

## WITHAM FIRST DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

**Minutes of the ninety second meeting of Witham First District Internal Drainage Board held on Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> June 2015 in Branston Booths Village Hall at 2pm.**

*Present:*

Mr. R.A. Fletcher	<b>Chairman</b>
Mr. P. Gilbert	<b>Vice Chairman</b>
Mr. E. Applewhite	
Mr. D.C. Armstrong	
Cllr. B. Charlesworth	
Cllr. R. Cucksey	
Cllr. D. Jackson	
Mr. M.D. Harrison	
Mr. B.S. Leggate	
Mr. S.B. Leggate	
Mr. L. Maplethorpe	
Mr. S. Maplethorpe	
Cllr. J.F. Money	
Cllr. C.R. Oxby	
Mr. E.H. Tonge	
Cllr. P. Vaughan	
Mr. A.S. Whitehead	

*In attendance:*

Mrs. Jane Froggatt	Chief Executive
Mr. David Gowing	Internal Auditor
Mr. Steve Larter	Finance Manager
Mr. Martin Shilling	Director of Operations
Mrs. Anna Wilson	Finance and Rating Officer

### **1919 Apologies for absence.**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. S.F. Cobb, Mr. J.R. Crust, Mr. T. Gilbert, Mr. R. Hall, Cllr. G. Hewson, Mr. R. Hickling, Mr. D. Leggate, Mr. D.R. Means, Mr. I. Mair and Dr. V. Stanton.

### **1920 Declarations of Interest.**

Declarations of interest were received from members nominated by City of Lincoln Council and North Kesteven District Council, in matters relating to their respective Councils.

### **1921 Chairman's Announcements.**

The Chairman welcomed Members, Officers and David Gowing, Internal Auditor, to the meeting.

- Death of Mr. Norman Alan Osborne.

Members were advised of the unexpected, untimely death of Norman Osborne on Monday, 08<sup>th</sup> June and the Chairman paid tribute to Norman's hard work, dedication and enthusiasm for land drainage and flood protection. Norman had been a Board member for 30 years, attending his first meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1985, and was Vice Chairman of the Board from November 1996 to November 2001 before serving as Chairman from November 2001 to November 2006.

Norman played an active role in the ADA Lincolnshire Branch and was elected Branch Chairman on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2009, a role he continued to hold. He had also chaired the IDBs' Lincolnshire Show Committee for many years until 2014.

The Chairman invited everyone to stand for a period of silence and reflection in memory of Norman.

- Changes to Membership of the Board.

The Chairman advised that the two Councils, who between them nominate 7 members of the Board, had advised of some changes:

- City of Lincoln Council. The Chairman introduced and welcomed Cllr. Brent Charlesworth as a new member of the Board. He also welcomed 2 of the 3 returning members Cllr. David Jackson and Cllr. Pat Vaughan, noting that Cllr. Gary Hewson also returns but had given his apologies for the meeting.
- North Kesteven District Council. The Chairman welcomed 3 returning members, Cllr. Ray Cucksey, Cllr. John Money and Cllr. Ron Oxby. It was noted that Cllr. Rob Kendrick was not returning, the seat having passed on rotation to City of Lincoln, but a letter of thanks had been sent to him.
- Summer Inspections 2015.

The Chairman highlighted the 2 joint summer inspections (with Witham Third DIDB and Upper Witham IDB), one within the 3 drainage districts on Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> July and one external to North East Lindsey IDB on Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> September. Members were invited to indicate whether or not they would be attending each inspection.

## **1922 Minutes of the Board meeting on 28.04.15.**

The minutes of the Board's previous meeting held on Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2015 were APPROVED as an accurate record.

### ***MATTERS ARISING:***

Most items were covered by the agenda, but the following updates were provided.

#### **1922.1 Motor Vehicles Allowances Policy (minute 1904.4 refers).**

It was confirmed that following the procurement exercise referred to at the last meeting, various vans were now being evaluated (a Citroen Berlingo van having been used by all 3 Boards on a week's trial).

