

## **WITHAM FIRST DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

Minutes of the eighty seventh meeting of Witham First District Internal Drainage Board held on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> June 2014 at Washingborough Village Hall.

### *Present:*

Mr. R. Fletcher– Chairman.  
Mr. P. Gilbert – Vice Chairman.  
Mr. E. Applewhite.  
Mr. D.C. Armstrong.  
Mr. T. Gilbert.  
Mr. R. Hall.  
Mr. M.D. Harrison.  
Cllr. G. Hewson.  
Mr. B.S. Leggate.  
Mr. S. B. Leggate.  
Mr. N. Maplethorpe.  
Mr. S. Maplethorpe.  
Mr. D.R Means.  
Mr. N. Osborne.  
Cllr. C.R. Oxby.  
Dr. V. Stanton.  
Mr. E.H. Tonge.  
Cllr. P. Vaughan.

### *In attendance:*

Mrs. Jane Froggatt	Chief Executive
Mr. Martin Shilling	Director of Operations
Mr. Steve Larter	Finance Manager
Mrs. Anna Wilson	Finance and Rating Officer
Mr Ken Pratt	Upper Witham Engineer
Mr Guy Hird	Upper Witham Assistant Engineer

### **1916 Apologies.**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. S.F. Cobb, Mr. J. R. Crust, Cllr. R.Cucksey, Mr. R. Hickling, Cllr. R. Kendrick, Cllr. D. Jackson, Mr. J. Mair, Cllr. J. Money, Mr. L. Maplethorpe, Mr. A.S. Whitehead.

### **1917 Declarations of Interest.**

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

## **1918 Chairman's Announcements.**

### **1918.1 Summary of the Agenda.**

The Chairman summarised the agenda for the meeting, which by tradition focuses at the June meeting on the closure of the previous year's Accounts. The Board will consider three financial reports relating to last year 2013/14.

The first is the final monitoring report as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 and the Chairman was pleased to report that the Board ended the year with a surplus of (£15,997), in sharp contrast with the deficit of £54,321 in March 2013 after the very wet year and high usage of electricity. The Board had also carried forward £40,000 into reserves for 2014/15 in order to repair the Twenty Foot Drain Bank Slip at Chapel Hill.

The £16k surplus at the year-end feeds through into the next financial report on the agenda, the Statement of Accounts for 2013/14.

The third financial report on last year is the IDB Annual Return. The Board will today need to consider and agree completion of Section 2 of that return. The IDB Annual Return, and other information requested by Grant Thornton, the Board's External Auditors, will be submitted by Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> June, so that they can give their audit opinion and complete the Closure of 2013/14 Accounts.

Before being asked to agree this suite of 3 papers, the Board will consider the Risk Register and the Internal Auditor's independent report on last year.

### **1918.2 Fact Finding Trip to the Netherlands.**

A total of 8 representatives of the 3 IDBs participated in a 'fact finding trip' to the Netherlands from 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> May. It was an informative trip and the Chairman tabled a resulting article, summarising the trip, which Samantha Ireland, GIS and Ratings Officer, had published in the ADA Gazette (summer 2014 edition).

### **1918.3 A.D.A. Stand at Lincolnshire Show.**

The IDBs, EA, LCC and ADA jointly hosted a stand at Lincolnshire Show on Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> & Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> June.

The good weather was a bonus and Norman Osborne had advised that we had over 2,500 people attend the stand over the 2 days, including Owen Paterson, Secretary of State. The Chairman thanked Norman Osborne for once again chairing ADA's Lincolnshire Show Committee and those members who supported the event.

### **1918.4 The Board's Summer Inspection 2014.**

Members were reminded that the Board's Summer Inspection was on Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> June. The coach will leave Haverholme Park Farm for St. German's Pumping Station near King's Lynn for 10.15am where David Thomas, Engineer to Middle Level Commissioners, will host the tour of the Pumping Station which opened in 2011.

## **1919 Minutes of the Board meeting held on Tuesday, 22nd April 2014.**

The minutes of the Board's meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2014 were APPROVED as an accurate record, with one amendment. Mr. E. Applewhite's apologies had been recorded, but he was present at the meeting.

### **MATTERS ARISING:**

#### **1919.1 Public Sector Co-operation Agreements (minute 1905.1 refers).**

Mr. Norman Osborne advised members that, in his capacity as ADA Lincolnshire Branch Chairman, he had recently attended a number of meetings in other parts of the Country where PSCAs had been discussed as a positive vehicle for FRM authorities working in partnership. He felt that the Board's early signature in November 2013 and the work for the EA on Anwick Catchwater had generated both a positive outcome and positive publicity.

