

WITHAM FIRST DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Minutes of the one hundred and second meeting of Witham First District Internal Drainage Board held on Tuesday, 19th September 2017 in Branston Booths Village Hall, Lincoln at 2pm.

Present:

Mr. E. Applewhite
Mr. D. C. Armstrong **Vice Chairman**
Mr. D. K. Busby
Mr. J. R. Crust
Mr. P. Gilbert **Chairman**
Cllr. G. Hewson
Mr. D. G. Leggate
Mr. L. Maplethorpe
Mr. S. Maplethorpe
Mr. A.R. Means
Cllr. C. R. Oxby
Dr. V. Stanton
Cllr. P. Vaughan

In Attendance:

Mrs. Jane Froggatt	Chief Executive.
Mr. Steve Larter	Finance Consultant.
Mr. Martin Shilling	Director of Operations & Engineering Services.
Miss Jayne Flower	Executive Assistant.

2131 Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. I Carrington, Mr. P. Carrott, Cllr. M. Clarke, Mr S. Cobb, Mr. R. A. Fletcher, Mr. T. Gilbert, Mr. W. B. Grantham, Mr. M. D. Harrison, Mr. R. C. Hickling, Mr. A. G. Hodgson, Mr. D. Jackson, Mr. S. B. Leggate, Mr. I. J. Mair and Cllr. J. F. Money.

2132 Declarations of Members' Interests.

Members nominated by City of Lincoln Council and North Kesteven District Council declared interests in matters relating to the councils.

2133 Chairman's Announcements.

The Chairman advised members that NKDC had nominated two new members to the Board Cllr. Ian Carrington and Cllr. Mike Clarke. North Kesteven District Council now had four seats on the Board, rather than three, and existing members Cllr. Ron Oxby and Cllr. John Money will continue. Members were advised that Cllr. Ray Cucksey has now left the Board and the Chairman requested the Board's thanks for his contribution be recorded.

Members were reminded that from the May meeting, City of Lincoln Council's nominated members reduced from four to three and that Mr. Brent Charlesworth had left the Board. The three other members continue, namely Cllr. Gary Hewson, Mr.

David Jackson and Cllr. Pat Vaughan. At the last meeting, Mr. Adrian Whitehead advised that he would be standing down forthwith from the Board, as he was relocating to Norfolk. The Board therefore carries a vacant seat for the electoral district of Sleaford.

Sadly, the Chairman advised members of the death of Mr. Mark Welsh, Lincolnshire County Council's lead Highways Officer for Flood and Drainage. Mark died prematurely on 06th July, following a road traffic collision whilst he was attending a meeting in London. There was a large turnout for Mark's funeral on 04th August and the Board was represented by Bob Fletcher and Jane Froggatt. Mark was a big supporter of and friend to IDBs and instrumental in the Boards providing a consents and enforcements service for LCC in our extended catchments.

It was also with regret that the Chairman advised members of the recent death of Mr. Brian Applewhite. Brian was a former Board member and his son Ed Applewhite had replaced him as a member of the Board. Members stood in silence to pay respects to Brian, giving thanks for a life well lived.

2134 Minutes of the Board Meeting, 30.05.17.

The Minutes of the Board's previous meeting held on Tuesday, 30th May 2017 were proposed by Cllr. Pat Vaughan, seconded by Cllr. Gary Hewson and APPROVED as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING:

2134.1 Land Value Transfer rate per hectare (minute 2112.2 refers).

The Chief Executive advised that although she and the Chairman had offered to attend a North Kesteven District Council Scrutiny Meeting, to promote a wider understanding of the Board's position, no invitation had yet been forthcoming but it was reaffirmed that the first tranche of Special Levy monies had been paid in May 2017 at the new rate.

2134.2 IDB1 Report 2016/17 (minute 2123 refers).

The new, updated version of the IDB1 Return had been received from Defra after the June General Election and the Chief Executive confirmed that it had been completed and returned to Defra. It was highlighted that this year there were new questions in relation to governance, including members' average attendance at Board meetings.

2135 Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting, 05.09.17.

The minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 5th September 2017 were proposed by Cllr. Ron Oxyby, seconded by Mr. Simon Maplethorpe and APPROVED as an accurate record and the recommendations to the Board were NOTED.

