



3. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST ON ANY GENERAL ITEM**

C. Crunkhorn – Outer Dowsing.  
K. Smith – Outer Dowsing  
B. Bowles – Outer Dowsing  
J. Woods – Outer Dowsing

4 **MINUTES**

4.1 **Board Meeting – Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on 14 June 2023 were submitted and signed by the Chairman. The Chairman ran through each page and asked members for comments.

The Chief Engineer confirmed that on page 2, paragraph 4.3 the total figure for the re-profiling was £5.4 million.

Page 6, paragraph 9.15 the Board's contribution was confirmed as £22k.

5. **MEETINGS WITH OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

5.1 The Chief Executive confirmed that FENS 2100 were nationally recognised and had schemes to protect the fenland which was not hampered by national rules. This was a big opportunity and the Board were fully engaged with it.

*C. Hardy* - asked if beavers were going to be reintroduced and controlled? The Chief Executive confirmed that there was no place for them in the fenland area and they would create an issue. He believed there would be a licence to remove them from flood defences.

6. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND FINANCE MANAGERS REPORT**

6.1 **Cash Book Balances**

The Chief Executive went through his report and confirmed that the bank balances remained healthy and £500k had been placed on deposit.

6.2 **Deposits Accounts**

The Chief Executive referred Board Members to the white pages of his report which detailed CCLA The Public Sector Deposit Fund. The Chief Executive ran through all the benefits of opening this account and asked the Board for approval to open the account with himself and the Chief Engineer, Ed Johnson, to be named signatories on the account as they are with all other accounts held on behalf of the Board. The Board took a vote and it was unanimously agreed to proceed with the opening of the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund account.

*M. Leggott* - confirmed it made sense to proceed especially with regard to instant access.

6.3 **Payments Made**

The Chief Executive confirmed the larger payments had been taken out of the Capital Grant Scheme. He was pleased to confirm the insurance bill had reduced to £82k from last year and if anyone wanted further details then these could be found on the website.

6.4 **External Audit Report**

The Chief Executive confirmed that a clean report had been received from the External Auditor. There were no qualifications.

6.5 **Income**

The Chief Executive confirmed that again we are where we expected to be, and members could see the total amount of rates collected as at the end of July 2022. The new credit card machine had been put to good use, especially during Covid and it was now very rare that people come into the office to make payment of their rates.

6.6 **Audit Thresholds**

The Chief Executive confirmed that Kings Lynn IDB had massive capital grant income which took the total income over £6.5m. Where this happen for 2 consecutive years then they would be listed

as a Category 1 Authority. An audit for a Category 1 Authority costs in excess of £100k whereas a light audit (such as this Board has) is in the region of £3k. Kings Lynn IDB are back below the threshold but Lindsey Marsh are entering into the same situation and when the Hobhole Pumping Station project progresses this Board will be classed as Category 1 for one or two years. SAAA have been approached regarding levelling up to enable Capital Grants to be removed from Income, especially as the individual Boards have already jumped through hoops to obtain the funding. The Chief Executive was hoping that a decision will be made before the first year of works at Hobhole.

The Chairman added that by the time the grants were received, 3 different audits had already been completed so everything was fully regulated. The Chief Executive confirmed that a 4% rate increase would be required to cover the cost of a Category 1 Audit,

7. **Income and Expenditure**

The Chief Executive briefly ran through his report and confirmed that 74% of the income had been collected which meant that over £1 million had been collected to date. The phone was busy with people calling to make payment by way of credit card which bought cash in more quickly.

8. **CHIEF ENGINEER'S REPORT NO. 2/23**

The Chief Engineer would take his report as read and highlight all areas of importance and any updates for Board Members.

8.1 **Pumping Hours**

The Chief Engineer confirmed there were 126 pumping hours as at the end of August bringing the total for the year to 7,289.

8.2 **Rainfall**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that 49.1mm was recorded for the catchment during August.

8.3 **Water Transfer - Irrigation**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that Water Transfer Ltd administrates water transfer from the River Witham into the District. The annual licence runs from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> September.

8.4 **Salinity Testing**

The Chief Engineer confirmed the Board tested the salinity levels on behalf of Water Transfer Ltd and this testing regime was checked by the EA and it was exactly the same.

8.5 **Soil Moisture Deficit**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that there had been a slight dip in July and August and he believed the Board was in a good position heading to Autumn.

8.6 **Plant Operations 2023-2024**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that the information shown was at the end of July. The next meeting will see a big difference in the hours as all plant is out working all hours.

*R. Hall-Jones* - asked how long the Chief Engineer was expecting fir piles to last? The Chief Engineer confirmed that in his last role they removed some fir piles after 45 years and they were still in good condition.

8.7 **Planning**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that the land South of Wainfleet Road Boston detailed on page 15 of his report, paragraph 5.3 was moving forwards but with a more detailed design.

*D. Middleton* - asked how the Board made sure the 9m byelaw easement was adhered to? The Chief Engineer confirmed the Board comment on any issues and contacts the applicant early in the process. At some point, the applicant will request formal consent. Then the Board will check the development is compliant and may also carry out an inspection.

8.8 **Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind**

The Chief Engineer confirmed the chosen route was south through the district which would result in major consenting issues.

*J. Woods - asked as the cables were near Hobhole Pumping Station, would this be advantageous to the Board. The Chief Engineer confirmed not.*

8.9 **Plant & Equipment**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that the Board was just awaiting delivery of one item, the Votex Jumbo 150 Flail.

8.10 **Technical Matters**

The Chief Engineer confirmed that the Catchment Survey work had been carried out by two graduate students and it had been a very busy summer.

8.11 **Hobhole Pumping Station**

The Chief Engineer showed Board Members some slides of the recent visit to Holland undertaken by himself, the Engineering Manager and the Pump Engineer. The slides showed the various sites visited and the pump designs that could be considered for installation at Hobhole.

9. **Health and Safety Officer's Report**

M. Leggott confirmed he attended his first Health & Safety meeting in July 2023 as the Board Member representative. Concerns had been raised about operatives working on wet banks and the use of steps that had been used recently on a site. The Chief Engineer was concerned that they were not CE or UKCA marked and would prefer that a purpose made structure be purchased.

Discussions were ongoing about the safest way to re-fuel the weed boats. M. Leggott said that overall he was very impressed by the levels of common sense displayed at the meeting.

The Chief Engineer read through his report and highlighted that the employee involved in the accident with the sledgehammer had returned to normal work. Inductions had been carried out for 3 new employees and various lifting plans had been completed.

Also included in the report were the Minutes of the meeting attended by M. Leggott. The Chief Engineer confirmed that Health and Safety was constantly under review and there were always improvements to be made.

10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

*R. Hall-Jones - wanted to extend congratulations and thanks for the work being done in respect of the Hobhole project. He added that the road conditions along the banks in Holland were in very good condition unlike ours and trees encroaching onto the roads. The Chief Engineer confirmed that the tops of the banks would change drastically once the pumping station was built. The Chief Engineer agreed that the roads at the top of the banks in Holland were good but drivers also tended to use the middle of the roads, only venturing onto the sides when there was a car passing. This had been mentioned to Lincolnshire County Council.*

*R. Hall-Jones - added the banks on the Catchwater Drain were lovely and tidy but the state of the watercourse was totally opposite. The Chief Engineer said that the Board had been lobbying the EA for over 4 years to get them to commit to complete necessary mudding works. The Chief Executive added that he had written to the new area director in this regard and a phone call had been made following the Flood Risk meeting but it would be necessary to continue to pressure them to deal with this.*

There was no other business and the meeting was closed at 3.45pm

Chairman