1922.2 Request to adopt a watercourse downstream of a proposed housing development off Grantham Road, Sleaford (minute 1913 refers).

The Chief Executive confirmed she had written to Jason McKellar at the Millward Partnership in Nottingham to convey the Board's view on the potential adoption of the watercourse and suggesting a meeting of both parties to seek to progress the issues. An update would be provided to the September meeting.

**1923 Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting on 02.06.15.**

The minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 02<sup>nd</sup> June 2015 were proposed, seconded and APPROVED as an accurate record and recommendations from the Committee to the Board were noted.

Matters arising were addressed on the agenda.

**1924 Minutes of the Joint Administration Committee meeting on 11.05.15.**

The minutes of the Joint Administration Committee meeting held on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015 were NOTED, as were the recommendations from the Committee. The next meeting is on 27.07.15.

**1925 Chief Executive's Report.**

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

1925.1 Ministerial Appointments.

Following the 07.05.15 Election, Secretary of State Liz Truss had been reappointed, Minister of State George Eustace returns to Defra and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State is now Rory Stewart. In addition, Lord Gardner of Kimble (Deputy Chief Executive of the Countryside Alliance) replaces Lord de Mauley as Defra's spokesman in the House of Lords but, unlike his predecessor, he will have no formal Ministerial responsibility within the Department.

1925.2 Lincolnshire IDB Clerks' meeting (01.06.15)

At this meeting it was apparent that EA staff were approaching IDBs to enquire about the possibility of the EA de-maining stretches of watercourses. The scale of this was being quantified, with GIS information being co-ordinated by BSIDB's GIS Officer. Discussion would need to be held with EA staff about the condition of any watercourses they proposed to transfer to IDBs, future maintenance costs etc. This issue was at an early stage, but is potentially significant.

1925.3 Insurance Renewals 2015/16.

The Board's insurance policies are due for renewal on 30.06.15 and it was highlighted that renewal costs on Upper Witham recently had risen from £22.3k last year to £26.7k for this year, i.e. 19% and more than the 5% increase in budgets. Towergate had not yet provided the individual policy quotations, but it was noted that the Board's fleet value had similarly increased.

Members received and noted the report.

## **1926 Revised Risk Register.**

A revised Risk Register (version 8) as at June 2015 had been circulated with the agenda. This version was, as agreed, the first version of an integrated Risk Register for the group of 3 Boards, as most risks were of a generic nature and common to the 3 Boards. Where a particular risk is specific to an individual Board, this is indicated.

The Register uses the 5 original objectives, agreed at a Risk Management seminar on 28.05.12. It then assesses the risks, controls, gaps and action plan to mitigate/manage risk.

Members APPROVED the revised Risk Register.

## **1927 Internal Auditor's Report on 2014/15.**

Mr. David Gowing, Internal Auditor, presented his independent report on 2014/15, which had been circulated with the agenda. He outlined that he had reviewed practices against the ADA Practitioners' Guide (2006) and the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. His review also included an implementation review of previous audit recommendations, a review of system changes, sample testing of 2014/15 transactions, a review of the end of financial year figures and completion of his section of the IDB Annual Return.

The main findings of his audit were presented as:

