 01st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 was presented and compared the budget position for Q4 of 2024/25 to the actual position for Q4, with the variance. The overall variance at Q4 was a positive one of (£13,535), but this did not include the costs of £13,500 for the development of a new website for the 4 Boards and £16,294 for a new Ratings Management System (RMS). Once these were included, there was a slight negative variance of £16,259 (1.26%) on an approved budget of £1,289,674 for 2024/25.

Members noted the satisfactory outturn position on joint services for the 4 IDBs and why the two ICT developments (new website and Ratings Management System) were developed in-year.

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

6. Chief Executive's Report.

The Chief Executive's report circulated with the agenda was presented, with the following items highlighted:

6.1 Financial Positions at the end of 2024/25 & Internal Auditor's Review of 2024/25.

All 4 IDBs ended 2024/25 on 31st March 2025 with a healthy year-end surplus position, which is encouraging given the challenges during the year including electricity, the partial payment of Highland Water Claims by the EA, the declaration of a Major Incident by the LRF in Lincolnshire 06.01.25-09.01.25 due to flooding,

the need to develop both a new Drainage Rates system by 31.03.25 and to renew the website in-year. And, significantly, the IDB £75million Fund [increased in April 2025 by the Floods Minister to £91 million] which provided significant one-off income for much needed recovery and resilience schemes in all 4 drainage districts, but which brought project challenges and financial risk with those opportunities.

The summary of the 31.03.25 end of year positions was as follows:

- **NELDB: An underlying surplus position of £157,929 and £37,929 net after proposed Reserves transfers.**
- Upper Witham IDB: An underlying surplus position of £291,755, £41,755 net after proposed Reserves transfers.
- Witham First DIDB: An underlying surplus position of £262,058, £37,058 net after proposed Reserves transfers.
- Witham Third DIDB: An underlying surplus position of £270,627, £15,627 net after proposed Reserves transfers.

Internal Auditor, Chris Harris, of Lighthouse Consultancy Ltd conducted his 2024/25 internal review of the 4 IDBs during March 2025 and has issued a 'substantial assurance rating' once again for each Board.

6.2 **EA Highland Water Claims by IDBs.**

As reported to members at the January 2025 Board meetings, only 54% of the 80% EA Highland Water payment due for payment by 30.09.24 for the 2024/25 Estimates had so far been received by the Boards. The Witham & Humber DBs' original claim in 2024 was £880k.

The EA notified IDBs verbally, via a videoconference meeting on 13.09.24 that they had insufficient budget to meet the IDB claims. The RFCC agreed at its meeting on 18.10.24 to ensure payment is made, potentially from Local Levy, before 31st March 2025. Following discussion at RFCC, it was agreed that the IDBs across Lincolnshire should be paid in full the shortfall of £421,705.40, this being from Local Levy before 31.03.25 if national funds were not forthcoming.

At the RFCC meeting on 24.01.25 the Chairman, Eddy Poll, confirmed that IDBs would be reimbursed from Local Levy but he advised that decision had been criticised by 'the upper echelons of the EA'. However, he stood by that RFCC decision as fair and reasonable, the IDBs having incurred the costs of processing water from upland areas. It was confirmed that the outstanding 2024 Highland Water Claims were paid from Local Levy monies in late February 2025.

The national EA budget to meet IDB HWCs has apparently been uplifted to £6.1million for 2025/26, but we do not know the level of claims this year and whether this is sufficient budget. This therefore remains a risk for 2025/26.

The claims for 2025 were submitted on 09.05.25. These total circa £830k, so have returned to the more typical annual claims total. This being, by Board:

- **NELDB: £130k**
- Upper Witham IDB: £290.3k
- Witham First DIDB: £33k

- Witham Third DIDB: £377.5k

Members will be updated on Highland Water Claims during 2025/26, payments by the EA being due by 30.09.25.

