

Minutes of a Meeting of the Board held at The Reindeer Inn and via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, 22nd November 2022, at 10.00 a.m.

Elected Members

* Messrs J. Coggon
* P. Cornish
* R. Adam
Vacancy
Vacancy
J.H.T. Bramhill
* T. Dickinson
* J. Fretwell
* M.A. Harris
* R. Mason
* M. Wagstaff
* M.T. Smith

Nominated by North Lincolnshire Council

*V Cllr R. Allcock
* Mr I. Bint
* Cllr J. Briggs
Mr L. Drury
* Mrs J. Kennedy
* Cllr T. Mitchell
* Mr M.D. Pilkington
* Cllr Mrs J. Reed
Cllr D. Robinson
* Cllr D.J. Rose
One Vacancy

Nominated by Bassetlaw District Council

* Cllr Mrs H. Brand
*V Cllr Mrs J.M. Sanger

* *Present*

* Mr A. McGill (Chief Executive)
* Dr D. Hickman (Executive Officer)
* Messrs R. Brown (Senior Engineer)
* A. Malin (Senior Operations Manager)
* D. Braddy (Operations Manager)
* Mesdames N. Hind (Finance Manager)
* C.B. Davies (Corporate Services Manager)

* *In attendance*

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN PRO TEM

The Chief Executive was appointed Chairman pro tem to conduct the election of the Chairman for the ensuing year.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Cllr D.J. Rose and seconded by Cllr J. Briggs that Mr J. Coggon be elected Chairman of the Board for the ensuing year.

RESOLVED unanimously

That Mr J. Coggon be elected Chairman of the Board for the ensuing year.

3. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Mr M.A. Harris and seconded by Cllr J. Briggs that Mr P. Cornish be elected Vice-Chairman of the Board for the ensuing year.

RESOLVED unanimously

That Mr P. Cornish be elected Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.

Mr J. Coggon welcomed new member Mrs J. Kennedy, who had been nominated by North Lincolnshire Council.

4. APOLOGIES

None.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr J. Briggs declared an interest in agenda item 22 for planning applications PA/2022/1410, PA/2022/1435, PA/2022/1665, PA/2022/1817 and PA/2022/1899 due to being a ward member.

6. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

7. BOARD MINUTES (Pages 633 to 648)

Mr J. Coggon referred to minute 17, Page 645, paragraph 4, and asked for his name to be removed as he had not been in attendance at the meeting.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of a meeting of the Board held on the 27th September 2022 be confirmed as a correct record subject to the amendment above.

8. MATTERS ARISING

Mr J. Coggon asked the Operations Team to look out for and report any byelaw contraventions in the Board's area.

RECEIVED

9. PLANT AND COMPENSATION COMMITTEE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE JOINT MEETING

Officers presented for consideration the attached minutes of a joint meeting of the Committees held on 8th November 2022.

It was pointed out that the Operations Manager for Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board was incorrectly noted as attending the meeting instead of the Board's Operations Manager, Mr D. Braddy. The designation of the Isle of Axholme area as an area of outstanding natural beauty was queried and it was confirmed that this was still in consultation. The minutes would be amended to reflect the above changes before they were signed.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of a Joint Committee meeting held on 8th November 2022 be approved and adopted subject to the amendments detailed above.

10. MEETING DATES

Officers suggested the following meeting dates for approval:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Meeting</i>
24th January 2023	10.00 a.m.	Board (Approval of estimates and rate setting)
28th March 2023	10.00 a.m.	Board
25th May 2023	12.30 p.m.	Consortium Committee
6th June 2023	10.00 a.m.	Plant and Compensation Committee
6th June 2023	11.00 a.m.	Finance Committee
27th June 2023	10.00 a.m.	Board (Approval of final accounts)
25th July 2023	2.00 p.m.	Joint Negotiating Committee
26th September	10.00 a.m.	Board
3rd October 2023	10.30 a.m.	Consortium Committee
3rd October 2023	2.00 p.m.	Joint Negotiating Committee
7th November 2023	10.00 a.m.	Plant and Compensation Committee
7th November 2023	11.00 a.m.	Finance Committee
21st November 2023	10.00 a.m.	Board (Annual General meeting)

The following events were also noted for information:

ADA Trent Branch AGM – 14th June 2023

Lincolnshire Show – 21st and 22nd June 2023

ADA Annual Conference – November 2023 (date to be confirmed)

RESOLVED

That the meeting dates for 2023 be approved and noted.

11. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

Officers updated on the current Committee membership, highlighting that recent resignations had left a vacancy on the Plant and Compensation, and the Finance Committees. It was noted that membership of committees should be split equally wherever possible between elected and nominated members. Cllr R. Allcock stated that he would not be standing for re-election to North Lincolnshire Council in May 2023 and he was currently a member of all four Committees.

Mr M.A. Harris and the Chairman thanked Cllr R. Allcock for his dedication and help throughout his term of office on the Board.

Following the successful joint Committee meeting in November 2022, it was suggested that the Board should consider combining the Finance Committee and the Plant and Compensation Committee.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Plant and Finance Committee and the Finance Committee be combined to form a Finance and Plant Committee and that the Terms of Reference be brought back to the Board for consideration.
- (b) That Committee membership be discussed at the next Board meeting.

12. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE

It was noted that companies no longer needed to consider Covid-19 in their suite of risk assessments.

The Senior Operations Manager reported on five incidents across the Consortium since the last Board meeting, two of these had occurred in the Isle of Axholme area, both damage only with no injuries to individuals. The Operations team was reviewing the Consortium's COSHH assessments with a view of rationalising these to a more manageable number.

RECEIVED

13. OPERATIONS

13:1 Summer Maintenance Works

As the summer maintenance period was coming to a close, the Operations Manager reported that flailing was now 98% complete and weedcutting 97% complete. The last watercourses only remained incomplete due to root crops and access issues.

RECEIVED

13:2 Winter Maintenance Works

The 2022/23 winter works programme had commenced and details of the programme up to 31st March 2023 were as below:

Drain Name	Catchment	Description of works	Length (m)	Status
Little Carr Drain AXD490300	South Street	Tree and Bushing	20	Complete
Mother Drain (West) AXD580100	Scaftworth	Reforming Access improvements Bush/Tree Removal	1,800 700 290	DLO on site
Marsh Ings Drain East AXD040300	Waterton Hall Sluice	Bush/Tree Removal	25	Complete
Snow Sewer/Warping Drain AXD500100	Three Bridges	Tree and Bushing Berm Installation Enhanced Weed Removal	775 1,250 1,000	DLO on site
Wiseton Bridge Drain AXD611700	Wiseton	Reforming Bush/Tree Removal Syphon Culvert Replacement	1,330 650 15	
Fishing Ground Drain AXD054400	Paupers	Tree and Bushing	200	
Markham Moor Drain AXD640300	River Maun	Bush/Tree Removal	300	
Church Drain AXD041100	Waterton Hall Sluice	Tree and Bushing	158	

Black Skye Drain AXD610300	Wiseton	Reforming Access improvements Bush/Tree Removal	1,000 1,235 1,235	
Church Drain AXD041100	Waterton Hall Sluice	Bush/Tree Removal	150	
Mattersey Thorpe Drain AXD541400	River Idle	Reforming Bush/Tree Removal Access Improvements	829 530 48	
Blackdyke Drain AXD510300	Four Bridges	Reforming Access Improvements	772 12	
Luddington Main Drain AXD051300	Paupers	Access Improvements	12	
Total			14,336m	

The proposed reforming schemes for 2023/24 were detailed as below:

Drain Name	Catchment	Description of works	Length (m)
Steelgoose / Folly Drain AXD390200 / AXD390100	Folly Drain	Culvert Installation 1200mm	12
Hook House Drain AXD050400	Paupers	Headwall and Culvert Replacement	12
North Moor Drain AXD431200	Derrythorpe	Access Improvements	30
South Moor Road Drain AXD055700	Paupers	Reforming	198
South Moor Road Drain AXD055700	Paupers	Reforming	200
Brunyee Drain AXD055500	Paupers	Reforming	221
Carr Ings Drain AXD570900	Gringley	Toe Boarding	300
Sile Drain AXD030100	Garthorpe North Outlet	Reforming	541
Constable Drain AXD052700	Paupers	Reforming	850
Trent Fields Drain AXD030400	Garthorpe North Outlet	Reforming Desilt	1,658
Althorpe Main Drain AXD380100	Althorpe	Desilting	1,998
Haldenby Drain AXD020800	Adlingfleet	Low Level Culvert to Avoid Badger Sett	20
Total			6,040m

The October mitigation period had recently closed with several drains being cut or sprayed in readiness for the upcoming winter works programme. Any remaining mitigation work would be carried forward to the second mitigation period commencing on 15th February 2023.

