

# WITHAM FOURTH DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

## MINUTES

of the proceedings of the **Plant & Pumping Stations Committee** at a Meeting held at 47 Norfolk Street on **Thursday 25 November 2021**

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Present:- C. Crunkhorn (Committee Chairman)

Messrs: T. Ashton  
P. Bedford  
P. Richardson (Chairman)  
A. Saul  
K. Smith

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from J.E. Grant, F. Pickett and J. Ward.

2. **CHIEF ENGINEER'S ESTIMATES 2022/2023**

2.1 **Plant Replacement Programme 2021/22 – Current Year Update**

Purchase	Replacement	Estimated Cost	Actual Cost	Delivery
		£	£	
Spearhead SPV	Spearhead SPV	240,400.00	240,400.00	Nov-20
Spearhead SPV	Spearhead SPV	230,400.00	230,400.00	Nov-20
Claas Arion 650 CSi	Massey Ferguson	91,000.00	93,500.00	Apr-21
Herder Cavalier Flail	Bomford B81-81 Flail	80,000.00	80,100.00	Apr-21
Herder 2.5m	Weed Baskets Various	18,000.00	11,400.00	May-21
Votex Jumbo 1.5m	No replacement	15,000.00	15,500.00	Nov-21
	<b>Total</b>	<b>674,800.00</b>	<b>671,300.00</b>	

The Chief Engineer read through the details of plant replaced in 2021-22 and confirmed that delivery had now been taken of all items. The Vortex Jumbo had arrived too late to be used this year but was ready to start work next season. The Committee Members were aware that one of the two SPVs had encountered a number of issues and the Chief Engineer was rapidly losing patience with the continuous problems. The good news was that Irelands Farm Machinery have now been trained to work on Deutz engines and the SPV is booked in next week for a complete overhaul and Irelands had provided the Board with a replacement machine in the meantime. The other SPV is good and reliable.

3 **Plant Replacement Programme**

The Chief Engineer referred Committee Members to the full list of plant assets at the back of his report. The report gave a detailed breakdown of each item of machinery including the hours worked, depreciation and estimated life expectancy. However, there was some movement and the Chief Engineer confirmed the details.

- **Toyota Hilux 4x4 Fuel Truck** – replacement has been brought forward from 2023-24 due to being written off in an accident.

- **Tonk Tree Shears** – replacement deferred from 2022-23, the Plant and Workshop Manager has assessed this equipment and it is in good enough condition for continued service. This will be reviewed again in 2023 for replacement in 2024-25
- **Sykes 6” Mobile Pump** – replacement deferred from 2022-23, the Plant and Workshop Manager has assessed this equipment and it is in good enough condition for continued service. This will be reviewed again in 2025 for replacement in 2026-27 unless there are any major problems.
- **JCB Teleporter** – replacement deferred from 2021-22, the Plant and Workshop Manager has assessed this equipment. Low hours and good overall condition mean it is suitable for continued service. This will be reviewed again in 2024 for replacement in 2025-26 unless there are any major problems.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the Toyota Hilux which had been written off was 8 years old and we had been offered £13k in settlement from our insurers.

#### 4 **Plant Replacements 2022-23**

The Chief Engineer referred Committee Members to his report and the items which needed to be replaced in the next year.

##### 4.1 **Caterpillar 380e Excavator**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that the Caterpillar 380e excavator purchased in 2013 had completed 8,900 operating hours to date. This machine is used regularly throughout the district carrying out channel maintenance operations such as weed-cutting, mudding, piling and culvert laying. Whilst this machine is in relatively fair condition, The Chief Engineer confirmed it is showing signs of ageing wear and tear on the drive train and undercarriage.

The Board’s policy is to change hydraulic excavators after eight years’ service. This machine had been deferred from replacement in 2021-22, the 2022 cutting season would be this machine’s ninth year. The machine is now fully depreciated and has a net book value of nil pounds to the Board.

Therefore, based on the information detailed above it is suggested the committee recommend to the Board the approval to purchase a replacement excavator complete with buckets at a net estimated cost of **£75,000.00 plus VAT.**

*P. Bedford* -asked if the purchase would be like for like? The Chief Engineer confirmed that he would go the market and obtain 3 quotes for the machine from different suppliers, the Board would obtain a part-exchange value for the machine and then put it out to tender. If the tender quotes did not exceed the part exchange value it would be traded in.

*T. Ashton* -asked the lead time for the new machine? The Chief Engineer confirmed for smaller machines it was not too bad but bespoke machines were 12-18 months.

*A. Harrison* -asked what was meant by stock? The Chief Engineer confirmed fuel and oil were stock items.

The Committee Chairman moved the meeting forwards and asked for a show of hands and it was unanimously agreed to recommend to the Board that this item be purchased.