6.3 **Public Sector Cooperation Agreements (PSCAs) with the EA.**

A meeting was held on 24.02.25 between Ian Coupland, the Chief Executive, Darren Pitcher and Luke Davenport of the EA. The purpose was to agree the revised 5-year PSCA agreements for each IDB with the EA, which take effect from 01.04.25 to 31.03.30. There was not a lot of room for negotiation, the PSCA template is national, the main new section relates to complaints handling. The PSCAs have now been signed by both parties and are operational from 01st April 2025.

The practical implementation of PSCAs was discussed and also the Defra 5-year commercial review of the PSCA works awarded by the EA, as an exercise was being undertaken this Spring to compare the costs of works commissioned by the EA from their mainframe contractors with works undertaken by IDBs. Whilst the EA mainframe contractor costs were not shared with us, it seems clear in the comparisons we discussed that IDBs offer value for money to the EA, particularly if you factor in the 'exceptional events' for which it appears contractors charge the EA as extras and IDBs tend to absorb within the job, e.g., if an access route is blocked and needs clearance works, or works around a tree stump- IDBs undertake within the scope of the job and without charging extra.

In context, the agreements have been a productive way for the Boards to see regular maintenance works on EA maintained main river. PSCAs have been used annually to commission works from each of our 4 Witham & Humber Drainage Boards. Only some of the income from these works has been at times been built into baseline budgets, largely to cover the costs of some Operative time. So, although the Boards are required to operate at a full costs recovery basis rather than making a profit, each year some of the PSCA income has in effect been fortuitous income for each Board. To put some metrics around the value of the PSCA income to each Board, last year 2024/25 the actual income for PSCA works [which may vary from the original start of year quotations, e.g. due to rainfall event access to river banks may be halted and works stopped] was as follows:

- **NELDB: £167,566**
- Upper Witham IDB: £174,893
- Witham First DIDB: £78,987
- Witham Third DIDB: £249,181

The Director of Operations had submitted quotations, as requested by the EA, for a similar level of works by each Board for 2025/26 and for 3 of the Boards initially orders were confirmed verbally, then works were halted whilst the EA assessed its available maintenance budgets for 2025/26.

There has subsequently been discussion with the EA during April as the EA has less maintenance monies available for main river in 2025/26 than the EA Operations team bid for, particularly in the Witham catchment. We were advised that many stretches of 'medium consequence main rivers' would not be

maintained this year [stretches of 'low consequence watercourse' maintenance being withdrawn last year]. A list of the medium consequence watercourses which this year will not be undertaken was provided in the Operations Report.

There are two significant issues here. The impact of reduced maintenance on main river and associated IDB systems affected by that lack of maintenance and secondly the reduced IDB income 2025/26 from EA PSCA works. Members will recall we cover this work through retained plant and machinery and through our floating Operative roles bolstering the workforce [hence we have delayed some recruitment until this issue was clarified].

Members will be updated once we have confirmation of orders and know what PSCA works the EA wish to commission for 2025/26.

Informal communication had been received yesterday, and Officers expected the full amount of PSCA work to be commissioned for NELDB, reduced amounts in the other 3 Witham & Humber Drainage Boards.

6.4 ADA Pay & Conditions Committee.

The focus of the last meeting on 11.03.25 was revisions to terms and conditions of employment within the ADA Lincolnshire White Book, not on pay negotiation which will be the focus of the next meeting on 01.10.25.

One matter arising from the meeting is the standing down of the current Committee Chairman, Peter Richardson [Chairman, Witham Fourth DIDB]. The Committee draws membership from 7 IDBs- our 4 W&HDBs, Witham Fourth DIDB, Black Sluice IDB and South Holland IDB.

Cllr Lance Pennell, Upper Witham Board member, is the 4 Boards' representative on the Committee and although he is willing to continue as such, he is unable to commit to becoming Chairman for the Committee. At the ADA Lincolnshire Branch AGM on 24.04.25 there was no appointment to the role of Chairman.