#### **1919.2 Transfer of 18 Bridges & Culverts to Lincolnshire County Council (minute 1905.4 refers).**

It had been reported to the previous Board meeting that on 25.02.14 a meeting between the Board's Officers, LCC's officers and respective legal advisors had resulted in a revised approach to the potential bridges transfer.

The Board was no longer being asked to prove title to the structures. LCC and the Board would now agree a transfer agreement, which will rid the Board of all future maintenance responsibilities and public liability, for the commutation sum of £350,980.92 (a slight reduction from £354,480.92 in respect of Heighington culvert).

The position remained that respective solicitors had been asked to draft the transfer agreement as soon as practicable, but this had not yet been completed. The Board would be updated in due course.

#### **1919.3 Branston Delph (minute 1906.4 refers).**

Following discussion of this issue at the Executive Committee meeting on 08.04.14, the Director of Operations had written to the EA to request information about the use of Branston Delph at Branston Booths over the past six months, specifically telemetry information relating to actual water levels in the Delph and Carr Dyke at Branston Booths.

The Director of Operations reported that he had received a response from Jez Brown which indicated there had been no operation of the Delph outside the agreed protocol.

## **1920 Executive Committee minutes, 10.06.14.**

The minutes of the Board's Executive Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2014 were APPROVED as an accurate record and the recommendations were noted.

### **MATTERS ARISING:**

1920.1 Five Mile Development, Washingborough (minute 4.4 refers).

Further to discussion on 10.06.14, it was now understood from officers at North Kesteven District Council that the site had a new owner, the owner of Marks Specialist Transport Ltd. This offered some prospect of completion of necessary works in line with the agreement and it was stressed that only at that point would the Board adopt and maintain the watercourse. The commutation sum of £12k remained with the Board's solicitor until that point.

**1921 Joint Administration Committee minutes, 28.04.14.**

The minutes of the Joint Administration Committee meeting held on Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2014 had been circulated with the agenda and had been noted by partner IDBs, Upper Witham and Witham Third District, at their Board meetings on 23.06.14 and 24.06.14 respectively.

Members NOTED the minutes.

**MATTERS ARISING:**

1921.1 Staffing and Joint Administration Agreement (minute 6 refers).

It was proposed to make the interim staffing arrangements, in place since 01.08.13, substantive from 01<sup>st</sup> August 2014. This would mean that the Director of Operations would be shared between the three Boards, not two as at present.

Members were advised that Upper Witham and Witham Third District IDBs had approved the recommendations to move towards an integrated Engineering Service, in future sharing the role of Engineer and Assistant Engineer.

Firstly, the other two Boards had approved the J.A.C. proposed move to revised funding contribution proportions from 01<sup>st</sup> April 2015 of Upper Witham 40% (as now), Witham Third 35% (from 30% now) and Witham First 25% (from 30% now).

Members APPROVED the J.A.C. recommendations from 28.04.14 that:

- the joint administration agreement funding formula be revised from 01.04.15 to UW 40%, W3rd 35% and W1st 25% contributions respectively to the budget.
- in principle, all roles excluding Works Supervisor, Foremen and Operatives should be shared between the 3 Boards.
- the role of Director of Operations, shared on an interim basis until 31.07.14, would be made substantively a shared post between the 3 Boards from 01.08.14.
- the 3 Boards agree in principle to move to shared Engineer and shared Assistant Engineer roles, tasking the Chief Executive with making the necessary organisational arrangements.

## 1921.2 Internal Audit Function (minute 7 refers).

Members noted that the J.A.C. had approved on 28.04.14 the specification for market testing the Internal Audit Function, aimed at a 3 year contract to run from 01.08.14. The J.A.C. would consider on 21.07.14 the results of a tendering exercise and, on behalf of the 3 Boards, award the contract as a joint service for the Boards.

Members noted progress on this contract review.

## **1922 Risk Register.**

Members considered the updated Risk Register which had been circulated with the agenda, the last version having been approved on 11.02.14.

In particular, the updated action plan columns were highlighted, eg. the Emergency Plan having been updated.

Members APPROVED the updated, version 6, Risk Register.

## **1923 Internal Auditor's Report on 2013/14.**

The Internal Auditor's independent report on 2013/14 had been circulated. David Gowing, Internal Auditor, was unable to attend the meeting but he had attended the Executive Committee's meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> June to present his findings.