- continued improvement in the control, management and governance of the Boards.
- accurate and well presented accounting records.
- detailed and accurate information is provided to the Boards, especially on financial matters.
- a good system of Board reports and minutes.
- the majority of agreed recommendations from previous audits have been implemented.
- improved understanding and evidence of special levy charges and transfers from agricultural rate to special levy. Some reconciliation issues remain but these are being progressed.
- good compliance with governance standards with information on the web-site.
- improved information and action on drainage rate arrears with good collection rates from 96% to 99% across the group of 3 Boards. Priority should now be given to individual accounts with the higher level of arrears.
- no control use is made by the printing and storage of the DRS collector journals.
- the purchase and payment records require review to ensure full information is recorded with evidence of this being checked and authorised.
- processing and collation of wage timesheet data has been changed during the year so information is input to a spreadsheet and then to the payroll system. The output for the three Boards is not consistent with a similar issue in the purchase and payment records. A standard processing system for all three Boards would help ensure staff can easily rotate or stand-in when other staff are unavailable.
- in compliance with the Lincolnshire ADA "White Book" and recent legislation workforce staff should be paid at least a twelve week average earnings hourly rate when on leave rather than their basic hourly rate.
- a review of car mileage allowance has been completed with decisions to be implemented from April 2015. The three Boards' policies and payments are now in line with similar IDBs.
- the service procured from long term contractors is not always strictly in accordance with Financial Regulations.
- there are a few policies that require drafting and approval.

There was an action plan, based on his recommendations, which was in section 3 of the report and had been agreed with the Chief Executive.

Issues highlighted included the requirement for the Board to address enhancement to holiday pay, currently paid at basic pay rate, in the light of the Bear Scotland Appeal case (2014). Members were advised that options for complying with this were being considered, but would need to be implemented so as not to create a perverse incentive for all holidays to be taken in,

say, October based on overtime in the previous 12 weeks.

Members received and NOTED the Internal Auditor's Report and presentation and accepted his overall assessment of an "adequate assurance" rating for 2014/15.

### **1928 Financial Outturn Report 2014/15, as at 31.03.15.**

The Financial Outturn Report as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 was the first of 4 largely financial reports on the agenda, all relating to 2014/15.

The Finance Manager summarised the Board's 31.03.15 position as a small deficit outturn of £8,552 against approved budget. This was a healthy position given the Board had contained considerable issues which were not in the original budget, namely:

	£
• Replacement roof coverings at Timberland, Nocton and Heighington PS.	13,250
• 50% share of Nocton & Potterhanworth Catchment study.	8,370
• Prior year Balance Sheet Adjustment (net).	<u>11,690</u>
TOTAL	<u>33,310</u>

The report set out an analysis of all variances, positive and negative, between budget and actual for income and expenditure. Significant amongst these was a positive overall income variation of (£7k).

Special Levies from both City of Lincoln and North Kesteven District Councils were received as budgeted. Additional, positive income variations included (£17k) for rechargeable works, mainly PSCA works for the EA, sundry income of (£5k) and (£3k) for the granting of additional access track rights adjacent to Digby Pumping station. Against this, there was £12k less Drainage Rates income than planned in budget, but this adjustment provides a sound base for future years.

In terms of expenditure, it was noted that drains at £10k, pumping stations at (£34k) and Plant Holding £0k variances were in surplus, mainly due to lower than anticipated Wages and Plant recharges (£24k), electricity costs being lower than budgeted (£18k) and pump lifts at (£5k). The £13,250 cost of 3 pumping station roof replacements was included. Also, during the year the pump lift and refurbishment at Blankney at £7,287, North Kyme Pump no.1 at £4,288 and North Kyme Pump no.2 at £3,734 were included (it was noted that the Pump No.2 refurbishment at Heighington would be a cost of £11,543 to 2015/16).

The total of all variances, as set out on page 3 of the report, reconciled to the £8,552 deficit position.

The report set out capital movements during the year, with purchases of the Atlas 140W wheeled excavator in October 2014 at £112,875 (excl.VAT) and the Case Puma Tractor in October 2014 at £69,795 (excl.VAT), less the trade in of the McCormick tractor at £14,000 (excl.VAT) and the purchase of a weed basket at £5,800 (excl.VAT). The Volvo excavator, was sold for £16,500 (excl.VAT) and the 2009 Bomford flail was sold for £1,900 (excl.VAT).

Drainage Rates collection for 2014/15 was good, at 98.9% as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, with a balance of rates and costs outstanding of £2,118.17. This closing balance of monies owed to the Board was rolled forward into 2015/16 accounts, those invoices having been sent out to account holders on 08.04.15.