Lance has asked that each Board consider nominating a member in addition to him [as we have 4 seats] and whether someone may be willing to take on the role of Chairman.

6.5 Fish & Eel Regulations 2009.

The anticipated Fish & Eel Notice of Exemptions for pumping station compliance were issued by the EA to IDBs on 31.03.25. However, these were only issued for a 12-month period from 01.04.25 and with a requirement that compliance plans are agreed with the EA within six months, otherwise there may be enforcement action against the Board.

This change in approach has caused some concern amongst IDBs, who have largely been reliant on FDGiA funding to replace and refurbish pumping stations whereby fish friendly pumps have been installed to ensure compliance. The Capital Programme of FDGiA for 2025/26 has been severely cut by the EA and this year is now year 5 of a 5-year [not 6] year programme, with no certainty in funding beyond 31.03.26.

A meeting with the EA's national lead had been arranged for Monday, 12th May 2025 but unfortunately did not provide clarity as to what is required.

6.6 Annual Inspection- Thursday, 17th July 2025.

This year the 4 Boards' Inspection on 17th July will start from the joint Witham Third & Witham First DIDBs' Depot in Woodhall Spa at 09:00. Members will have an opportunity to view the additional mobile pumps and associated equipment purchased from the IDB Fund monies, which aim to provide greater resilience in future flood events.

The tour will follow a route showcasing some of the many schemes completed during 2024/25 including the completed works at Coningsby Pumping Station [inundated in November 2023 following the breach of the river Bain], the additional pumping capacity at Shortferry and Southrey Pumping Stations and a tilting weir installed as part of the LAPSIP [Lowland Agricultural Peat Small Infrastructure Project].

The morning tour will return to Woodhall Spa, followed by lunch at The Dower House at 13:30.

Members were asked to confirm with Jayne Flower at the end of the meeting or via email Jayney.Flower@witham3idb.gov.uk or by phone on 01522 697123 whether or not they will be attending.

The Vice Chairman impressed upon members the value of the day noting it was of great benefit to be able to see first-hand the works that are discussed during meetings.

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

7. Internal Audit Report 2024/24.

A report on last year 2024/25 had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by Chris Harris.

His overall assurance opinion was SUBSTANTIAL. He made no improvement recommendations as a result of the audit.

The matter raised in the previous Internal Audit Report for 2023/24 namely – weaknesses in relation to some out-of-date policies, risk management strategy and the debt recovery procedure had all been addressed.

The auditor was pleased to record that, following his detailed internal audit work, the governance, risk and control framework at North East Lindsey IDB is in good order and working well.

Whilst the 2024/25 General Reserve Position was in the order of 13.5% of turnover and within the previous 10 to 15% range, General reserves in future are expected to be between 15% and 20% of turnover as contained within the Financial Regulations approved at the JSC in December 2024.

For 2025/26, the General Reserve was estimated to be in the order of 16.51% of turnover.

8. Year End Financial Report to 31.03.25, month 12 of 2024/25.

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

The Board made an initial surplus of (£157,929) but, after a proposed transfers to specific Reserves of £120k, this reduces the surplus to (£37,929):

2024/25 (Surplus/Deficit) £	Proposed Fund Transfers £	Outturn (Surplus)/Deficit £
(157,929)	(120,000)	(37,929)

The Board is showing a modest surplus position after proposed transfer to reserves at the end of the financial year which will be transferred to General Reserve. Whilst this is a healthy outturn position Members were reminded that the Board now has more financial risk especially with regards electricity costs if we encounter wet weather events and the reliance on PSCA income. Therefore, it is important that the Board's reserves are maintained to mitigate some of this additional financial risk.

