

WITHAM FOURTH DISTRICT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES

of the proceedings of the **Works Committee** at a Meeting held at 47 Norfolk Street on Wednesday
16 November 2022

Present: P. Richardson (Chairman)

Messrs: P. Bedford	A. Hall
C. Crunkhorn	A. Harrison
(Vice-Chairman)	A. Saul
J. Grant	

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for non-attendance were received from: -

Messrs: C. Hardy
R. Hall-Jones
J. Woods

2. **CHIEF ENGINEER'S ESTIMATES 2023/2024**

2.1 **Weed Control Estimates**

The Chief Engineer presented his estimates to the Committee: -

Weed Control

Description	Movement	Estimate 2023-24	Approved 2022-23 Budget
	£	£	£
W.Con. - Works Supervision	18,309.00	84,959.00	66,650.00
W.Con. - Spraying	841.25	5,791.25	4,950.00
W.Con. - Flailing Drains	3,239.00	54,889.00	51,650.00
W.Con. - Flailing Sewers	10,938.14	211,517.14	200,579.00
W.Con. - W/basketSewer	54,106.00	429,798.00	375,692.00
W.Con. - W/basketDrains	15,324.25	121,971.75	106,647.50
W.Con. - H/Roding Sewers	688.16	7,288.16	6,600.00
W.Con. - General	500.00	5,500.00	5,000.00
W.Con. - Weed Boats	3,633.77	19,272.27	15,638.50
W.Con. - Transport Plant	2,618.00	18,218.00	15,600.00
Total	110,197.57	959,204.57	849,007.00

Cleansing

Description	Movement	Estimate 2023-24	Approved 2022-23 Budget
	£	£	£
C. - Works Supervision	1,334.70	35,691.00	34,356.30
C. - Sewer/Imp/Cleansing	10,103.00	80,403.00	70,300.00
C. - Drains/Imp/Cleansing	18,385.00	65,310.00	46,925.00
C. - Sewer Imp/Various outfalls	2,584.16	27,584.16	25,000.00
C. - Vermin Control	-	-	-
C. - CowBridge Lock/sluice	-	4,200.00	4,200.00
C. - Slip Repairs	5,408.54	88,408.54	83,000.00
C. - Surveys	-	2,525.00	2,525.00
C. - Bushing	2,814.54	36,939.54	34,125.00
C. - Faggot Making	(12,000)	-	12,000.00
C. - Drain Access Works	738	15,738.00	15,000.00
C. - Transport Plant	785.40	5,785.40	5,000.00
Total	30,153.34	362,584.64	332,431.30

Weed Control & Cleansing Total	140,350.91	1,321,789.21	1,181,438.30
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The Chief Engineer read through the estimates and confirmed the tables show the comparison with the estimates for 2022-2023. There had been no increase in workload and the estimates cover more core activities year on year. The costs increase has been based on inflation and the increase in fuel costs and the salary increases. There was nothing further to add to the report apart from the faggot making shown in the Cleansing budget. This was a very expensive way to maintain hedges and this money could be used to purchase more cost-effective materials.

J. Grant - asked if the weed boats were reliable? The Chief Engineer confirmed they were both 5 years old now and happy to report no issues.

The Chairman confirmed there had been some movement in the issue of wage increases. The Board had offered a 2.1% increase together with a £1500 one off costs. This offer had been rejected by 75% of the staff and will be discussed at the Pay & Conditions meeting next week when a counteroffer would be discussed. The Chairman added that the equation which had resulted in the offer of 2.1% had been used for the past 10 years and was based on the average earnings over the past 12 months.

The Chief Engineer confirmed that this was always going to be a difficult year and whilst UNISON have an obligation to their members, they had offered no opinion on the offer put forward. Boards to the north of our District had been given a higher pay award but they were outside of the system. The Chief Engineer added that the inflationary increase would be added to next year's salary increase. The Chief Executive confirmed that last year's pay award had been 3.7% and the year prior was 4.1%.

A. Saul recommended that the Channel Maintenance Activities and Improvements Estimate 2023-2024 be adopted. A. Hall seconded the proposal and the show of hands was unanimous.

Following these discussions it was:-

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

That the 2023/23 Channel Maintenance Estimates for Weed Control and Cleansing Improvements be approved by the Board.

3. **Asset Improvement Programme**

The following section details the estimate for asset improvements for 2023-24:

Description	Movement	Estimate 2023-24	Approved 2022-23 Budget
	£	£	£
Watercourse Assets/Urban	-	40,070.00	40,070.00
Watercourse Assets/Ordinary	-	20,709.13	20,709.13
Bridge Repairs	0.00	-	-
Total	0.00	60,779.13	60,779.13

The Chief Engineer confirmed there was no change required in the estimate due to the financial situation. The Board was in a good position and he would recommend that the estimate be held.

A. Hall recommended that the Asset Improvement Programme estimate be adopted. A. Harrison seconded the proposal and the show of hands was unanimous.

Following these discussions it was:

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

That the 2023/24 Asset Improvement Programme be approved by the Board.

4. **ENVIRONMENT AGENCY/ CO-OPERATION WORKS**

The following section details the estimate for PSCA Main River Maintenance Works for 2023-24:

Rivers	Works	Estimate
Maud Foster Drain, Stone Bridge Drain, East & West Fen Catchwater Drains	Gain machine access	£1,500.00
	Machine transport to and from site	£8,000.00
	Boatwork	£73,700.00
	Spraying lillies	£13,950.00
	Provide tracked excavator	£46,560.00
	Flail bank sides before 360	£2,450.00
	Provide flail mowing on non raised channels	£10,850.00
	Raised provide flail crest & sides x 2	£7,700.00
	H&S flail to crest x 4	£31,500.00
	Works Total	£196,210.00
	Supervision & Eng Support @ 18%	£35,317.80
	Total	£231,527.80

The Chief Engineer confirmed that the estimate had been prepared for the EA detailing the programme of works completed each year. As the Committee could see the total value of works was £196k, with an additional £35k supervision costs totalling £231k.

The Chairman confirmed that the Board had a very good working relationship with the EA.

J. Grant - stated this was good because the work was being completed to the Board's high standards.

A. Harrison - asked if the Board was satisfied that all costs were being recovered? The Chairman confirmed he had also queried this but the costs were covered. The Chief Engineer confirmed that the estimates were prepared on a "not for profit" basis. If the cost was £8k then we would be paid £8k there was never any issue with payment and never any risk to the Board they would be "out of pocket".

The Chairman asked that the Officer's estimate be approved and the 2023/24 PSCA works programme for the EA be delivered.

A. Harrison recommended that the Environment Agency Public Sector Co-operations works estimate be approved by the Board. P. Bedford seconded the proposal and the show of hands was unanimous.

It was therefore:-

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND

That the Environment Agency Public Sector Co-operations works estimate be approved by the Board.

The Chairman confirmed that there had been a retirement from the Engineering Department but this will be discussed further at the December Board meeting. However, engineers are needed to work for the Board and the grant system will enable the Board to cover some of the salary costs.

6. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

Chairman