

WITHAM FOURTH DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES

of the proceedings of the **Environment Committee** at a Meeting held at the Board's Offices, 47 Norfolk Street, Boston on Wednesday **20 November 2019**

Present: - B. Bowles (Committee Chairman)
Messrs: T. Ashton
C. Crunkhorn
A. Harrison
P. Richardson (Chairman)
A. Saul

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for non-attendance were received from:-

N. Jones
P. Skinner

2. **ENVIRONMENT OFFICER'S REPORT**

The Chief Engineer (CE) went through the Environmental Report:-

2.1 **Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Update**

The Chief Engineer went through the Board's BAP as set out in the Agenda. With regard to the European Eel we are trying to accommodate with a spring inlet through Anton's Gowt and efforts will be made to time this with the Elvers migration.

2.2 **Eel Monitoring at Hobhole & Lade Bank Pumping Station**

The Chief Engineer informed members that the Hull International Fisheries Institute ("HIFI") continue to monitor eel passage at Hobhole Pumping Station. The first phase was due to take place in October but because of the wet weather we had to let the water out early. No eels were caught. There will be no sluicing through October/November as the levels were too low. As a result, HIFI have abandoned their plans for eel monitoring. HIFI understand that drainage has to take priority.

2.3 **Eel Sluicing and Water Level Management**

The Board makes every effort to comply with EU Legislation, but part of that operation means we are restricted to night-time pumping. The extreme weather this year has not assisted this, and the Board have come in for some criticism because of high water levels. The Chief Engineer confirmed that he is trying to keep a fine line between drainage and environment compliance.

2.4 **Lade Bank Pumping Station Eel Pass**

The Chief Engineer confirmed there are not many eel passes in this country and this work forms part of the plan to make Lade Bank Pumping Station eel compliant. The pull out at the back of his report showed the design of the eel pass. The cost of this work is £47,420 plus VAT and forms part of the grant process. The work will hopefully be completed by Christmas. The passage will be monitored by HIFI and the EA as this will only work when the pumps are not running.

B. Bowles - asked the cost of the project? The Chief Engineer confirmed the total project was £300,000 which was 80% funded. The Board has received all of the monies and the grant is dependent upon the pumping station being eel compliant.

3. **CHIEF ENGINEER'S ESTIMATES 2020/2021**

The Chief Engineer ran through the Environment and Conservation estimate for 2020/21, there was a slight increase of £2,000.

	ENVIRONMENTAL EXPENDITURE	BAP Ref	Estimate 2020/21	Estimate 2019/20
Item	Environmental Management - % of Workload & Travel Expenses			
1	Engineering Manager (5%)	√	£3,000	£2,826
2	Technical Engineer (25% approx)	√	£6,000	£4,791
3	Engineer/Admin Assistant's (5%)	√	£1,500	£1,235
4	Both Foreman's Workload & Travel Expenses (10%)	√	£9,100	£8,880
5	Related Employer's Superannuation Expenditure	√	£4,000	£3,936
6	Related Employer's N.I. Expenditure	√	£2,700	£2,632
	Totals		£26,300	£24,300
	Conservation Schemes/Wildlife/Environmental Benefit			
7	Bush/Tree Management - 35% of Annual Expenditure deemed to be for Environmental Benefit	H3	£18,000	£18,000
8	Faggot Making - deemed to be for Environmental Benefit	H3	£12,000	£12,000
9	Noxious and Invasive Weed Control	√	£5,000	£5,000
10	Owl & Kestrel boxes, fish conservation, nest surveys, Cowbridge Reel Project, training, Otter Holt/monitoring, miscellaneous.	S5, S8, S11,S13	£6,000	£6,000
11	Eels research support costs 2019/120	S2	£1,500	£1,500
	Totals		£42,500	£42,500
	Saline Water Pumping			
12	Energy and Labour Cost (Installation/removal/maintenance)		£0	£0
13	Replacement Desalination Pumps		£0	£0
	Totals		£0	£0
	Waste Management/Disposal			
14	"Fly Swat"		3,000.00	2,750.00
15	Witham Fourth expenditure		2,000.00	2,000.00
	Totals		5,000.00	4,750.00
	Other Expenditure			
16	Contributions/Memberships (inc. GLNP, Wash EMS)	√	£1,800	£1,750
17	British Water Ways Board – Use of Anton's Gowt Lock**	S2	£6,000	£5,500
18	Insurances		£210	£210
	Totals		£8,010	£7,460
	Total Expenditure for Environment		£81,810	£79,010

After discussion it was:

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND That the estimate for 2020/2021 at £81,810 be approved.

4. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- A. Harrison* - asked we were still using desalination? The Chief Engineer confirmed that we were not and that the salinity figures had not changed that much.
- B. Bowles* - asked about water voles? The Chief Executive confirmed that ADA Environment Committee have put together a paper confirming how well they flourish in IDB areas.
- A. Saul* - asked if the Boston Barrier had now been put in place? The Chief Executive confirmed that it had been installed but would not be used until next Spring.

The Chief Executive just wanted to remind everyone that the next Board Meeting was due to take place on 12th December 2019 and to remind everyone of the ADA training day on 27th November 2019 from 10.00am to 4.00pm

There was no other business and the meeting was closed

Chairman