RECEIVED

13:3 Construction Works

Additional construction works programmed for 2022/23 were detailed as below:

Pump Station / Drain Name	Catchment	Description of works	Length (m)
Southfield Pump Station AXPS4601	Southfield	Dam Installation De silt Basin	200
Wrays Drain AXD056200	Paupers	New Cut Drain Drain widening	831

RECEIVED

13:4 Environmental Matters

The Environment Agency had confirmed that there would be no request for any PSCA work to be completed by the Board for the 2022/23 winter period.

RECEIVED

13:5 Plant and Equipment

The five-year draft plant replacement programme covering 2023/24 to 2027/28 had been considered by the Plant and Finance Committee on the 8th November 2022. See attached minutes for details of discussion points. Mr M.D. Pilkington asked whether the correct decision was made by the Board when it was decided not to dispose of one of the Board's excavators. The Senior Operations Manager confirmed that the excavator had increased in productive hours since the discussion at the last meeting, however, Officers would have a clearer picture of the machine's productivity after the winter period.

RECEIVED

13:6 Strategic Ordinary Watercourses

The Chairman brought to attention the Strategic Ordinary Watercourses (SOWs); a watercourse that served or posed a risk of flooding to a number of properties, businesses, infrastructure or valuable environmental sites. These watercourses were monitored and where weedgrowth was prevalent, early cuts could be undertaken in advance of the summer cutting season which commenced after 15th July each year. The Chief Executive confirmed that a list of the SOWs had been emailed to members on the 18th November 2022 for review. Members were asked to review the list and contact Officers with details of any watercourses that required adding or removing from the list. These would be reviewed by the Operations Team and reported back to the Board.

RECEIVED

The Chairman made the executive decision to proceed through the rest of the agenda in a different order than originally planned to progress the reports that were a matter of note, before moving on to the Asset Renewal and Refurbishment Projects and the Finance and Estimates reports which would require more time and discussion.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

14:1 Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA) - Environmental Good Governance Guide for Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs)

This was a culmination of a two-year Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs funded project, managed and delivered by ADA. It brought together a vast, complex and ever-changing array of environmental legislation, regulation and policy that was relevant to IDBs' operational activities.

RECEIVED

14:2 River Idle Management Partnership

Officers had met with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust who shared many of the Board's concerns regarding the condition of the River Idle. A paper detailing the issues on the River Idle was being drafted jointly to influence and inform the Lower Idle Asset Management Plan for West Stockwith Pumping Station. Provision was originally made for annual review, however, this had not been undertaken by the Environment Agency and Officers and the representatives of Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust believed this should be rectified as soon as possible.

RECEIVED

14:3 Keadby Warping Drain

The site had missed two year's grazing and areas had been colonised by scrub. The current grazing tenant had asked if he could place three Red Poll Heifers on the site to help with scrub control and Officers had agreed to this until the end of April 2023. The Board's Environmental Officer anticipated that this smaller native breed could undertake this without damage to the banks and it would save the Board from having to undertake the task.

RECEIVED

14:4 Mink Control

Axholme Pest Control had installed mink traps as planned with works largely funded by SSE Keadby Power Station as part of their water vole mitigation. Traps had been located at Paupers, Bewcarrs, Bewcarrs Drain (1 caught), Althorpe PS (3 caught), Derrythorpe PS (1 caught) and Trentside PS (3 caught). To date 15 mink had been caught including those within the Scunthorpe and Gainsborough Water Management Board area. Their carcasses were being transported to Cambridge where it was hoped that DNA analysis would determine if mink were crossing the River Trent or if it was acting as a natural barrier. This would help inform whether areas such as North Lincolnshire could be made and kept mink free. All traps were being monitored by Remoti and the results were being collated by the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership. The information was being shared with partners in East Anglia who had registered a charity, Waterlife Recovery Trust, that aspired to develop a national mink eradication program.