Bank balances as at 31.03.15 totalled £186,658. This had reduced significantly due to £350,980 being paid to LCC on 22.01.15 for the transfer of bridges/culverts liability.

The detail in the remainder of the report was the summary position on page 5, the breakdown of the drainage rates outturn position on page 5, bank balances on page 5 and pages 7 to 13 detailing budget, actual expenditure and variances for every budget heading for the year. This level of detail is provided to members twice each year.

Members received and NOTED the report and the reasons for the small deficit outturn 2014/15 position of £8,552 as at 31.03.15.

### **1929 Annual Report & Statement of Accounts 2014/15.**

The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for 2014/15 had been circulated with the agenda.

The Annual Report set out background information to the Board and how it operates and highlighted some works undertaken in 2014/15. The Statement of Accounts, in summary, detailed:

- the Statement of responsibilities.
- the Statement of Accounting Policies.
- the 28 members of the Board during the year.
- the 8 governance statements for Board members.
- Income & Expenditure account (page 13).
- Balance Sheet as at 31.03.15 (page 14).
- Notes to the Accounts (pages 15 to 21).

On Note 8, Related Party Transactions, 3 were highlighted given the Accounts are in the public domain (i.e. the Board rents land to Mr. Steve Cobb, Mr. Peter Gilbert and Mr. Neil Maplethorpe, all of whom were Board members during the financial year).

Note 13, the FRS17 Pensions report, was as provided to the Board by Hymans Robertson LLP, actuary to the Lincolnshire LGPS.

Note 14, on page 21, set out the Board's funds and reserves balances as at the opening 01.04.14 position and the closing balances as at 31.03.15. The 31.03.15 balances of note were (£91,448) revenue reserve, (£19,473) plant and machinery reserve, (£75,000) pumping station reserve and (£22,578) projects reserve. It was noted that the plant and machinery reserve was significantly reduced after recent purchases and would need to be replenished over the next couple of years, the pumping station reserve remained constant and the Revenue Reserve had reduced only by £8,552 to (£91,448) to meet the 31.03.15 deficit position. The one-off projects reserve of (£22,578) was what remained of the original (£40,000) to do the Twenty Foot Drain bank reinstatement in 2015/16.

Members APPROVED the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for 2014/15 and noted that its status, even after Board approval, would remain as 'unaudited' by the External Auditors (who concentrate on the IDB Annual Return, derived from the Statement of Accounts). It would, however, be uploaded to the Board's website.

### **1930 IDB Annual Return for 2014/15.**

A copy of the completed but unapproved IDB Annual Return had been circulated with the agenda. The Board is required to approve this before 30<sup>th</sup> June. Section 1, the 10 accounting statements, had been completed. Section 2, the Annual Governance Statement, was gone through with members who agreed all 8 statements.

Section 4 had been completed by the Internal Auditor following his visit. Section 3 will be completed by Grant Thornton, following the external audit.

Members received and APPROVED the IDB Annual Return, which was signed by the Chairman and Chief Executive and which would now be submitted to Grant Thornton.

### **1931 IDB1 Report to Defra.**

The completed IDB1 Report, which has to be submitted to Defra before 31<sup>st</sup> August, had been circulated with the agenda.

The IDB1 Return asks for similar information for Defra as the IDB Annual Return includes for the Department for Communities & Local Government, but the IDB1 also asks for Special Levies information for 2015/16 (City of Lincoln £126,959 and NKDC £104,161).

This year the IDB1 Return is also asking for information about the Board's policies, Environmental credentials, asset management and governance arrangements (e.g. Code of Conduct for Board members, Financial Regulations, Register of members' interests, published website information in line with legislation and good practice guidance).

The IDB1 Report was APPROVED by the Board for submission to Defra.