After discussion it was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** That the Board purchase:  
a replacement excavator, complete with buckets at a net estimated cost of **£75,000.00 plus VAT.**

#### 4.2 Isuzu Dmax Pick-up

The Chief Engineer confirmed that the Isuzu Dmax Pick-up purchased in 2016 has completed 93,000 miles to date, its estimated miles at date of actual trade in 2022 will be approximately 101,000 miles

This vehicle is utilised by the East Fen Works Supervisor around the district for supervision of work, and is designated as Emergency Response Plant, considered critical in times of emergency in the district. The vehicle has a net book value of £6,445.00 to the Board.

Therefore, based on the information detailed above it is suggested the committee recommend to the Board the approval to purchase a replacement 4x4 at a net estimated cost of **£25,000.00 plus VAT.**

- T. Ashton* -stated that on page 5 reference was made to purchasing a new vehicle for the Pump Engineer and questioned whether this vehicle could be utilised by him? The Chief Engineer confirmed that this was definitely an option as the Board's policy was to cascade vehicles but this vehicle was of a slightly higher spec than the basic vehicles generally used for depot use. The Chief Engineer believed that a van would be more beneficial to the Pump Engineer than a pick- up truck.
- B. Bowles* -agreed in view of the mileage the vehicle should not be passed down.
- C. Crunkhorn* -agreed it was false economy not to purchase a new vehicle.

A discussion followed and there was a show of hands. It was unanimously agreed to recommend to the Board that this item be purchased.

After discussion it was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** That the Board purchase:  
a replacement 4x4 at a net estimated cost of **£25,000.00 plus VAT.**

#### 4.3 Toyota Hilux Pick-up (fuel delivery truck)

The Chief Engineer confirmed that using the Toyota Hilux Pick-up for transporting fuel around the district had proved a great success. This Hilux was purchased in 2013 and had completed 87,000 miles. It was envisaged the Board would run this vehicle for a further 12 months however due to a recent accident it has been written off by the Board's insurers.

This vehicle was used around the district to deliver fuel to the Board's plant and equipment, it was also designated as Emergency Response Plant, considered critical in times of emergency in the district. The vehicle was fully depreciated and had a net book value of nil pounds to the Board.

The Board's insurers have valued the vehicle at £13k. Therefore, it is suggested the committee recommend to the Board the approval to purchase a replacement 4x4 at a net estimated cost of **£25,000.00 plus VAT.**

- K. Smith* - asked how we were refuelling at the moment? The Chief Engineer confirmed that we were using a flat bed trailer however, this Option was not ideal and it is not easy to manoeuvre in the district. The Chief Engineer was not keen on the use of a towable bowser for the same reason. The Hilux was ideal for off road use.
- T. Ashton* - fully supported the purchase and asked about the lead time for the New vehicle? The Chief Engineer confirmed that the order would be placed with Toyota Fleet so this should not be too much of an issue.
- B. Bowles* Asked if it would be liveried? The Chief Engineer confirmed that it would be.

A discussion followed and there was a show of hands. It was unanimously agreed to recommend to the Board that this item be purchased.

After discussion it was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** That the Board purchase:  
a replacement 4x4 at a net estimated cost of  
**£25,000.00 plus VAT.**

#### 4.4 **Alpego Off-set flail**

The Chief Engineer confirmed the Alpego off-set flail was purchased in 2015. This was purchased for light occasional use however, since 2018 it has been used seasonally on Environment Agency PSCA Main River Maintenance Works. (c.600 hours per year).

As a result of this increase in workload, the flail is showing serious signs of aging wear and tear and increased maintenance. The flail is not suitable for heavy duty work and the Chief Engineer would be looking to replace it on the basis of a VOTEX equivalent.

The replacement flail will be capitalised and registered as an asset. Therefore, it is suggested the committee recommend to the Board the approval to purchase a replacement flail at a net estimated cost of **£15,000.00 plus VAT**

After discussion it was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** That the Board purchase:  
a replacement flail at a net estimated cost of **£15,000.00 plus VAT**

#### 4.5 **HGV Tirsan Low Loader Trailer**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that the HGV Tirsan Low Loader Trailer was purchased in 2006 for £28,095 and was originally due for replacement in 2016-17. The replacement was deferred at that time pending review until 2021-22.

At a recent M.O.T. inspection it was noted that the trailer was worn out underneath. Tirsan Trailers are no longer built and spare parts are no longer available for certain parts of the trailer.

This trailer is used in the district to move plant and equipment from site to site, additionally, it is also used to move plant on a contract basis for another drainage Board. It is designated as Emergency Response Plant, considered critical in times of emergency in the district. The trailer is fully depreciated and has a net book value of nil pounds to the Board.

Therefore, it is suggested the committee recommend to the Board the approval to purchase a replacement trailer at a net estimated cost of **£60,000.00 plus VAT**

*T. Ashton* - asked what axle this trailer had? The Chief Engineer confirmed it was double-axled.