The following table set out the 4 Witham & Humber Boards' outturn positions at 31st March 2025:

Board	Initial Outturn P12	Transfer to Reserves			Outturn P12 (trf to Gen Fund)	% of Budgeted Turnover
		Insurance Reserve	Plant & Machinery	Pumping Stations		
NEL	(£157,929)	£50,000		£70,000	(£37,929)	20.47%
UW	(£291,755)	£50,000	£200,000		(£41,755)	21.62%
W1	(£262,058)	£50,000	£100,000	£75,000	(£37,058)	19.02%
W3	(£270,627)	£15,000	£240,000		(£15,627)	21.09%

All Boards ended the financial year with a surplus position, as forecast at the January round of Board meetings. This is due to some costs that normally the Boards would incur during the year (e.g. pump lifts) being charged to grant funded schemes. It is emphasised this is a one-off benefit and next year the Board will again need to fund these works.

The table includes some proposed fund transfers, and these will be for each individual Board to approve. The suggested transfers ensure a General Fund position of @20% of budgeted turnover, a reasonable Emergency Events reserve balance, a Self-Insurance reserve to mitigate against future reductions in insurance cover especially regarding flood risk, and to address any current known shortfalls in the Plant & Machinery reserve which is utilised to fund the annual Plant Programmes.

The major impact on both income and expenditure during 2024/25 was the FDGIA Storm Recovery monies and the IDB Fund Recovery, Resilience and Innovation funding which has been increased from £75m to £91m for IDBs. Witham and Humber Drainage Boards were successful with their Expressions of Interests for funding, at £17.4 million over the 2 years 2024/25 and 2025/26. This has increased the turnover of the Boards significantly in 2024/25.

Board	Turnover 2024/25	Turnover 2023/24	Turnover 2022/23	Turnover 2021/22
NEL	£1,516,315	£1,183,261	£1,118,904	£875,641
UW	£5,582,743	£2,058,900	£2,104,380	£1,731,952
W1	£3,515,904	£1,755,139	£1,270,180	£1,107,185
W3	£7,018,816	£2,305,778	£1,928,966	£1,744,739
TOTAL	£17,633,778	£7,303,078	£6,422,430	£5,459,517

The table above illustrated how the turnover of the Boards in 2024/25 has been significant compared to previous years, and this is likely to continue in 2025/26 as further IDB Fund grant is received to complete the remaining schemes.

Highland Water Claims:

After further discussions and providing the detailed calculations, the Highland Water Claims to the EA relating to 2023/24 actuals and 80% of the estimate for 2024/25 due for payment in September 2025 were finally received on 26th February 2025. These amounts are included in these outturn positions.

The claims have been prepared for the 2024/25 actual position and the Estimate for 2025/26. As expected, these have reduced in comparison to last year, mainly due to reduced electricity costs (usage and rates) and expenditure recovered through the grant schemes which would have ordinarily fallen upon the Boards to resource (e.g. bank slips, pump lifts, etc). The 2025 claims were submitted in May, as follows:

Board	Estimate 24/25	Actual 24/25	Variance 24/25	Estimate 25/26
NEL	£131,500	£82,627	(£48,873)	130,000
UW	£282,000	£257,073	(£24,627)	290,300
W1	£32,600	£25,376	(£7,224)	33,000
W3	£395,000	£361,532	(£33,468)	377,500

Electricity:

The following table set out electricity costs by Board for 01st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 usage, so it includes new standing charges/rates from 01st October 2024):

Board	Full Year Budget	Actual	Variance
NEL	£90,000	£39,095	(£50,905)
UW	£192,000	£125,109	(£66,890)
W1	£335,500	£263,830	(£71,670)
W3	£220,000	£144,097	(£75,903)

Members were reminded that new usage rates and standing/KVA charges commenced from 01st October 2024, but the most significant factor is that apart from the wet weather in January, there has been a relatively dry winter/spring which has benefitted the Boards' electricity usage.

