

WITHAM FOURTH DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES

of the proceedings of the **Environment Committee** at 47 Norfolk Street on Wednesday
16 November 2022

Present: - B. Bowles (Committee Chairman)
Messrs: C. Crunkhorn
A. Harrison
N. Jones
P. Richardson (Chairman)
A. Saul
P. Skinner

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for non-attendance were received from:-
T. Ashton

2. **ENVIRONMENT OFFICER'S REPORT**

The Committee Chairman welcomed Members to the meeting. The Chief Engineer went through the Environment Report which he would take as read but there were a few things he would just like to mention.

2.1 **Biodiversity Action Plan Tracker (BAPT)**

The Chief Engineer went through the Board's BAPT as set out in the agenda. This was a full report of the BAP actions and their progress in 2022. The Chief Engineer intended to keep this document updated for the next 5 years to enable the Board to keep track of the progress made each year. The target was to show all the achievements over the 5-year period.

The Chairman asked P. Skinner if other people are doing this? P. Skinner replied that it was a pleasure to be on a Board which was so pro-active and had recently been on a site visit to the coast with an EA expert. This was excellent as it showed real experiences and kept the environment ideals alive.

The Chief Executive and the Chief Engineer agreed and said that our staff in the district had the benefit of ARC GIS Collector and they were able to log details of any species on the app which were then visible in the office. The part time ecologist had been provided with a spare tablet with the same app and had been asked to record kingfisher nesting sites etc so that they could continue to be monitored. The Chief Engineer stated that with regard to the environment workload this was now much more proactive and he felt comfortable that the Board are well placed to support the environment.

The Chairman added that the estimate put together shows that we are committed to the environment but now we had reached a turning point and needed to consider new benefits.

The Committee Chairman believed that the Board should be publicising what it already does do and does well. The Chief Executive confirmed that the Board's figure in relation to the environment is the largest amongst the Board's. The Chief Engineer was concerned that over the next 5 to 6 years scrutiny of public bodies managing the environment will increase and he did not want this Board to be found under performing.

P. Skinner - asked what the update was in relation to the mink traps? The Chief

Engineer confirmed that 15 had now been caught. The traps would be moved in the New Year as the numbers caught had started to decline.
- added he hoped that the water vole population would increase.

P. Skinner

3. CHIEF ENGINEER'S ESTIMATES 2023/2024

The Chief Engineer ran through the Environment and Conservation estimate for 2023/24, there was a slight increase of £1,615.00 which related to the increase in wages anticipated for April 2023.

After discussion it was:

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND That the estimate for 2023/2024 at £98,474.00 be recommended for approval by the Board at the December 2022 Board Meeting.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business, and the meeting was closed at 3.15pm

Chairman