The report followed on from his interim report to the Board on 11.02.14 and his final report on 2013/14 had been completed on 10.06.14 after his visit to review the 3 financial reports for the Board and the basis on which the financial information within them had been compiled. He had then discussed his findings with the Chief Executive and, after the Executive Committee meeting, the management action plan responding to the issues raised had been agreed between the Chief Executive and the Internal Auditor.

Members were advised of his findings, summarised as:

- an overall improvement in the control, management and governance of the Board.
- new SAGE finance and payroll system, together with staff changes means financial control, reports and management information has improved and is more detailed.
- systems and record keeping is more efficient and more reliance can be placed on the records. Manual records keeping has reduced, reducing the risk of error.
- accurate and well presented accounting records.
- detailed and accurate information is provided to the Board, who can now make informed decisions.
- the majority of agreed recommendations from the 2012/13 audit have been implemented.
- in common with some other Lincolnshire IDBs, the Special Levy charges cannot be fully evidenced to 1992. There is little evidence of land changes being made in recent years and the actual land this relates to is not accurately recorded. The Finance Manager has located documents from 1996 to support a transfer rate of £216.90 but it is the Auditor's view (and the Finance Manager's view) that this must be incorrect as it is so low. Assuming hectares of 241, the transfer value should be in the region of £4,400 to £8,000 depending on the interpretation of

- pumped/non pumped areas. Further work is required on this.
- the policy adopted by the Board of 10-15% general reserve and all other monies being deployed into specific reserves was introduced. Whilst there is no official guidance on the percentage of general reserve that should be held it is stated in the ADA Practitioners' Guide (2006) that the level should be reasonable. Most other Lincolnshire IDBs have a general reserve of at least 20% (and other specific reserves which cannot be used for any other purpose) as it is considered there is a risk of this level of emergency expenditure. It is acknowledged that, whilst there have been government statements that the level of reserves throughout the public sector should be reduced, IDBs are relatively small organisations so maybe their reserves should be larger than average.
  - significantly improved web site with more information than previously provided. most of the data required for Data Transparency is already included.
  - a sample check of the rating system collectors journals (daily income record) revealed these were not 100% accurate and this was not identified by the monthly reconciliations. However, no income was lost or not recorded in the ratings accounts.
  - one employee claims extremely high mileage allowance although it is acknowledged that due to his duties he travels considerable distance. His mileage claims are difficult to check as it is unclear if home to office mileage is being correctly deducted or the policy that is used.
  - the Board still pays the high mileage rate that most other Lincolnshire Boards have significantly reduced. The mileage entitlement for all staff is unclear.

The Chief Executive emphasised that the findings and report are those of the Internal Auditor.

She understood his concerns about a reduced general reserve of 10-15%, but pointed out that specific reserves can be redeployed, with the Board's approval, for an emergency event should that be necessary. She advised the Board needed to build up specific reserves for pumping stations renewal, plant programme etc.

Members discussed the Auditor's recommendation in respect of the Reserves Policy and resolved to maintain the Board's revised policy of maintaining 10-15% in general reserves and allocating other monies to specific reserves. This would be kept under review.

The other issue discussed was the lack of an evidence/audit trail to fully prove changes to Special Levy back to 1992. This was apparently an issue in other IDBs and nationally. ADA is aware.

After discussion, members received the Internal Auditor's Report on 2013/14 and ACCEPTED his 'Adequate Assurance Rating'.

#### **1924 Financial performance report for 31.03.14.**

The final in-year financial performance report for 2013/14, to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014, had been circulated with the agenda.

The Finance Manager outlined the purpose of the paper was to account for income and expenditure throughout the year, to detail the outturn position as at 31.03.14 and to explain variances against the budget estimates approved originally in February 2013. The Internal Auditor had requested that in-year financial reports show also drainage rates collection performance and bank balances, both of which were included.

At the Board's 22.04.14 meeting, the forecast 31.03.14 outturn position had been a surplus of (£2,557). Now that the Closure of Accounts process was complete, the actual 31.03.14 outturn position was confirmed as an improved surplus of (£15,997). This variance of (£13,440) since the last forecast was then explained, with an outline of both income and expenditure variations.

Of the variances outlined, of significance was a capital receipt for land sale of £4,250 previously included in income and now transferred to capital receipts. Also, there is a variance of (£22k) for both the principal and the interest payable on the PWLB loan for bridges/culverts transfers. A budget allocation was made for both but only interest is charged direct to the Balance Sheet to reduce the loan outstanding. The effect was to give a net benefit of (£22k).