Drainage Rate Collection:

The following table set out the Drainage Rate collection rate 2024/25, as of 31st March 2025 (previous years shown for comparison as at 31st March):

Board	Collection rate 24/25	Collection rate 23/24	Collection rate 22/23
NEL	99.9%	95.7%	95.3%
UW	93.8%	96.0%	98.6%
W1	99.0%	99.6%	99.0%
W3	100.1%	99.8%	99.4%

The Boards were part of a joint initiative with the Ouse & Humber IDBs, York Consortium IDBs and South Holland IDB (18 IDBs in total) to develop a new drainage ratings system, known as the Ratings Management System (RMS). This has been a very successful project, with the new system going live from April 2025. This year's rate demands have been produced and issued from the new system. The new system has cost £60k in external fees which has been recharged proportionally across the IDBs (so £16.3k for the 4 W&H Boards, plus officer time).

Bank & Investment Balances:

A £250k 1-year fixed term cash deposit was made on 18th October 2024 with Chorley & District Building Society at 4.5%. 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 (£11,250) interest for each of the Boards, split over 2 financial years.

Members were reminded that the Board has a General Reserve Policy of 15% to 20% of budgeted annual income/expenditure which currently has an allocation of (£187,132). The surplus of (£37,929) will increase the balance to (£225,061), which is 20.47% of 2024/25 estimated income and expenditure of (£1,099,565).

Other earmarked reserves exist for Pumping Station Renewal/Capital Programme (£411k), One-Off Projects/FDGIA/IDB Fund (£215k), Emergency Events (£112k), Conservation (£11.6k) and Rosper Road Pits (£7k) and Developer Contributions (£102k). It is proposed that transfers of £50k to the Self Insurance Reserve and £70k to the Pumping Stations Reserve are approved as part of this report.

Members were reminded that if funds are required, the Board can approve movements between the reserves at any time so these allocations can be changed at any time in the future.

The unaudited 2024/25 Annual Report and Accounts were provided for information only and as such remain unaudited. The report covers a narrative of what has been undertaken, and which Members have served on the Board during the financial year plus the unaudited financial statements and accompanying notes. It will be loaded onto the Board's website.

As part of this report the Policy on capitalising asset expenditure over £6k has been amended for the items purchased through the IDB Fund grant, where these have been fully depreciated in year and therefore will not provide funding for their future replacement. Should these items need replacing in the future then resources will need to be identified at that time to fund the replacement purchase.

Following discussion North East Lindsey IDB members **NOTED** the 2024/25 financial

performance for the period 01st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 (P12); **APPROVED** the additional fund transfers of £50k to the Self Insurance Reserve and £70k to the Pumping Stations Reserve; **NOTED** the Governance update; **REVIEWED AND NOTED** the Schedules of Expenditure incurred 01.01.2025 to 31.03.2025 and **NOTED** the unaudited Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25.

9. Annual Governance Statement 2024/25.

The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) had been circulated and must be approved prior to the Accounting Statements, either at separate meetings or in the same meeting with the correct order of business on the agenda. This must be evidenced by the meeting minute references and/or dates.

The AGS comprises 9 assertions (number 9 is not applicable to IDBs) which the Board must consider and agree or provide a detailed explanation for the external auditor where it cannot agree and how it will address any weaknesses identified.

Once agreed, the Accounting Statements and complete AGAR may be approved.

The Chairman accordingly took Members through the relevant 8 statements at the Board meeting and the response to each was agreed.

10. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25.

A report had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Finance for approval by Members of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2024/25. The Board has a statutory requirement to complete and approve the AGAR.

The AGAR has 4 separate sections and normally needs to be approved at a full Board meeting before 01st July. It also must be submitted, along with additional requested information, to the nationally appointed External Auditor PKF Littlejohn LLP by 01st July 2025 for their review. Alongside this, the rights of public inspection will also commence on Monday 09th June 2025 until Friday 18th July 2025. This period incorporates the first 10 working days of July, as required by statute.

The AGAR comprises the following key sections:

- Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25 (received earlier in the meeting)
- Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 (approved earlier)
- Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 (with this item)
- Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2024/25 (due by 30th September).