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15. NATIONAL STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT

15:1 Humber Low Carbon Pipeline Project

The Board's Planning and Development Control Officer had been involved in discussions with representatives of National Grid and adjacent IDBs relating to the proposed installation of a major pipeline. The indicative line of the pipeline was shown on the attached drawing AX22010_IND and the proposed pipeline corridor was indicated on the attached drawings entitled proposed order limits pages 3,4 and 5 of 15.

The proposal was a National Strategic Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and would be considered by the Planning Inspectorate through a Development Consent Order process. The applicants were currently undertaking public engagement events with the aim of submitting the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration. Formal submission of the DCO was expected in 2023.

The applicant's agents had been informed of the Board's requirements surrounding crossing of Board maintained and riparian watercourses using trenchless techniques at a minimum depth of two metres plus safe working distance below hard bed level. They had also been informed of the Board's byelaw requirements for any structure that may be proposed within nine metres of a Board maintained watercourse.

The Board's Planning and Development Control Officer would continue to liaise with the developer and make appropriate comments to the Planning Inspectorate through the DCO process. The scale of the proposal and numerous interactions with Board maintained and riparian watercourses would have a significant impact with regard to the Board's consenting activities.

RECEIVED

16. HUMBER 2100+

Members were presented with the Humber 2100+ timeline for note.

RECEIVED

17. DELEGATED MATTERS – PLANNING, BYELAWS AND SUPERVISORY ROLE

17:1 Byelaw Applications

There had been no byelaw consents granted under delegated authority since the last meeting.

RECEIVED

17:2 Section 23 Applications

There had been no Section 23 consents granted since the last meeting.

RECEIVED

17:3 Planning Applications

Officers reported on 21 planning applications which had been dealt with since the last meeting and appropriate comments relating to surface water drainage had been made. No objections had been made.

RECEIVED

18. ASSOCIATION OF DRAINAGE AUTHORITIES

Minutes from the last ADA Trent Branch Meeting were presented for members information.

It was reported that the Annual IDB/EA Liaison Meeting was to be held on the 30th November 2022 and that members were to let the office know should they wish to attend.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the minutes of the last ADA Trent Branch Meeting be noted.
- (b) That the date of the Annual IDB/EA Liaison Meeting on the 30th November 2022 be noted and members were to inform the office if they wished to attend.

19. ASSET RENEWAL AND REFURBISHMENT PROJECTS

19:1 Common Carrs Pumping Station – Emergency Works (AX20307)

Works were substantially complete except for the installation of the weedscreen which was due to be re-installed by the end of the month. It was also planned to replace the existing wooden doors with high security steel doors following a break in. Telemetry had been installed and would be commissioned by the Board's Mechanical and Electrical Field Engineer and Inter-Lec Limited. Final commissioning of the pump would be commissioned within the coming days.

Costs to date were £196,909 against the approved budget of £150,504 and the anticipated out-turn cost was £209,250.

To fund the current overspend and costs to completion it was recommended that the Capital Receipts Reserve totalling £199,249.58 be transferred to the scheme and £140,503.78 be released to general reserves from the current scheme funding. This reduced the Capital Receipts reserve to zero. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs J. Reed and seconded by Cllr D.J. Rose that the transfer recommended by officers be approved.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Capital Receipts Reserve totalling £199,249.58 be transferred to the scheme.
- (b) That £140,503.78 be released from the scheme back to the cash reserves.

19:2 Mother Drain Culvert SSSI at Misterton - Investigations (AX22403)

Officers were arranging for Northern Divers to survey the 600 metre length of brick arch culvert accompanied by specialist structural engineers. Once the survey had been undertaken, a report on the findings and a recommendation

would be made to a future meeting of the Board. The investigations were estimated to cost £10,000 and it was recommended by officers to fund these works by transferring this amount from the unspent Operational budget (AX20803). Mr I. Bint queried the level of impact if the culvert should collapse. The Senior Engineer confirmed that the flow was a consistent flow and could be managed with a 6 inch pump if it was to collapse, however, the cost implications could be around £250,000 including the build of a new pumping station and purchase of land. This cost did not include potential additional costs for remedial work after a culvert collapse.