MATTERS ARISING:

2135.1 Environment and GIS Technician Vacancy (minute 5.3 refers).

It was confirmed that Fiona Scott had been appointed to the vacant post and would be starting on Monday 25.09.17.

2136 Minutes of the Joint Services Committee Meeting, 24.07.17.

The minutes of the Joint Services Committee meeting held on Monday, 24th July 2017 and recommendations to the four Boards were noted.

MATTERS ARISING:

2136.1 Letter from JBA Consulting regarding North East Lindsey Board (minute 6.3 refers).

It was confirmed that no response from JBA had yet been received to the rebuttal of their challenge to the model of Joint Services between the four Boards rather than a procurement process by NELDB.

2136.2 Internal Audit Services (minute 8 refers).

Members were advised that the ADA Lincolnshire Branch had accepted the Boards' suggestion of the benefits of a 50% / 50% split between quality and price for the evaluation of tenders for the joint procurement exercise for Internal Audit Services. Tenders were due in by 5pm on Friday 15th September and therefore the evaluation process would begin shortly.

2136.3 Potential "Strapline" for the collective group of four Drainage Boards (minute 11 refers).

It was highlighted to members that whilst it was duly agreed, following a vote, that the new strapline for the four Boards would be "Witham and Humber Drainage Boards", the four Boards would remain separate legal entities and for business purposes their individual entities, websites, headed paper etc would all be retained.

2136.4 Joint Services Budget Monitoring Report for Quarter 1 2017/18, to 30.06.17 (minute 7 refers).

One of the roles of the Joint Services Committee is to monitor in-year financial performance on the agreed Joint Services budget. The recharges between Boards had been done for the first Quarter period, ended 30.06.17. The overall variance was £1,071 against a budget of £216,579 for the three months.

2137 Chief Executive's Report.

The Chief Executive's Report had been circulated with the agenda and this was received and NOTED.

2138 External Auditors' Notice of Closure on the IDB Annual Return 2016/17.

A note was circulated with the Agenda. It was clarified that pleasingly all three Boards had received a clean audit with no qualifications on the IDB Annual Return and no 'other matters' to report to the Board. The formal Notice of Closure for 2016/17 had therefore been received and is now published on the Board's website, at Witham House and in the drainage district at the Board's depot. Members thanked Steve Larter, Finance Consultant for his work in achieving this. This concluded the financial year 2016/17.

2139 Financial Performance Report 2016/17 to 31.08.17.

The Financial Performance Report on 2016/17, as at 31st August 2017, had been circulated with the agenda and was presented by the Finance Consultant. This report provided detail on the first five months of the financial year.

The financial performance as at 31st August 2017 was summarised as follows:

Profiled Budget P5 £	Actual (Surplus)/Deficit £	Variance £
(355,629)	(414,694)	(59,065)

The Board was showing a positive position against budget profile. Members were reminded that this is still early in the financial year and some of the 'high risk' spend areas have not yet been incurred (e.g. overtime during cutting season, electricity during winter months, etc). However, at this stage there were no significant issues of concern. The overall summary position was then explained in further detail:

- Income (£58k)

The main income streams had been posted in terms of Drainage Rates raised (not necessarily paid) and Special Levies actually received for the first half year payment. The second Special Levy half year payment is due in November.

Rechargeable Works were again being undertaken largely for the EA under the PSCA with income received monthly 'on account' rather than in lump sums when works are completed. Therefore, the Rechargeable works is currently (£11k) ahead of target. Expenditure to offset this was shown in Rechargeable Works.

Highland Water claims had been submitted to the Environment Agency for 2016/17 actual with a further balance of (£3,284) due and for the 2017/18 Estimate (£13,700). 80% of the estimated claim for 2017/18 (£10,960) will be paid in September 2017 along with the balance for 2015/16 actual (£3,284), with the balance adjusted for the actual 2017/18 spend payable the following September 2018.

Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) payments of (£42k) had been received for the continuation of the Branston Fen scheme (£12k) for a pump lift and associated works and a Billingham & Timberland Catchment study (£30k). The expenditure to offset this, once incurred, will be shown in One Off schemes.