### **1932 Statement of Expenditure for April 2015.**

Moving on to the new financial year 2015/16, members had received with the agenda the Statement of Expenditure incurred for April 2015. This was presented by the Rating and Finance Officer.

Gross expenditure incurred to 30.04.15 was £104,486.54 or, net of £13,222.93 reclaimable VAT, this was £91,263.59. Of this, £2,928.01 was rechargeable expenditure.

Members received and NOTED the expenditure incurred.

### **1933 Financial Performance Report for the first 2 months of 2015/16 (01.04.15 to 31.05.15).**

A report on the first two months of 2015/16 to 31<sup>st</sup> May had been circulated with the agenda detailing:

- Drainage Rates collection. Invoices were despatched on 08<sup>th</sup>/09<sup>th</sup> April totalling £481,039. As of 01<sup>st</sup> June, pleasingly £340,657.76 had so far been received. An update was given as at 15.06.15, in that now 75% had been collected, leaving £123.5k to be collected.
- Both City of Lincoln and North Kesteven Councils had paid the first tranche of Special Levies on 01.05.15, which totalled £115,560.
- Highland Water claim – 80% of the (£13,920) submitted estimate for 2015/16 is due to be paid by the EA by 30.09.15, together with the reconciliation between estimated and actual for 2014/15, i.e. (£90).
- Expenditure will be the April statement, plus May. Of note, May includes phase two of PS roof replacements at Digby and Billingham at £5,490 (excl.VAT) and the complex pump refurbishment at Heighington at £11,543 (excl.VAT). Also, in May the first 50% EA precept payment by the Board was made at £41,515 (the second being due by 30.11.15).

Members received and NOTED the 2015/16 financial position to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2015.

### **1934 Drainage Rates write-offs.**

The Finance & Rating Officer had prepared a paper, circulated with the agenda, which requested the Board write-off 3 account values totalling £4.66, as each is under the £2.50 threshold value for 2015/16. The paper also recommended the Board writes-off, as usual, the £1,306.04 rates account 0191 for Branston Island (an EA Operated washland of 94 hectares, subject to flooding as required).

Members AGREED the 2 write-offs, write-offs being reserved to the Board.

### **1935 Electoral Register 2015.**

A copy of the Electoral Register for the October 2015 election was available to the meeting. It was confirmed that the Notice of Inspection had been advertised in the Lincolnshire Echo on 28.05.15 and a copy of the Electoral Register had been available at Witham House for public inspection from 28<sup>th</sup> May to 11<sup>th</sup> June.

Members APPROVED the Electoral Register 2015, approval of which would be advertised in the Lincolnshire Echo on 09.07.15.

### **1936 Proposal to expand the role of the Joint Administration Committee to that of Joint Services Committee.**

A paper had been circulated with the agenda which put forward a proposition supported at the Joint Administration Committee meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> May that the role of the current Committee be expanded to that of Joint Services Committee.

Executive Committee members had supported on 02.06.15 the recommendation from the Joint Administration Committee, noting that all 3 Boards would need to agree the extension of the Committee's role before any changes were made.

In summary, the Terms of Reference for the current Joint Administration Committee date to the 01.04.09 Joint Administration Agreement between the 3 Boards and now monitoring of the agreement and joint administration budget is less onerous and there is less budget variance, better use could be made of the Committee's time.

Since 2013 the Joint Administration Committee had, by informal agreement, monitored all recharges between the 3 Boards as joint administration was now less than 50% of total recharges. Expanding the role to encompass all services would therefore regularise the current informal arrangements.

The Committee has been used as a sounding board for issues which potentially affect all 3 Boards and where a common approach would ensure consistency and/or achieve efficiencies of scale. An example was the approach to a revised Motor Vehicles Allowances Policy, discussed in detail by the Joint Administration Committee on 08.12.14 and its recommendations approved by each Board in January/February 2015. This role of discussion and scrutiny of issues of common concern could become a core part of a Joint Services Committee's role.