RESOLVED

- (a) That £10,000 be transferred from AX20803 to fund the survey of the Mother Drain culvert at Misterton
- (b) That Officers seek additional funding through local levy as necessary.

19:3 Capital Projects - Reforming

After reviewing projects close to completion, Officers had recommended that the following projects be closed and the remaining balances returned to reserves:

AX17015 – Toft Dyke Tree and Bushing (£5,594.90 underspent)

AX18008 – Lound Hall (£612.08 overspent)

AX20802 – Luddington Drain (£549.16 underspent)

AX21506 – Medley and Belshaw (£7,088.95 underspent)

AX21506 – Toft Dyke (£1,433.26 underspent)

RESOLVED

That the above projects be closed and that remaining balances totalling £14,054.19 be returned to reserves.

19:4 South Street Pumping Station Refurbishment (AX16014)

Draft General Arrangement and Pump Assembly drawings for the new outside fish friendly pump had been received from Bosman Water Management BV. It was likely that some minor civil modifications would be required to accommodate the new pump. Committed costs to date were £727,421.94 against the revised budget of £891,000.

RECEIVED

19:5 Kelfield Pumped Catchment Improvement Scheme (AX16019) – Decommissioning of Blackdyke Pumping Station

After consideration from North Lincolnshire Council, it was advised that prior approval for the demolition of Blackdyke Pumping Station was not required. A full asbestos survey by BESA revealed no asbestos at the station. The Board's officers were in discussions with Northern Powergrid regarding the disconnection of the existing power supply and demolition was planned for April/May 2023.

RECEIVED

19:6 Southfield Pumping Station Refurbishment (AX18001)

KSB had attended site on the 4th November 2022 to remove pump no. 1 for the new vibration sensor unit to be fitted at their workshop. Costs to date were £259,822 against the overall approved budget of £392,000.

RECEIVED

19:7 Telemetry System Replacement (AX20303)

Snagging issues on the telemetry system were scheduled to be completed by the end of December 2022.

RECEIVED

19:8 Wrays Drain, Crowle (AX21505)

Regular liaison meetings were being held with officers of North Lincolnshire Council, their designers and Severn Trent Water to resolve residual issues and conflicts between drainage networks. Tender packs were in preparation for all parties' drainage schemes and would be dispatched at the earliest opportunity following resolution of residual minor issues.

The Senior Engineer had reported that there was a foul sewer crossing the existing culvert which Severn Trent Water were reluctant to move, however, this should not affect the project greatly. Works were intended on site from March 2023 for the North Lincolnshire Council and Severn Trent Water schemes along with the Board's flood relief works. It was noted that the bill of quantities was 90% complete. Cllr Mrs J. Reed and Cllr J. Briggs offered support engaging with landowners where works would be required over third-party land and, together with the MP, would be following up with Severn Trent Water. The Senior Engineer stated that all residual issues in the area needed to be resolved.

RECEIVED

19:9 Future Programme Update

Officers presented members with a project status sheet showing an overview on the Consortium's programme. Officers had outlined with Scape the planned future projects that would form part of two large scale packaged Outline Business Cases (OBCs). Emphasis would be put on connectivity between catchments, and the potential for large scale movement and retention of water in periods of low and high flows along with the environmental benefits from this approach. Cllr R. Allcock queried how the idea of production of large scale OBCs were received by the Environment Agency. The Executive Officer confirmed that the packaged approach was favourable on a regional and especially a national level.

RECEIVED

20. FINANCE

20:1 Method of Accounting

The costs recorded within the Board's Annual Financial Statements, AGAR and IDB1 forms included both the external costs (money leaving the organisation), but also an element of absorbed costs, which were allocated to schemes and

work programmes based upon a time mechanism and the rate which was applied to an hour charge for a man or piece of plant. This method of accounting enabled the Board to see how much annual costs were for employing the Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) or running and maintaining the Board's plant allowing the Board to ensure it had sufficient costs to meet this expenditure. If the Board did not have a DLO or use of its own plant, there would not have been any absorption and those funds would have been made to outside contractors.

To ensure those costs absorbed into drains maintenance and pumping stations maintenance costs were not double counted, an offset element was included as absorbed income, shown in the accounts as 'use of own labour and plant'. This method would continue going forward on AGAR and IDB1 forms.