The Annual Internal Audit Report has been completed by the Internal Auditor, Lighthouse UK Consultancy Ltd, and the separate, more detailed report was presented earlier during the meeting.

The Annual Governance Statement [AGS] had been approved before the AGAR was presented.

Accounting Statements utilise the information used in the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which appears elsewhere on this Agenda. Once approved, the document

is published on the Board's website to meet its requirements under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. This will be on Friday 06th June 2025.

The statutory deadline by which the AGAR and signed external auditor report and the Notice of Conclusion of Audit must be published is 30th September 2025.

Following discussion, the Board APPROVED the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25, noting it will be published on the Board's website along with the notice to commence the period of public rights of inspection from 09th June 2025.

11. Operations Report.

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

All 4 Boards are preparing for the start of the vegetation maintenance season; this is the time to repair and maintain all the flails and weed baskets in preparation.

The IDB fund work for the Operatives has slowed down, with the completion of some of the schemes at 31.03.25. All the contractors undertaking bank slip repairs had finished their programmed work and we have taken delivery of all the new mobile pumps and generators ordered. Woodhall Depot is currently full of stock for future bank repair works [timber, sheet piles, stone], this stock is held for all 4 Boards' use. The annual pre-season operational team briefings are booked in for the 4 Boards, and we always include Carnaby's (NEL's approved contractor) in this training. These briefings are about creating awareness to hazards and environmental issues, for example overhead cables, working near open channels, lone working. For environmental we discuss bird nesting forms, working around badger sets, water vole habitat and about not damaging the toe of the banks, non-native invasive species awareness and reporting and biosecurity measures.

Middle Drain pumping station:

On the morning of the 01.04.25 Darren Scott discovered a break-in at Middle Drain pumping station. The intruders had cut wiring from the panels to 2 of the pumps, damaged the doors front and rear (the rear door being into Yorkshire Electric's equipment). The estimate to replace the cabling is circa £13,000 and to replace the doors circa £4,500. The replacement work is an insurance claim. The new Able UK pumping station also had a break-in.

New Structures:

The new weed screens and fabricated platform structures [funded via the IDB Fund] at Barrow Haven, Foxes and Target pond have all been installed and are now usable.

Mobile Pump:

The new Euromachines Mobile 6" pump with generator and lighting tower purchased from the national IDB fund monies will be kept at North East Lindsey's depot and is due for delivery within the next 6 weeks. This is a self-contained unit ready for immediate deployment by the Works Supervisor. The Board will also have access, as will all 4 Boards, to the stock of 4", 6", 8" and 12" pumps stored at the Woodhall Depot in flood events.

Public Sector Cooperation Agreement [PSCA] works:

Estimates were provided to the EA for a similar amount of PSCA work in 2025/26 as undertaken in previous years by all 4 Boards. It had been confirmed verbally that the EA wanted to commission the work again this year. Extra time was committed to re quoting some works, due to the quotes having to be signed off by a DEFRA Commercial 5-year review this year.

The quotes submitted were:

NEL: £156,026.84

UW: £216,471.10

W1: £107,896.53

W3: £318,568.84

However, we have now been informed that EA funding restrictions for maintenance on main rivers in the Witham catchment mean they have reduced the programme for the Witham Boards. The PSCA works by NELDB are not affected by the reductions and PSCA works will go ahead this year as planned.

Members discussed and NOTED the Operations report and update.

12. Capital Programme Report.

A capital schemes report had been circulated with the agenda and was jointly presented by the Director of Finance & Governance, Director of Engineering and the Director of Operations.

The Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) programme is administered by the Environment Agency (EA) on behalf of Defra and applications to claim GIA are approved by the EA. The Capital Programme Refresh exercise is to be undertaken, with Indicative Allocations in September 2025

The indicative allocation for FDGiA for 2025/26 for each Board had been received from the EA. The funding for this final year of the now 5-year capital programme has been significantly reduced, although this funding has not changed since the indicative allocation in January 2025.