*T. Ashton* -said he would be very interested to know exactly what had worn out as previously it had been agreed to fully overhaul the trailer. Having completed that work, he would be interested to know why it has only lasted another 10k miles per year. He suggested that a full appraisal and quote for the necessary work was obtained. The Chief Engineer confirmed that he would ask the mechanic to provide this information.

*T. Ashton* - added he would like to inspect the trailer.

*B. Bowles* - agreed that the trailer should be open to inspection by Board Members.

The Chief Engineer added his main concern was safety when carting equipment around the district. The Chief Executive added that the trailer had been purchased new in 2006 and had completed over 200k miles.

*T. Ashton* - added that this trailer should be good for over 800k miles but appreciates the poor state of the roads the vehicle is travelling on.

The Chief Engineer confirmed that there was no rush to replace the item and the points raised were all valid. He would ask the mechanic to complete a thorough appraisal of the trailer and it could be discussed further thereafter.

#### 4.6 **Weed baskets**

The Chief Engineer advised that 2 x 3m weed baskets were due for replacement. However, it was proposed the replace these with 1 x 2.5m and 1 x 3.75m baskets.

It was suggested the committee recommend to the Board the approval to purchase two new weed baskets at a net estimated cost of **£12,000.00 plus VAT**.

After discussion it was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** That the Board purchase: two new weed baskets at a net estimated cost of **£12,000.00 plus VAT**.

#### 5. **Additional Plant**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that he would like to ask support from the Committee for the purchase of the following items:-

##### 5.1 **Pile Compactor/Hammer**

The Chief Engineer would like to purchase an excavator mounted pile compactor/hammer. This would be mounted on the dipper arm of the excavator and used for driving in timber and steel piles when repairing slips.

At present, the Board is hiring the item and whilst cost-effective at approximately £6.5k per year availability can be a problem at short notice. Inevitably a number of slips can completely close off the channel and/or are often on roadsides and need repairing urgently and at short notice. If the Board purchase their own it would cost the Board approximately £4.5k per year over 8 years including running costs.

Therefore, it is suggested the committee recommend to the Board the approval to purchase a new pile hammer at a net estimated cost of **£30,000.00 plus VAT**

After discussion it was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** That the Board purchase:  
a new pile hammer at a net estimated cost of **£30,000.00 plus VAT**

##### 5.2 **Pump Engineers Van**

The Chief Engineer advised that this had already been discussed, but previously the Board had the Unimog and 2 depot trucks there was always a spare vehicle available. However, now one of the trucks was being used for fuel and the other being out of action, there was a need for the Pump Engineer to have a separate vehicle.

Three options have been considered: Use of his own vehicle and pay a user allowance with mileage, provision of a fully electric van ("EV") and provision of a diesel van. The Chief Engineer confirmed the various costs of the three options for 10k miles per year over 8 years.

Whilst the EV option is the most cost effective over the whole life cost period, the initial costs do not include the installation of two or three additional EV charging points. The Chief Engineer considers the diesel option to be the best investment for the Board until 100% EV reliability is proven.

Therefore, it is suggested the committee recommend to the Board the approval to purchase a new van at a net estimated cost of **£14,600.00 plus VAT**.

- K. Smith* - supported the purchase of an EV. The vehicle was not in constant use and not deemed an emergency vehicle. The Chairman reminded that the initial costs did not include installation of the charging points. The Chief Engineer advised that 50% grants were available for EV charging points.
- A. Saul* - asked how many charging points would be required? The Chief Engineer suggested one at Lade Bank Pumping Station which would be free because of the solar panels installed, one at Hobhole Pumping Station and one at the office. The EV has a book listed 200-mile range.
- T. Ashton* - was not convinced by electric at this present time and would support the diesel option.

A discussion followed and the Committee was mainly in favour of purchasing a diesel van but there was some argument to try an EV. It was unanimously agreed to recommend to the Board to purchase a van but that the EV and diesel option be deferred to the Board meeting in December 2021.

It was therefore

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** That the Board purchase:  
a new van at a net estimated cost of **£14,600.00 plus VAT.**

6 **Pumping Stations Estimate 2022/2023**

The Chief Engineer confirmed the increase in the estimate reflected the anticipated cost of increase in fuel duty and insurance costs. There would be no increase in electricity costs as the Board was tied into a fixed rate tariff until 2023.

- T. Ashton* - confirmed this increase was not as bad as he had feared but with the increase in fuel duty, he felt that we should review the security of the sites where diesel is stored.

The Chief Engineer concurred this was a huge concern as was the safety of the machines overnight. The Chief Engineer confirmed that he would progress the issue of the gates at HHPS.

After discussion it was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** That the Chief Engineers estimate of £565,874.82 (2021/22 £490,752.13) be approved.

6 **Depot Estimate 2022/2023**

The Chief Engineer set out this estimate and after discussion it was

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** That the Chief Engineers estimate of £46,000 for 2022/23 (2020/21 £45,400) be approved.

7. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business, and the meeting was closed at 3.35pm.

**Chairman**