It had been requested that those absorbed costs be removed from the Board's Management Accounts and the annual estimates to enable a clearer view of what was actual external costs and directly relatable to the funds the Board must raise from rating but also those costs that directly affected the Cash Surplus Reserves of the Board.

RECEIVED

20:2 Management Accounts up to 30th September 2022

The Finance Manager presented the attached Management Accounts for the period ending 30th September 2022. The summary of income and expenditure showed a negative variance of £3,451.61 for the period. The 2022/23 estimates allowed for a deficit budget of £9,272 where the funds would be met from general reserves. It was noted that the development water surface fee received was higher than estimated. The Finance Manager reported that the pumping station outturn resulted in a £353,828. The fuel expenditure overspend was expected to be £14,500 due to the increase in fuel costs. The outturn report indicated that after allowing for noted expected overspends and savings, the Board's deficit would increase to £383,386.08.

The outturn allowed for the additional unplanned purchases of the new excavator, tractors and low loader in the current financial year. The majority of these costs would be met from the plant reserve, however, a shortfall of £60,795.14 had been transferred from general reserves. The overspend incorporating the increase in electricity costs was based on average weather conditions and therefore the outturn position could worsen should the Board experience a wet winter.

The balance on the plant reserve would be reduced to zero at the end of the financial year and the Board would be required to rate for any unplanned purchases in later financial years.

The Board held funds within a Capital Receipts Unapplied Reserve to the value of £199,249.58. These were not used for revenue expenditure and could not be used to boost general cash reserves but were used to acquire new assets or could be used in the betterment of an existing asset.

The predicted surplus cash position at 31st March 2023 was £425,825.26 which meant the surplus cash as a percentage of net operating costs was 31.50%. The Board would keep an eye on electricity costs before making decisions on the

finances in January, however the Finance Manager reminded members that a wet winter could worsen the situation. Cllr R. Allcock believed that external help with costs was vital. Mr M. Wagstaff queried whether there were any possible contracts with lower costs for electricity. The Senior Engineer confirmed that one of the electricity providers would only offer contracts for a six-month period which could leave the Board in a vulnerable position after the contract if prices were to increase further. Another electricity provider would not provide quotes without a 25% deposit on the contract. It was noted that Officers had spent a considerable amount of time and effort in their research for the most competitive rates and contracts on the market.

As at the 30th September 2022, the remaining funds within the schemes after committed costs was £734,942.10 and of that figure, those funds that related to Board contributions were calculated at £389,309.73.

The attached balance sheet was presented for members information.

RESOLVED

That the attached Management Accounts for the period ending 30th September be approved.

20:3 Transfer of Budgets for Approval

The attached transfers of budgets were presented for note, these had been discussed in more detail under the relevant items within the Asset Renewal and Refurbishment report.

RESOLVED

That the attached transfer of budgets be noted.

20:4 Cash and Bank Reserves as at 30th September 2022

It was noted that cash balances were £2,254,210.92. The Chairman queried the interest rates on the Board's accounts and it was confirmed by the Chief Executive that Officers were looking at potential options for better rates. It was noted by members that one of the Board's individual financial institutions was over the limit according to the financial regulations. Four loans remained outstanding totalling £798,695.84.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Board's cash balances and borrowings be noted
- (b) That authority for the temporary increase in the amount invested in the bank accounts be given.

20:5 Payments over £500

The attached schedule of payments over £500 made by the Board since the last meeting was presented for approval. It was brought to attention that there were two separate payments of £20,000 for insurance premiums and the Finance Manager confirmed that this was due to a daily spending cap for BACS transactions with the individual bank account meaning the payments had to be split over multiple days.

RESOLVED

That the schedule of payments totalling £318,682.87 be approved.

21. DRAFT ESTIMATES OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2023/24

21:1 Draft Estimates 2023/24

The Chief Executive gave an overview to members on the current situation and further to the last meeting, the Chief Executive reported that he had engaged with ADA and MPs (Mrs V. Atkins and Mr A. Percy) to raise the profile of IDBs and how the current financial pressures had an effect on IDBs and the work they did. Officers and members were in agreement that external help towards the financial pressures faced by IDBs was vital. It was highlighted that although other organisations and bodies were facing similar pressures, there was not the same awareness surrounding IDBs especially since many councils in the UK did not cover an IDB area. Cllr Mrs J. Reed highlighted the importance of staying united with the local councils and working together and Cllr R. Allcock was hopeful that DEFRA would give IDBs some aid in the current situation.