The report contained a table summarising the approved estimates for 2013/14, the forecast outturn and then the actual outturn surplus of (£15,997). It also provided the detail of all capital movements, both sales and purchases. As a one-off exercise the full breakdown of income and expenditure for the year, which substantiates the summary table, was provided as an appendix to the report.

A table summarising joint administration charges and recharges between the Board, Upper Witham and Witham Third District IDBs was included in the report. The same table had been submitted to all 3 Boards and included all recharges, not just joint administration.

The report also provided a schedule of the Board's Funds and Reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014. Of note, this shows the general reserve at £100,000 and 4 categories of specific reserves (plant & machinery, pumping stations, one-off projects and office equipment).

The report then outlined Drainage Rates collection at 98.1% which constituted income of £471,302.84 against £480,244.08 raised for 2013/14 (of which, £15,224.11 was brought forward on 01.04.13 and £465,019.97 was rates demands for 2013/14).

Finally, the report showed total bank balances as at 31.03.14 of £617,617.63, with no separate investments held by the Board.

Mark Harrison questioned the bank balance, it being higher than anticipated albeit it included the £354k PWLB loan income not yet transferred to LCC.

Members NOTED the final performance report for 2013/14 as at 31.03.14 and APPROVED the (£15,997) surplus be deployed into the plant and machinery reserve.

#### **1925 Statement of Accounts 2013/14.**

The Statement of Accounts 2013/14 as at 31.03.14 had been circulated with the agenda. It was explained that it is no longer a requirement for IDBs to produce a full set of accounts but it is good practice to do so, the information contained therein is required in order to produce the IDB Annual Return and in 2015 it is likely that IDBs will once again be required to produce a full set of accounts. However, the status of the Statement of Accounts will remain as 'unaudited', as the External Auditors are currently not required to examine them.

The Annual Report on 2013/14 was followed by the Statement of Responsibilities and details of Board members during the year. The Annual Governance Statement was set out in the report, which the Chairman and Chief Executive would sign on behalf of members if, once presented, the Board was satisfied to approve the accounts.

The Chairman's certificate on the Statement of Responsibilities was similarly set out and would be signed when the accounts were approved.

The report then set out the Statement of Accounting Policies, the basis on which the accounts had been prepared.

The key pages drawn to members' attention were the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31.03.14 (page 13) and the Balance Sheet as at 31.03.14 (page 14).

On the I & E account, total income for the year ended 31.03.14 was £755,484 (compared with £733,880 in the previous year 2012/13). Total expenditure was £739,487 (compared with £788,201 in 2012/13). This gave a year end surplus as at 31.03.14 of (£15,997) compared with the previous year's 31.03.13 deficit of £54,321.

On the Balance Sheet, total assets and liabilities were set out and for 2013/14 it had been prepared to reflect the FRS17 Pension Impact, as a result of which the balance sheet for 2012/13 had been restated to reflect this.

A series of 'Notes to the Accounts' was then set out, including Note 13 on FRS17 Pensions as set out by Hymans Robertson LLP, the fund Actuaries for the Lincolnshire County Council Pension Fund.

Following discussion, the Board APPROVED the Statement of Accounts 2013/14 and authorised the Chairman and Chief Executive to sign them, including the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board. A signed copy of the Statement of Accounts 2013/14 would be bound with the June 2014 Board minutes.

(Cllr. Ron Oxby joined the meeting at this point).

#### **1926 IDB Annual Return for 2013/14.**

The IDB Annual Return for 2013/14 had been circulated with the agenda. Section 1 covered the Accounting Statements 2013/14, with 10 completed boxes as at 31.03.14 compared with the position as at 31.03.13. Section 2 was the Annual Governance Statement, to be completed by members of the Board today. Section 3 was the External Auditors' Certificate and Opinion on 2013/14 and Grant Thornton would complete and return upon closure of accounts. The Internal Auditor had completed Section 4, the Annual Internal Audit report 2013/14, on 10.06.14.

On Section 1, the accounting statements, the Finance Manager presented this and tabled a revised sheet to adjust Box 6 for capital receipts income, after discussion with Grant Thornton. In effect, Box 6 had reduced by £33k and Box 7 (Balances carried forward) had increased by a corresponding £33k.

It was also explained that, after much discussion with Grant Thornton, Box 9 on total fixed assets had been restated as advised to include the value of fixed assets at historical cost rather than current value. Members were aware of the inconsistency on this issue across IDBs and the differing views of External Auditors on the subject.