The FDGiA funding received for 2025/26 is as follows:

Witham 1st	Timberland PS	£511,079
Witham 3rd	Woodhall Spa PS	£513,640
Upper Witham		£0
North East Lindsey		£0

Department for Education Funding:

A funding bid for five schemes within the 4 Boards was submitted in September 2024. This was for Department for Education (DfE) funding for flood defence schemes providing flood risk benefits to schools. The following schemes were successful in receiving funding, totalling £800,000:

North East Lindsey	Mawmbridge PS	£100,000
North East Lindsey	Immingham PS	£200,000
Upper Witham	Saxilby PS	£100,000
Witham 1st	Timberland & Billingham PS	£200,000
Witham 3rd	Woodhall Spa PS	£200,000

Mawmbridge PS Refurbishment:

IDB No	ND-3990-2018-PRO
EA National Project No	ANC501E/000A/064A
GIA Claim No	IDB 0543
GIA Approval Amount	£274,458
Project Stage	OBC Development
Consultant	Stantec

This project has not been given an allocation by the EA in 2025/26. The construction phase of this has been pushed back to start in 2027/28. The project has been put on the 'opportunities list' by the Environment Agency; so, should funding become available in-year it will be considered for GIA funding later in-year.

A bid for DofE funding for £100,000 was successful and will be used to continue to develop the project.

An FCERM 4 for additional funding to allow the continuation of the ecological surveys through 2025/26 has been approved by the EA. The ecological surveys, particularly the various bird surveys, are a critical activity to allow the development of the project to enable the start of construction in spring 2027. These surveys will continue in the relevant time periods over the next year and will inform the MMO licence application and any constraints there may be on the construction phase of the works.

The OBC will continue to be developed by Stantec, with work progressing on the benefits assessment and modelling for maximum discharge capacity and climate change. The outline design will be developed if funding becomes available within the year.

Income and spend as at 31st March 2025:

<u>Mawmbridge Catchment Study</u>	Approved	Actual	Variance
Income	(£224,548)	(£224,548)	£0
Expenditure	£224,548	£150,265	(£74,283)
Net	£0	(£74,283)	(£74,283)

Immingham PS Refurbishment:

IDB No	ND 3987-2018-PRO
EA National Project No	ANC501E/000A/058A
GIA Claim No	IDB 0546
GIA Approval Amount	£175,000
Project Stage	OBC Development
Consultant	Stantec

This project has not been given an allocation by the EA in 2025/26. The construction phase of this has been pushed back to start in 2027/28. The project has been put on the opportunities list by the EA so should funding become available in-year it will be considered for GIA funding later in-year.

A bid for DofE funding for £200,000 was successful and will be used to continue to develop the project. An outline design for the pumping station has been developed considering the requirements of the maintenance requirements, improved resilience to flooding from main river and tidal inundation and the need for new fish friendly pumps at the site.

Modelling work is ongoing to determine the capacity of pumps required at the site. This has indicated that the maximum capacity required at this site is 3.1m³/sec. Therefore, the preferred option is to replace the pumps with three fish friendly variable speed pumps. In addition, the MCC and critical equipment will be raised to the level of the adjacent Environment flood bank, to provide resilience to the pumping station.

The economic assessment has been updated and is currently being reviewed by the Board's officers. This will inform the OBC submission, which is programmed for the summer of 2025.

Income and spend as at 31st March 2025:

Immingham Pumping Station Refurbishment	Approved	Actual	Variance
Income	(£175,000)	(£175,000)	£0
Expenditure	£175,000	£144,570	(£30,430)
Net	£0	(£30,430)	(£30,430)

Completed IDB Fund Schemes

Storm Recovery Costs (T1 Completed):

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 storms Babet [Oct '23] and Henk [January '24] events over and above 'business as usual' costs. The Witham & Humber Boards also had to offset the income they had received via the Statement of Claim to the RFCC 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.