- Board & General Administration £1k
- Additional insurance costs for Cyber Liability cover £1k.
- One off Schemes £1k

Only minimal expenditure had been incurred to date for the Branston Fen scheme and

for the Billingham & Timberland Catchment Study. Both received FDGIA grant approval with the grant income of (£42k) showing in Income.

- Conservation £0k
- Depot £0k
- Drains (£2k) and Pumping Stations (£9k) – Wages & Plant Holding Account £2k - overall net (£9k) variance.

Main variances are Electricity (£5k) and servicing (£3k), all other budgets are broadly on target.

- Joint Services/Witham House £2k

The first three month invoices (at the end of June 2017) had been produced and paid by the Boards. The next invoices will be prepared at the end of September 2017. The JSC monitor these budgets and at the last quarter end there was overall minimal variance.

- Consents & Enforcement £0k

The actual costs incurred for the year will be invoiced in full to Lincolnshire County Council and therefore are 'nil' cost to the Board. This is under a Memorandum of Understanding which has been extended to 31/03/2018.

- Director of Operations/Engineers (£3k)

The first three month invoices (at the end of June 2017) had been produced and paid by the Boards. The next invoices will be prepared at the end of September 2017. The JSC monitor these budgets and at the last quarter end there was overall minimal variance.

- Contribution to Reserves/Pay Contingency £0k

No contribution to reserves had been provided for in the 2017/18 Estimates. No separate pay contingency was provided for although the base estimates for wages and salaries included a 1% uplift.

- Public Workload Board (PWLB) £0k

Loan repayments for the bridges / culverts transfer to LCC as planned.

- Rechargeable Works £7k

This is the additional works undertaken, which will be invoiced mainly to the EA over the course of the year.

- EA Precept (£1k)

The first half yearly amount of £41,516 was paid to the EA in July 2017 and the second payment is due in November 2017. The 2017/18 budget included a 2% increase but the IDB Precept was not increased for 2017/18, so there will be a (£1.6k) saving on this budget head over the full year.

The total of all these stated Variations is (£59k), so a positive variation at month five in the year and no significant issues of concern.

- Drainage Rates 2017/18

The drainage rates collection rate stands at 90.2% (94.4% @P5 2016/17). First reminders were despatched on 10th August 2017 and final reminders will be despatched the week commencing 25th September 2017. A court date had been set for 4th December 2017. All historical outstanding rating queries are now resolved and only land transfers from in year are now being actioned.

- Plant & Machinery Replacement Programme

The Plant & Machinery Replacement Programme had no purchases for 2017/18 and only a sale of the Ford Ranger 4x4, which had been completed.

The Board noted the financial performance for 01st April 2017 to 31st August 2017.

2140 Statement of Expenditure, 01.04.17 to 31.08.17.

The Statement of Expenditure incurred for the five months to 31st August 2017 had been circulated with the Agenda and was presented by the Finance Consultant.

Expenditure totalled £289,643.67 or, excluding £18,382.77 VAT, the net amount of £271,248.24. Of this, £9,014.96 was rechargeable expenditure to other bodies.

Items raised by or highlighted to members included:

item 110: £167.50 net payment Road tax for Volvo AE13 BYN. In response to a question, it was confirmed that road tax was payable as the Volvo was classified as a construction vehicle rather than agricultural (and it is possible that it would be on the public highway at some point as it moves between locations).

Item 7: £1,142.59 net payment to Beacon UK for implementation of the hi-vis protective clothing for the Board's workforce.

Item 98: £4,511.80 net payment to Mastenbroek Ltd. for the Herder flail spare parts for the 2017/18 weed cutting season.

Item 111: £3,821.20 to NKDC for NNDR on the Board's Depot. It was pointed out that there had been a business rates revaluation this year, but there was no increase.

Items 154 to 165: 12 payments to Torgate Risk Solutions for the Board's insurances to 30.06.18.

Members received the report and NOTED the expenditure incurred in the five months to 31.08.17.

2141 Drainage Rates Write-offs.

A Briefing Note had been circulated with the agenda. Members were advised that the Board has a policy for writing off Drainage Rate demands under the value of £2.50. There were five accounts outstanding as at 31st August under this limit totalling £8.59, as follows:

Account	Value £
136	0.55

159	2.27
195	1.91
299	2.04
844	1.82
TOTAL	8.59

Members APPROVED the write off of £8.59, spread over five accounts (write offs being a matter reserved to the Board).