After discussion the Board APPROVED the IDB Annual Return and authorised the Chairman and Chief Executive to sign this as follows:

- the revised (tabled) Section 1 IDB Annual Return, noting the restated position for 31.03.13 on Box 9, total fixed assets being restated to historical cost.
- considered and agreed the 8 governance statements in Section 2 of the return.
- noted that Section 3 would be completed by Grant Thornton, External Auditors, after submission of the Annual Return on 27.06.14.
- noted the completion of Section 4, internal control 10 objectives, by the Internal Auditor as being achieved throughout 2013/14.

#### **1927 Statement of Expenditure.**

The Statement of Expenditure for the two months 01<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2014 had been circulated with the agenda.

Expenditure totalled £196,598.16 gross, which net of VAT at £17,149.25 (which is reclaimable) was net expenditure of £179,448.91.

The expenditure included the first of two EA precept payments of £41,515.50. The second payment is due on 01.11.14.

As discussed at Executive Committee, it also included £5,031.02 (net of VAT) for Herder flail spare parts from Mastebroek for servicing and running repairs for the 2014 weed cutting season.

Members received and NOTED the expenditure incurred.

#### **1928 Write-offs of Drainage Rates.**

Members had received a schedule of 4 drainage rates accounts outstanding as at 31<sup>st</sup> May 2014 where the value on each was under £2.50, the Board's policy being not to pursue and to write off unpaid demands under £2.50. The write-off of drainage rates is a matter reserved to the Board.

Members AGREED to write-off the debt totaling £7.04, spread across 4 accounts as follows:

<b><u>Account</u></b>	<b><u>Value</u></b> <b>£</b>
0136	0.53
0159	2.20
0195	1.85
0523	2.46
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7.04</b>

## **1929 Director of Operations' Report.**

The Director of Operations' Report had been circulated and an additional presentation was given for the period 01<sup>st</sup> May to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

### **1929.1 Planned Maintenance Programme.**

The summer maintenance programme had commenced during this period with hand work being undertaken on Sleaford Drove, Pindle and Digby North Branch Drains. These drains are generally inaccessible by mechanical plant and serve more high risk residential areas and those susceptible to high rainfall events. The Branston Beck flood bank has also been cut.

Some verges and pumping station access tracks, along with their compounds, had been flailed or 'strimmed', given the strong growth experienced recently.

The reinstatement of one of the major slips on the Twenty Foot Drain at Chapel Hill Pumping Station has been completed on the fieldside of the drain. The Board's own workforce have used a combination of steel piles, granite stone, imported soil and reinforcing grid to repair and support the reinstatement of the slips on the left bank of the drain in the vicinity of the pumping station.

This work has been completed without the need for formal Notice of Entry thanks to the co-operation of the adjacent occupier, Mr. Foreman.

### **1929.2 Pumping Stations.**

The pumps had been operated to bring retained levels up to 'summer levels' within the Board's systems. These have been managed to meet requests from neighbouring occupiers for their irrigation needs. A few isolated periods of heavy rain had been experienced during this period but the hours pumped could almost be regarded as 'normal'.

### **1929.3 Plant.**

Tenders for the purchase of tractor and wheeled excavator had been received and appraised with recommendations to the Board in separate reports.

### **1929.4 Timberland Pumping Station Open Day.**

The Board's Timberland pumping station was open to the public on 01<sup>st</sup> June between 1pm and 4.30pm. It is estimated that 100 visitors viewed the Board's diesel engine driven pump and 10RB dragline working demonstrations. There were also static demonstrations of a vintage tractor, small pumps and archive material. Some visitors arrived in vintage transport, including a Rolls Royce.

The station will be open to the public again on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> September as part of the Lincolnshire Heritage Weekend and members were encouraged to attend.

#### 1929.5 Woodhall Spa Country Show.

The Board was represented at the show by a joint stand with Witham 3<sup>rd</sup> District IDB. The display consisted of working plant, the ADA model and other static displays. A number of Board members and officers from neighbouring Boards visited the stand throughout the day.

#### 1929.6 Conservation.

The annual survey of the owl boxes has been undertaken and the results show an excellent year for a variety of species that use the boxes. Barn and Tawny Owls along with Kestrels and Jackdaws have raised clutches of young in the boxes sited throughout the district. Lincolnshire remains the most populated County in the Country for Barn Owls.

Members received and NOTED the Director of Operations' report and presentation.

### **1930 Planning applications.**

The schedule of planning applications received from the Local Planning Authorities for consultation in the period 04.04.14 to 09.06.14 had been circulated with the agenda.