A further reason for expanding the role of the JAC is to provide a forum for discussion of specific functions, where a joint approach may be helpful and where there is a gap now. Some Boards, for example, have Committees for functions like Audit & Governance, Environment, Health & Safety, Terms and Remuneration.

Members AGREED to the extension of the Joint Administration Committee's role to that of Joint Services Committee, with the remit as outlined. Furthermore, it was noted that Witham Third DIDB had similarly agreed this extension of role and that Upper Witham Internal Drainage Board would consider the proposal on 22.06.15. Subject to all 3 Boards approving

such, revised Terms of Reference would go to the first meeting of a Joint Services Committee on 27.07.15.

### **1937 Summer Inspection 2015.**

It was noted that the 2 joint tours this summer were as follows:

- Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> July - 3pm at Witham Third DIDB's depot, Green Lane, Woodhall Spa. A coach tour of schemes/improvements/enforcement cases as examples of recent works in the group of 3 Boards' drainage districts. Return to W3rd depot for 6.45pm. The Golf Hotel for evening meal from 7pm for 7.30pm.
- Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> September – depart Lincoln (possibly Upper Witham's North Hykeham depot on Meadow Lane) circa 8.30am by coach for Forest Pines Hotel at 10am. Tour then hosted by North East Lindsey IDB, returning for lunch to Forest Pines Hotel. Coach departs at circa 4pm for Upper Witham's depot, estimated arrival time of 5.30pm.

Members were invited to indicate whether or not they would be attending each tour.

### **1938 Director of Operations' Report.**

The Director of Operations' Report for May and June 2015 had been circulated with the agenda and was supplemented with a presentation. Issues highlighted included:

- **Planned Maintenance Programme.**

The winter de-silting programme had been completed during this period. Other work included the strimming of grass to the raised embankment on Branston Beck, hand work to clear vegetation from Digby North Branch and Sleaford Drove Drain. The maintenance of pumping stations compounds has also been completed. The completed winter 2014/15 works were outlined as follows:

Watercourse	Length m	Length miles	Length completed	% completed
Odds Dyke	645m	0.4 miles	0.4 miles	100%
Timberland Town Dyke	4849m	4.0 miles	4.0 miles	100%
Boathouse Drain	4400m	2.7 miles	2.7 miles	100%
Cross Drain	1210m	0.8 miles	0.8 miles	100%
Causeway Drain	730m	0.5 miles	0.5 miles	100%
East Cross Drain	580m	0.4 miles	0.4 miles	100%
Dorrington Bankside Drain	1300m	0.8 miles	0.8 miles	100%
West Cross Drain	650m	0.4 miles	0.4 miles	100%
Ruskington Middle Drain	1150m	0.7 miles	0.7 miles	100%
Ruskington Roadside North	1100m	0.7 miles	0.7 miles	100%
Dorrington Middle/Elkingtons Drain	1370m	0.9 miles	0.9 miles	100%
Totals	17975m	12.3 miles	12.3 miles	100%

- **Pumping Stations.**

Pump no.2 had been removed from Heighington Pumping Station as part of the Board's programme of periodic lifting of pumps for inspection and repair. Records indicate that it was last inspected in 2006. Whilst the impellor showed little signs of wear and tear, other

elements of the pump were worn. Various shaft sleeves and bearings significantly so, with some new parts having to be cast and re-engineered. The pipework that delivered grease to the bottom bearing arrangement was completely eroded away and so some parts were receiving little or no lubrication. This work is allowed for in the budget for pump maintenance during 2015/16, the cost being £11,543 for this repair.

Given the condition of pump no.2, pump no.1 was removed for similar inspection. Its condition, whilst showing a similar external condition, was in much better condition internally. Apart from the replacement of bearings and the cleaning of the impellor, little additional work was required. This work too is included for within the pump maintenance budget for 2015/16 and is an estimated £8,000.