2142 Health & Safety

A health and safety report had been circulated with the agenda.

Members discussed the access bridge to Ringmoor Pumping Station and were advised that enquiries to establish ownership were ongoing. Meanwhile, an improvement scheme was being developed.

It was also noted that Hi-Vis clothing was now supplied to all Operatives and the depot was now a Hi-Vis work area.

The report and update was received and NOTED.

2143 Director of Operations & Engineering Services' Report.

The Director of Operations and Engineering Services Report had been circulated with the agenda. This was presented with a visual presentation:

- **Planned Maintenance Programme**

The planned summer maintenance programme had continued through this period. After a warm, dry June and July, the changeable weather through August adversely effected harvest, which in turn hampered access onto those drains abutted by arable fields. The ideal growing conditions also produced thick, vigorous growth on both the banksides and within the channel making the cutting of vegetation somewhat slow at times. There were also instances when access was not reasonable, due to the wet ground conditions.

The watercourses that will benefit from winter maintenance this coming season were listed as:

- Sleaford Drove Dyke
- Digby Beck North Branch
- Main Engine Drain – Heighington Fen
- Dorrington Bankside

The work planned included de-silting of the channel bed to reinstate the original drain profile, the repairing of slips and the removal of bushes and trees that are obstructing access for the Board's plant and machinery. Formal Notices had been sent to the occupiers of land to which entry will be required and advising those opposite the intended working that work will be undertaken during the winter months.

- Pumping Stations

General maintenance of the pumping station compounds had been completed during this period.

As briefly viewed during the Board's Summer Inspection, the Environment Agency has undertaken substantial works to secure the vehicular access to the Farroway Pumping Station following a slip on the bank of the Billingham Skirth that undermined the access track. Work was completed in late July. Further work will be required in the autumn to clear the Skirth channel bed.

Repairs had been undertaken on the automatic weedscreen cleaner at Chapel Hill Pumping Station. The mechanism that lowers/raises the grab had failed and so lowered the grab in an un-controlled operation.

- Grant in Aid Schemes

The final part of the scheme at Branston Fen Pumping Station is programmed for completion this financial year. This work will involve the lifting and refurbishment of both pumps and will be arranged for completion shortly. Prices have been received and the work has been awarded to Perry's Pumps of Lincoln for the refurbishment of the pumps, John Martin Hoyes for the fabrication and installation of the dam to the intake sump and E. Skinns Ltd. for the fabrication and installation of a new door to the control house.

It will be necessary to de-water the intake sump when these pumps are removed and re-installed, as they sit on a plinth within the sump and this will need to be cleaned before the pumps are re-commissioned. The contract includes for the refurbishment of both submersible pumps [last lifted in 2000] and the provision of new steel door to the control building.

Work had commenced on the catchment study of the Timberland & Billingham Fen area. The initial phase of the study is the topographical survey of all the Board's maintained channels and the intake sumps of the pumping stations. Once this work is completed the information will be used to construct a computer based hydraulic model. This model will then compare the current standard of protection provided by the system compared to the original design of 1976. It will also be used to inform options for alternative pumping arrangements and patterns within the fens. This project will be fully funded by the Environment Agency's FDGiA programme.

- Plant

Various minor repairs had been undertaken on the Board's plant fleet. The most common faults being the replacement of hydraulic hoses that fail due to normal wear and tear, caused by the heavy vibrations and high pressures during use.

In addition, repairs were required to the gearbox of the Bomford flail. A small oil leak was found that required the re-sealing of the gearbox. This work was undertaken before more substantial repairs, or even un-economical repairs, were required. The Bomford flail is due to be replaced in 2018 as part of the plant programme, which includes a new tractor/flail combination. Tenders are being written for the provision of a new tractor/flail combination. This purchase will replace the Claas Axion 810 & Bomford T81-81flail combination purchased in 2011 and 2012 respectively. After discussion, members agreed that the specification for the tractor/flail replacement in 2018/19 should be prepared and the Board's officers should proceed to invite tenders for the Chairman to

authorise the plant purchase order being placed by 01.01.18 (ahead of the January 2018 Board meeting). This has to avoid the usual January price increase and to ensure delivery before the end of June 2018.