The Engineer's report outlined the applications on which no objections had been raised on behalf of the Board. It also detailed two applications where comments had been forwarded to North Kesteven District Council as follows:

#### 1930.1 Home Farm, North Kyme Drove.

"The proposed additional roof area is large enough such that specific surface water drainage measures should be taken. If this is to be by means of an additional soakaway, it should be designed in accordance with Sections 3.26 to 3.29 of part H of Building Regulations".

#### 1930.2 Land to the rear of 83 Main Road, Washingborough.

"This site is adjacent to 81 Main Road, which was problematic because it did not have a drainage outfall. Access is to be gained through that development (to the 2 proposed dwellings). Detailed results of soakaway tests should be included with the detailed application. They should be carried out during the winter when groundwater levels are likely to be highest. The analysis should seek to prove there is sufficient depth available between the invert of piped drainage from the dwelling and above ground water level (gwl) – all in accordance with BRE Digest 365".

Members NOTED the applications considered and the comments submitted, on this occasion to North Kesteven District Council.

### **1931 Consents & Enforcements.**

A schedule of consent applications and enforcement cases to 12.06.14 had been circulated with the agenda. This covered both district and extended catchment cases undertaken for LCC as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).

The status of consent and enforcement cases was NOTED by the Board.

### **1932 Request from Digby Parish Council that the Board adopts and maintains Greendykes, Digby.**

Members had received copy correspondence from the Chairman of Digby Parish Council, received on 12.05.14, in which he asked the Board to reconsider its earlier decision not to adopt and schedule maintenance of Greendykes watercourse. Members had also received a Briefing Note setting out the issues and a recommendation from the Executive Committee.

It was acknowledged that the Board has worked with partner FRM Authorities and the Parish Council to improve the system in Digby, as we are all keen to reduce flood risk in the village.

The Board approved a policy for the adoption of watercourses on 11.02.14 and the Board's Executive Committee considered the request on 11.06.14, bearing this policy in mind.

The Board was reminded of the criteria the Board agreed in determining whether or not to adopt a watercourse and schedule maintenance:

- the watercourse is a primary drainage or flow route.
- (usually) the watercourse has more than one riparian owner/occupier.
- the watercourse has known drainage issues, where regular maintenance could resolve or ameliorate these.
- the watercourse lies within and/or serves a developed area or an environmentally sensitive area that could be impaired without regular maintenance.
- it is not maintained by another Flood Risk Management Authority.
- continuity with scheduled and/or designated watercourse downstream.
- new development that includes additional drainage infrastructure.

The Board's Executive Committee acknowledged that Greendykes does meet several of the criteria, which would enable the Board to adopt it. However, on balance the recommendation from the Committee was that the Board cannot adopt every watercourse that meets some of the criteria (because of lack of capacity in the Board) and there are clear riparian responsibilities for Greendykes which are longstanding. Now that the system has been improved and is clear of obstruction and silt deposits, the Committee's view was that it should not be beyond the reach of riparian owners to maintain the system.

The Executive Committee recommendation was, therefore, that the request for adoption should not be approved by the Board but, in the spirit of being helpful, if the riparian owners or Parish Council was to request maintenance by the Board as rechargeable works, the Board would look favourably at such a request as Greendykes is within the Board's district.

If, the Board determined to adopt Greendykes (which was A-B on the location plan and 253 metres long or by implication as B to G is not the Board's now, the Board is in effect being asked to adopt A to G (including Greendykes) which is a 645 metres stretch of watercourse) Executive Committee would recommend that the Board does not adopt maintenance responsibility for the structures on it, particularly:

- The public footpath alongside Greendykes (near A) which is LCC's responsibility
- The road culvert.
- The field access culvert which is riparian owned (along C-D stretch).
- The culvert in front of 23-25 Station Road (B to C).

After discussion, members RESOVLED to accept Executive Committee's recommendation not to adopt Greendykes, for the reasons stated. The Chief Executive would write accordingly to the Chairman of Digby Parish Council to convey this.

### **1933 Replacement Tractor.**

A paper had been circulated with the agenda which set out the results of the procurement process to replace the Board's McCormick tractor. The results were as follows:-

<b><u>Supplier</u></b>	<b><u>Model Offered</u></b>	<b><u>Nett Price</u></b>	<b><u>Trade In</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
Burdens Group	New Holland T7.200	£60,641	£15,000	£46,306
Pecks AgriTrac	Case IH Puma 160	£63,955	£14,000	£50,825
Marsh	Claas Axion 810 CIS	£72,201	£12,500	£61,255
Burdens Group	New Holland T7.220	£74,436	£15,000	£60,101
Crawfords	McCormick X7.670	£73,765	£15,000	£58,765
Chandlers Ltd.	MF 7620	£73,775	£11,000	£62,755
Pecks AgriTrac	Case IH Puma 170	£68,925	£14,000	£54,925

At the Board's Executive Committee meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> June, the tender values, as listed above, were considered. The Executive accepted the original recommendation of the Pecks AgriTrac tender for a Case IH Puma 160 MHR 4WD in the sum of £50,825, subject to receiving further technical information.