The Finance Manager presented members with a DRAFT estimates pack for 2023/24 detailing the expected income and expenditure for the year. The estimates pack had been prepared based on an increase of 47.5% on the rates from 2022/23 and whilst this increase was high it would still result in a deficit budget which would be required to be met from reserves. The total estimated expenditure plus contributions to schemes was estimated to be £2,387,948.

An overview was given on the pumping station expenditure including the electricity contracts which alone would have a huge impact on the Board's position. Nine pumping stations were due for renewal and the other twelve due in July 2024. The costs indicated for the remainder of the 2022/23 financial year were expected to result in a £353,828 overspend on electricity. There were no external funds at the time to assist with those additional costs, therefore the costs would need to be met from general reserves. The Board had insufficient reserves to sustain this kind of deficit meaning the costs would need to be rated for in the 2023/24 year to return reserves to an acceptable level. The estimated costs for 2023/24 were £611,250 and to raise sufficient income from rating to cover the electric costs alone would require a rate increase of 67.5%. The Finance Manager highlighted that these costs were based on a moderate winter and a winter period of wet or more extreme weather conditions could increase the costs by a further £300,000. In response to Cllr D.J. Rose, the Finance Manager confirmed that costs had been based around current prices and standing charges, taking the average of a dry and wet year.

Other expected income and expenditure was detailed in the attached estimates report including drain maintenance, engineering projects, plant renewals, DLO wages, supportive expenditure, absorption income and other recharge income.

The Chief Executive asked members for thoughts on what Officers should put forward to the meeting with DEFRA on the 30th November. Mr I. Bint suggested that although it was important to think about the impact on local residents, it was also important to raise the point of impact on industries such as the effect on wind turbines within the area if the Board was not able to carry out its services and large-scale flooding occurred.

Mr M. Wagstaff queried whether the rate would decrease should the electricity costs come down and Officers confirmed that the rate could be reduced in future years should costs decrease. Cllr D.J. Rose thanked the Finance Manager for producing and presenting the detailed estimates and highlighted that the Board should consider what savings could be made before the next meeting. It was suggested by Cllr Mrs J. Reed that the agenda for the January Board meeting be kept short to allow time for careful discussion surrounding the estimates and setting of the rate for 2023/24.

RECEIVED

Cllr J. Briggs left the meeting.

21:2 Rate Increase considered for 2023/24

The Finance Manager presented members with the attached report showing various scenarios based on different rate increases and what position this would leave the Board in, in terms of reserves.

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22. DRAINAGE RATES AND SPECIAL LEVIES

Of the 2022/23 year, £473,092.90 (88.01%) of drainage rates and £900,419 (100%) of special levies had been collected. A total of £64,417.82 remained outstanding.

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23. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY AND PARTNERSHIP MATTERS

There was nothing further to report.

24. WMC JOINT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE (JNC)

All Officers left the meeting with the exception of the Chief Executive and Corporate Services Manager. The Chairman presented the attached minutes of the meeting of the Joint Negotiating Committee held on 17th October and gave an overview of the meeting. He stated that the four Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen had met prior to the JNC and considered various options and looked at proposed increases across similar organisations.

The Chief Executive reported that feedback from staff on the proposal made at the JNC meeting had been positive and they were also understanding of the financial position of the Boards. He reported that the pay increase would not only affect staff directly employed by this Board but would also affect Consortium recharges.

Members were asked to consider the proposed pay increase for 2023/24 and the cost-of-living increase.

Members were supportive of the offer made at the JNC meeting and, although this was not really affordable bearing in mind the current financial situation, they agreed that this was essential in order to attract and retain staff.

It was proposed by Mr P. Cornish, seconded by Mr I. Bint and RESOLVED unanimously that the recommendations of the Committee be approved as follows:

- (a) That a one-off, unconsolidated payment of £1,000 (pro rata) be paid to all staff (except the Chief Executive) in December 2022 to assist with the current cost-of-living crisis.
- (b) That all wages and salaries be increased by 5.5% with effect from 1st April 2023.

25. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

CHAIRMAN