- **Plant.**

The Case Puma 170 tractor (purchased in October 2014) and new Herder Cavalier HBK 418 flail are programmed to be returned to Boston on 19<sup>th</sup> June. Upon return, it will be delivered to the Board's depot for final commissioning and Operator training. <sup>\*1</sup>

(\*1 Post meeting note - the Board took delivery on 13.07.15).

- **Rechargeable Work.**

The Board had started the work commissioned under the Public Sector Co-operation Agreement with the Environment Agency. It includes the clearing of obstructions from Digby Beck and the cutting of flood defence embankment crests at Digby, Sandhill, Farroway, Ruskington and Anwick. This work will continue throughout this financial year.

- **Woodhall Spa Country Show (17.05.15).**

The Board was represented at the show as part of a stand that demonstrated the work of the 3 Boards. As well as a display of photographs demonstrating the work currently undertaken by the Board and its history, the Atlas 140W wheeled excavator purchased in October 2014 was demonstrated with officers and Board members on hand to answer questions from the public.

- **Lincolnshire Show.**

The Board would once again be participating in the multi-agency flood and drainage stand at Lincolnshire Show, this year on Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> June.

- **Twenty Foot Drain Bank reinstatement.**

The Board's workforce had been working since Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> May on the major scheme to reinstate the slip in the Twenty Foot Drain batter at Chapel Hill (on the track side of the watercourse, following completion of the field side slip reinstatement last year).

The work had involved the excavation of poor material that had slumped into the drain bed, obstructing flow. This material, including a considerable quantity of concrete, had been removed from site and was replaced by a combination of stone placed to form a foundation with reinforced clay material, or stone, compacted in layers above it. This would provide a firm foundation for the access track to the neighbouring residential property and to Chapel Hill Pumping Station, as well as ensuring the channel is unobstructed in the vicinity of the pumping station.

It was reported that as the scheme progressed, it was clear that larger quantities of imported stone material were required than originally estimated.

Despite the challenging nature of the scheme, it was now progressing well and completion was envisaged on Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> June albeit there would remain some clearing of the site required after this date.

Members received and NOTED the report and presentation, particularly the detail of the Twenty Foot Drain scheme.

### **1939 Consents & Enforcements.**

A report outlining consents and enforcement cases both within the drainage district and in the extended catchment had been circulated with the agenda. Of note, the following cases were detailed:

- Byelaw Consent.

<b><u>Reference</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Applicant</u></b>	<b><u>Details</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>
FD-2037-2015-CON	Digby	Mr B Hall	Access culvert	12/05/15

- District Enforcement Case.

<b><u>Reference</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>	<b><u>Situation</u></b>
FD-1970-2015-ENF	Sleaford Fen off Electric Road Sleaford	Watercourse filled in	Meeting on site with complainant awaiting Land Charge Search

- Extended Catchment Enforcement Cases.

<b><u>Reference</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>	<b><u>Situation</u></b>
FE-237-2013-ENF	89a Main Street, Dorrington, Sleaford	Flooding in property and garden	Order to carry out remedial work received from NKDC. Continuing to monitor. Work to cut dyke programed for November 2015
FE-1406-2014-ENF	Spring Lane, Leasingham, Sleaford	Possible maintenance required to watercourse.	Following investigation and consultation, continuing to monitor.
FE-1683-2014-ENF	Rear of North St, Digby	Possible culvert blockage	Awaiting action by PC as to their intentions, Will monitor
FE-1881-2015-ENF	Fen Lane Metheringham, Lincoln	Water not flowing in watercourse	Awaiting response from land owner.

FE-1913-2015-ENF	Sleaford Road, Dorrington	Blocked culvert	LCC to clear culvert and additional maintenance required to watercourse.
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Members received and NOTED the current position on consents and enforcement cases.

### **1940 Planning Applications Report.**

The Board's Engineer had summarised planning applications considered in the period 09.04.15 to 08.06.15. Those applications where no objections were raised were set out.