However, a price was requested for the Case PUMA 170. This has been received in the sum of £68,925 giving a net cost of £54,925 after trade in. This model is preferable for the following reasons:

- Its longer wheel base gives greater stability to the tractor when operating the rear mounted flail
- It has a maximum gross vehicle weight of 13,000kg rather than the 12,000kg of the Puma 160. This gives greater flexibility to add additional ballast/weight.

The recommendation, therefore, was for the Board to accept the alternative tender from Pecks AgriTrac for a Case IH Puma 170 tractor because:

- it meets the general specification.
- is provided by a local supplier/agent.
- is greater than the sum allowed for in the Plant & Vehicle Replacement programme (approved in 11.02.14 at £55,000 with a trade-in value of £15,000), but this model provides greater stability and operational performance when carrying and operating the Bomford flail.
- the Board's drivers have viewed all the models offered and the Case was their preferred model, bearing in mind the primary use for the unit.

Members APPROVED the purchase of the Case PUMA 170 Tractor in the sum of £68,925, or £54,925 net of trade in.

#### **1934 Replacement Wheeled Excavator.**

The Board had approved on 11.02.14 the 2014/15 plant programme which included replacement of the Volvo wheeled excavator (AE56 JKY). A report was circulated with the agenda which set out the results of the procurement process as follows:

<b><u>Supplier</u></b>	<b><u>Model Offered</u></b>	<b><u>Nett Price</u></b>
Willowbrook Plant	Hyundai R180W-9A	£113,250
Volvo	EW160D	£124,500
TCHarison JCB	JS145W	£124,500
TDL Equipment Ltd.	Atlas 140W	£112,875
Liebherr	Incomplete tender	

The evaluation of tenders is based on price and quality. The Executive Committee's recommendation was to award the contract to TDL Equipment Ltd for an Atlas 140W for £112,87 because:

- it meets the general specification.
- It is the lowest priced tender received.
- the purchase price is in line with the £110,000 estimate agreed in the budget.
- recent experience, with the existing 2012 Atlas machine has been good in terms of suitability and reliability.
- the machine has the lowest gross weight of those offered at 15,400 (max).

Members noted that delivery time was approximately 3 months on the Atlas excavator and that the Board's existing Volvo wheeled excavator would be disposed of by separate invitations to tender, upon delivery of its replacement.

Members APPROVED the recommendation from Executive Committee to purchase from TDL Equipment Ltd an Atlas 140W wheeled excavator at £112,875 (net price) and to dispose of the Volvo wheeled excavator (AE56 JKY) upon delivery of the Atlas.

#### **1935 Bank slip repair and reinstatement at Twenty Foot Drain, Chapel Hill.**

The Board's Engineer provided an update on the bank slip repair and reinstatement scheme to Twenty Foot Drain, near the pumping station at Chapel Hill. This had been circulated.

Following an earlier proposal to carry out the work by contract, which was considered too expensive at circa £88k, the alternative scheme was considered to use direct labour, flattening the batters with berms. This would have required additional land, but there was the opportunity to provide some environmental enhancement. However, it would have sterilised a significant area of farm land and it was decided to carry out the work maintaining the existing drain cross-section geometry.

The scheme was not therefore completed in 2013/14 and £40k was carried forward into a reserve to provide a budget for and enable completion of the scheme in 2014/15.

On the field side of the drain, a design was prepared comprising a row of 2m long interlocking piles at the batter toe; with a row of 3m long discrete steel piles 1.3m behind at 1.4m centres. 300/150mm frost resistant granite was placed between the rows to provide erosion resistance to the channel flow. Above that, the top 2m comprised 5 layers of compacted soil with geogrid reinforcement between. The soil used was a clay material imported locally from the land of the farmer of the field side, Mr A Forman.

Work commenced on 19<sup>th</sup> May, but was disrupted or prevented on several days by heavy rainfall or ground conditions.