- Key's Farm, Billinghay

A road culvert that passes under Twenty Foot Bank at Key's Farm had been replaced by Lincolnshire Highways Authority. The bridge was 'under-pinned' by the Authority in the 1980's, after which time the invert was found to be higher than ideal and was thought to be the cause of high levels within that part of the fen.

The new culvert invert is 350mm lower than before and is no longer causing an obstruction to low flows. The original brick arch was replaced by the placing of a 1.8m [6"] diameter twin-wall plastic pipe with concrete infill.

- Public Sector Co-operation Agreement [PSCA]

Work is underway at various locations throughout the district on behalf of the Environment Agency. The majority of the work consists of the cutting of raised embankment and vegetation clearance from channels. The Board's Operatives also undertake hand work to clear channels such as Digby Beck. In total, the value of the work undertaken has been estimated at £39,130 for 2017/18 and this programme of work continues until 31st March 2018.

- Workforce

Operatives from the 3 Boards along with the Supervisor from North East Lindsey DB enjoyed a visit to the factory of JCB Heavy Plant Division at Rocester, Staffordshire on 26.07.17. The day included a factory visit and tour of the 'JCB Experience' that Members have enjoyed in the past. In addition, the Operatives were given the chance to operate a variety of heavy plant and equipment at the company's testing ground at a nearby quarry.

- Open Days 2017 – Timberland Diesel Pumping Station

Open Days were enjoyed by all those who attended on 04th June and 09th September with visitors coming from both near and far. The events coincided with open days at the Dogdyke Steam engine, to ensure maximum publicity and attendance. The September event also formed part of the Lincolnshire Heritage Open Days event.

Members received and noted the report and presentation.

2144 Engineering Services Report.

The Engineering Services Report had been circulated with the agenda.

Members received and NOTED the report and the comments submitted to Local Planning Authorities.

2145 Consents & Enforcements.

A report outlining the current position on consents and enforcement cases, both within the drainage district and in the extended rainfall catchment where the Board acts for and on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority, had been circulated. Detail was as follows:

Byelaw Consent Applications

Reference	Location	Applicant	Details	Date
FD-3414-2017-CON	Engine Drain No 1, Nocton Fen	Beeswax Dyson Farming Ltd	18m long, 1.8m dia twinwall access culvert	07-09-17
FD-3505-2017-CON	Canwick Fen Drain, Lincoln Eastern Bypass	Carillion Construction	Temporary access culvert	12-07-17

Section 23 Land Drainage Act Consent Applications – District

Reference	Location	Applicant	Details	Date
None				

Section 23 Land Drainage Act Consent Applications – Extended Area

The Board acts as Agent for Lincolnshire County Council, the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Reference	Location	Applicant	Details	Date
FE-3412-2017-CON	Near railway line, Washingborough	BAM Nuttall	Temporary discharge into ditch – 10m ³ /day	16-05-17

Enforcement Issues – District

Reference	Location	Description /Comments	Actions
FD-1970-2015-ENF	Sleaford fen - off Electric Road, Sleaford	Filled in watercourse	Complete 6-9-17
FD-2653-2016-ENF	White House Farm North Kyme	Otter fence erected	Awaiting report
FD-2954-2016-ENF	Railway line near Electric ST Road, Sleaford	Collapsed culvert	Complete 6-9-17
FD-3184-2017-ENF	The Drove Sleaford	Maintenance required	Awaiting remedial works NKDC

Enforcement Issues – Extended Area

Reference	Location	Description /Comments	Actions
FE-3192-2017-ENF	B1189 Thorpe Tilney, Lincoln	Possible maintenance required	Watercourse not in bad condition and will advise owner
FE-3236-2017-ENF	Warehouse, Station Rd, Potterhamworth	Flooding from watercourse	LCC to jet road culvert, awaiting update

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

2146 Any Other Business.

There being no further items of business, the meeting closed at 15:30 hours.

2147 Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Board and Annual Public meeting was confirmed for Tuesday, 21st November 2017 in Branston Booths Village Hall at 2pm.

.....Chairman.....Date
W1st BM 19.09.17