Bank Slip Repairs (W3 – T1 Completed):

Slip repairs have been undertaken by contractors on all the 4 Boards' watercourses. On North East Lindsey we commissioned Carnaby's (the current main contractor), on Upper Witham we had Steve Hill Contracting and Will Timmins Contractors, on Witham First we used Maine Agri and on Witham Third Mill Farm Services. Spence Bros have undertaken works on various Boards. We supplied all the materials from stocks of timber, 5' stakes, 10' & 14' fir piles, back boarding, frost proof lump stone, clay and topsoil. In addition to the stock held in the depot, we have had deliveries direct to sites.

Access platforms (T2 Completed):

New access platforms and weedscreens at Barrow, Barrow Haven and Foxes outfall. These were installed by Carnaby Contractors following the previous contractor pulling out. Total costs £83,404 and paid for from the IDB Fund monies.

Members NOTED the Capital Programme Report and verbal update.

13. Engineering Services Report.

An Engineering report had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Director of Engineering & Technical Services. This now incorporated the Environment update, planning & consultations and the Consents & Enforcements report.

Mink Update:

Mink trapping efforts across Lincolnshire remain successful, with captures likely having reached their peak. The number of Mink trapped within the county of Lincolnshire between 01st January and 10th April had fallen considerably from last year (441 to 83). This stark drop highlights the success of the project thus far. The Waterlife Recovery Trust, which coordinates the trapping programme, is always seeking landowners willing to host mink rafts. If any members are interested in volunteering to host a raft, they were reminded to please contact the 4 Boards' Environment Officer.

ADA Environment Day Focused on Drainage and Conservation:

ADA recently hosted a dedicated Environment Day, bringing together a range of speakers and attendees to explore key environmental issues relevant to drainage boards. The 4 Boards' officers, members, and members of the public took part in insightful presentations and discussions led by representatives from Natural England, ADA, Fenland Flora, Board Members, the Water Management Alliance, the Waterlife Recovery Trust, and The Beaver Trust.

Presentation slides from the day are now available on the ADA website. The event offered a valuable opportunity for those within the IDB community to exchange experiences, share knowledge, and engage with current environmental challenges. More information about the 2026 Environment Day will be shared closer to the date.

License Approvals for 2025:

The Environment officer had successfully received license extensions for the coming year, including:

- Water voles: licence to displace them for work on flood defences, water courses or drainage systems (CL24).
- Licence to interfere with badger setts for watercourse and drainage purposes (CL27)
- A new license has been granted allowing the Board to mitigate against the impacts of newly reintroduced Beavers: a licence to modify or remove dams, burrows and lodges (CL51)

There is currently no known Beaver release planned in Lincolnshire. The Board should be consulted prior to any planned release.

Humber Nature Partnership:

The Board remains actively involved in the Humber Management Scheme and will also contribute to the Humber Estuary Relevant Authorities Group (HERAG). HERAG brings together relevant authorities with the shared goal of improving and maintaining the quality and extent of wetlands within the strategic sub-catchment.

Land off Kings Road:

There are no further developments to land registered by the Board on Kings Road in the Immingham catchment.

Humber 2100+ - Step 1 Endorsement Report:

The multi-agency project considering the flood risk within the Humber Estuary has received the endorsement of all the professional partners to Step 1 of the overall strategy. This initial step is seeking to gain acceptance of various fundamental issues relating to flood risk in the catchment, building acceptance of the magnitude and consequence of the risk and how we communicate it to those it affects.

All professional partners have been issued with a copy of this report to use in briefing their Councillors and others to help them understand the outputs and secure endorsement.

Members received and NOTED the Engineering report and update.

17. Any Other Business.

There were no further items of business, and the meeting closed at 16.20.

18. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Board was confirmed for Wednesday 26th November 2025 at 2pm in Stallingborough Grange Hotel.

 Chairman..... 26.11.25..... Date
NELDB BM 21.05.25.