Work proceeded well until 11<sup>th</sup> June with only 800mm depth of soil remaining to be placed, when it was noticed the second row of piles had moved out 200mm in the centre of the 25m length of repair. Water level was then pumped down to expose the toe piles which had deflected similarly. The movement of the second row had increased to a maximum of 650mm by 09:00 the following morning. The toe line had not declutched but had moved a maximum of 400mm further away from the second row of piles. However, the reinforced soil above had not cracked and there was no discernible movement.

Further work ceased while the situation was monitored. The concern was that plant, and particularly the compactor, would cause further movement. However, the situation now appears to have stabilised and will be monitored.

The necessary reinstatement works to the track side of the drain is more problematic as there is a pole mounted HV transformer adjacent to the access track, just 4m from the batter top. The concern is to do nothing which would risk collapse or movement of the twin poles which are about 5m along from the downstream end of the 20m long slip.

A site investigation was carried out on 6<sup>th</sup> June which comprised three boreholes and penetration tests. The troublesome material is a very soft silty clay from 2m depth with a maximum thickness of 2m. Beneath that is a dense granular material.

Results were received on 9<sup>th</sup> June that the depth of the poor material was too great to allow an economic deployment of soil nailing / ground anchors. Without the electricity supply close by it would be relatively straightforward to remove the poor material and replace it with stone or better soil.

A site meeting is being arranged with Western Power to determine options and constraints.

The option of moving the track behind the transformer is under consideration, albeit that plant would have to pass under the lines.

The borehole strata will be plotted on the cross-section survey drawing. From this and the penetration test results, the suitability of piles to resist lateral movement will be assessed. Other options to hold back the bank, such as gabions, will also be appraised.

Horizontal and vertical movements of the track will be monitored from steel pins driven to ground level.

Access will be retained along the track, but by means that do not risk the stability of the overhead electricity supply line and transformer.

Members NOTED the current position and that there is further work needed to agree a way forwards on the repair to the track side bank. An update will be brought to a future meeting.

### **1936 Emergency Plan.**

Mr. Guy Hird, Assistant Engineer for Upper Witham IDB, had co-ordinated production of a joint Emergency Plan across the three IDBs and presented the report. The main body of this plan (not the detailed appendices) had been circulated with the agenda.

It was explained that, whilst the focus of the plan was dealing with emergency response and recovery phases in a flood incident, the plan aimed to cover also the 3 organisations' preparedness for other business continuity issues (like fire at Witham House or the depots, or communications failure).

Members APPROVED the Emergency Plan.

### **1937 Medium Term Plan.**

Mr. Ken Pratt, Engineer for Upper Witham IDB, had co-ordinated the submission by each Board of the Medium Term Plan (MTP) to the Environment Agency. He presented the report summarising Witham First's submission.

The purpose of the MTP is to register with the EA and Defra the need for maintenance of the now ageing pumping stations and to prioritise pump replacements, control panel replacements etc across the Board's district. A common methodology had been adopted e.g assumptions had been made on life span of control panels at 30 years, telemetry at 15 years, pump refurbishment at 20 years and AWC's at 30 years. Costs had been assumed at £16k for a control panel for a single pump, £22k a double pump and £28k for a triple pump. A single pump refurbishment had an assumed cost of £16k, a double was £24k. The assumed cost of a weedscreen cleaner was £68k for the exercise.

The aim was to give the Board, the EA and Defra an indicative cost and priorities for maintenance works and to lever in external grant funding, where possible.

In summary, members NOTED that the exercise demonstrated in the 20 year programme for the Board that £1.99 million will be required to maintain assets. The estimate was that up to £720k might meet criteria to lever in Defra Grant in Aid and £41k from Highland Water contributions. It was noted that this leaves a shortfall of £1.23 million maintenance over the 20 years, for the Board to plan for and fund.

**1938 Business Plan 2014/15 to 2016/17.**

A draft Business Plan for the 3 year period 2014/15 to 2016/17 had been circulated with the agenda.

Members APPROVED the plan.

**1939 Conservation Policy.**

A proposed Conservation Policy had been circulated with the agenda. It outlined the ways in which the Board intends to fulfil the requirements of the Land Drainage Act (1991) and other relevant legislation to undertake maintenance and water levels management in a way that is compatible with nature conservation interests and, wherever possible, to make a positive contribution to the enhancement of the natural environment.

Members APPROVED the Conservation Policy, which will be uploaded to the Board's website.

**1940 Any Other Business.**

There were no further items of business.

**1941 Date, Time and Place of the Board's Next Meeting.**

The Board's next meeting was confirmed for **Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> August 2014** at Washingborough Village Hall, commencing at 10am (not the usual 2pm).

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

JEF/KD

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