On this occasion comments had been forwarded to North Kesteven District Council only, as follows:

<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Applicant</u></b>	<b><u>Details</u></b>
The Stables, next to Ferry Farm, Blankney South Drove, Blankney Dales	Mr R Angell	Conversion of barn to dwelling
<i>The worth of the 'localised defences' is questioned. If the EA maintained defences fail then any secondary stub wall or bund will be of little benefit.</i>		
7 Fen Road, Washingborough	Ms S Newell	Outline for pair of semi-detached dwellings
<i>The soakaways proposed for the drainage of impermeable areas should be designed in accordance with sections 3.26 to 3.30 of part H of the Building Regulations.</i>		
6 Fen Road, Washingborough	Mr & Mrs J Keen	Outline for two dwellings
<i>The soakaways proposed for the drainage of impermeable areas should be designed in accordance with sections 3.26 to 3.30 of part H of the Building Regulations.</i>		

Members received and NOTED the report.

### **1941 Environmental Report for 2014/15 and Action Plan for 2015/16.**

A report on environmental initiatives in 2014/15 and setting out plans for this year had been written by the Board's GIS & Environment Officer and circulated with the agenda.

During last year to comply with the duty to 'protect and enhance the environment', the group of 3 Boards had:

- Employed an Environmental Intern from February to September 2014 who assisted in a number of Environmental Projects (e.g. recording and mapping of species locations, installation of 5 kingfisher nesting sites at Upper Witham pumping stations, planting of a 'pilot' wildflower site at a pumping station and researched methods of creating otter holts).
- Environmental training morning 24.06.14 for the 3 Boards' Operatives (informing staff about Environmental legislation with which the Boards must comply, invasive species, species recording).
- Environmental training morning for Board members and staff on 25.03.15. Topics included Eel regulations compliance, Countryside Stewardship Schemes, the work of the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership.
- Biodiversity Action Plan, species recording.
- Barn Owls – it was an extremely successful year in 2014 for owl and kestrel populations in the 3 drainage districts. In total, 93 barn owls, 1 tawny owl and 34 kestrels were

recorded. In Witham First's 22 boxes 8 barn owls were recorded, 18 barn owl chicks, 9 barn owl eggs and 4 kestrel chicks. Good weather enabled the owls to hunt for more prey and they were able to have more broods of greater number.

The action plan for 2015/16 included the installation of an otter holt into the bank of a drain, the assessment of high and medium priority pumping station sites for Eel regulations (2009) compliance, creation of wildflower meadows and the potential trail of static water levels at some locations like Heighington Fen.

Members received and NOTED the report.

**1942 Environmental Project between the group of 3 Boards and ADA Lincolnshire Branch's Environment Committee.**

A copy of the Terms of Reference for the Environment Project, whereby the 3 Boards work with ADA's Environment Committee, had been circulated with the agenda together with the notes of the inaugural meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

Members NOTED the report and the project work planned over the next 12 months.

**1943 Policy Statement on Flood Protection and Water Levels Management.**

An updated version of the 2009 existing Policy Statement on Flood Protection and Water Levels Management had been circulated.

This new version was merely an update, to take into account changes which had happened since 2009 (e.g. legislative changes, the Board's website, the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership now having been established etc).

Members APPROVED the updated Policy Statement, it being a Defra requirement that the Board has such and publicises it. It will be uploaded to the Board's website.

**1944 Any Other Business.**

1944.1 ADA White Book Pay Settlement 2015/16.

The Chief Executive confirmed that although several Boards had now paid 1% 'on account' for 2015/16, in anticipation that this would be the pay settlement, there was as yet no agreement. The Pay Committee was intending to meet with staff side after the Budget on 08.07.15.

**1945 Date, Time and Place of the Board's Next Meeting.**

The Board's next meeting was confirmed for Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2015 at 2pm in Branston Booths Village Hall.

..... Chairman ..... Date

W1st BM 16.06.15.