

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 **Wednesday 15 November 2023**

Present:- C. Crunkhorn (Committee Chairman)

Messrs: T. Ashton
P. Bedford
B. Bowles
M. Leggott
D. Middleton
P. Richardson
(Chairman)
A. Saul
K. Smith
J. Ward

1. **JAMES GRANT**

The Chairman confirmed that he was sure all Committee Members had heard the very sad news of James' passing and advised that one minute silence would be held at the next Board Meeting as a mark of respect.

2 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for the meeting.

2. **CHIEF ENGINEER'S ESTIMATES 2024/2025**

2.1 **Plant Replacement Programme 2023/24 – Current Year Update**

The Chief Executive confirmed for new members that the Committee looked at the costs of the pumping stations, plant and the depot. The Chief Engineer added that only pumping costs have any impact on the rate.

Purchase	Replacement	Estimated Cost	Actual Cost	Delivery
		£	£	
Hitachi XCN130-7	JCB JS145	150,000.00	122,800.00	Jul-23
Toyota Hilux 4x4	Toyota Hilux 4x4	30,000.00	29,747.00	Sep-23
Valtra T175ED	Claas Arion 630 Tractor	120,000.00	128,500.00	Nov-22
Herder Cavalier Flail	Herder Cavilier Flail	90,000.00	93,900.00	May-23
Herder 6.5m	5.5m Weed Basket	12,000.00	15,550.00	May-23
Votex Jumbo 150 Flail		17,500.00	17,850.00	Nov-23
	Total	419,500.00	408,347.00	

The Chief Engineer briefly read through the details of the plant approved for purchase and replacement last year together with the actual costs. The Chief Engineer confirmed that the actual spend had been slightly less than estimated and that delivery of the Votex Jumbo Flail had only just happened.

The Chief Engineer said that he did not intend to go through the Plant Replacement Programme in any great detail as this was all set out in his report.

3 **Plant Replacements 2024-25**

The Chief Engineer referred Committee Members to his report and the items which needed to be replaced in the next year. The Chief Engineer confirmed that all plant items would be offered for sale by tender unless the part exchange value was higher.

4.1 **JCB JS180 Excavator**

The JCB JS180 excavator purchased in 2016 has completed 8,257 operating hours to date, its estimated hours at date of actual trade in 2024 will be 10,000 hours.

This machine is utilised on a regular basis throughout the district carrying out channel maintenance operations such as weedcutting, mudding, piling and culvert laying. While this machine is still in relatively fair condition, it is showing signs of ageing wear and tear on the drive train and undercarriage due to the hours of work completed.

It is the Board's policy to change hydraulic excavators after eight years' service, the 2024-25 cutting season would be this machine's eighth year. The machine has a net book value of £2,060 to the Board as of the 1st April 2023.

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 and quick hitch at a net estimated cost of **£180,000.00 plus VAT**.

T. Ashton - asked what the delivery time was? The Chief Engineer confirmed that if the Board wanted a like for like machine it was in stock and available for immediate delivery. If a decision was made to purchase an alternative machine then certain amendments would need to be made and this could affect the delivery time. The Chief Engineer confirmed that there had been some service back up issues with the JCB and the JS180 is an old model that is now obsolete.

4.2 **Toyota Hilux Pick-up**

The Toyota Hilux Pick-up purchased in 2018 has completed 103,000 miles to date, its estimated miles at date of actual trade in 2024 will be approximately 115,000 miles.

This vehicle will be utilised by the Plant and Workshop Manager around the district to attend machinery for service and repairs, additionally it is also used around the district for other towing duties. This vehicle is designated as Emergency Response Plant, considered critical in times of emergency in the district. The vehicle has a net book value of £7,067.00 to the Board as of 1st April 2023.

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 **£33,000.00 plus VAT**.

P. Bedford - asked what the delivery time was for the Hilux? The Chief Engineer confirmed that it was roughly a 12-month turnaround period. However, if the Committee agreed to recommend the purchase to the Board it would be possible to obtain a no obligation build slot. This item would be purchased for the Depot Manager as he preferred to carry out services in the field rather than in the depot.

J. Ward - asked if Toyota were the preferred choice? The Chief Engineer confirmed it was 100% reliable.

4.3 **3No. Weedbaskets 5.5m, 5.0m & 4.3m**

The two Engineering and Hire and one Herder Weedbasket were all purchased in 2017 and 2018. The baskets have completed up to six-years' work and the attachments are utilised yearly throughout the district carrying out channel maintenance operations. Due to the nature of the work they complete all three are now in poor condition and in need of replacement.

It is the Board's policy to change these big weed baskets after five years' service, the 2023-24 cutting season has been the baskets sixth and seventh years.

As a result of one 5.5m basket becoming unusable, a spare three metre basket has been used that has reduced output. Authority was sort from the Chairman to place the order for the baskets on the 1st November 2023 to ensure delivery before the end of this cutting season.

Therefore, based on the information detailed above it is suggested the committee recommend to the Board they ratify the purchase of three replacement weed baskets at a net estimated cost of **£36,000.00 plus VAT**

M. Leggott - commented that this confirmed the Board's 5-year replacement programme was absolutely correct.

4.4 **2No. 150mm dia. Pump Sets**

The Power Vac 200mm dia. pump purchased in 1995 and the Sykes 150mm dia. pump purchased in 2010 are both to be considered for replacement. The pumps have been utilised in the District to support channel maintenance operations such as de-watering for slip repairs and culvert replacements. In more recent years they have been called on to assist with flood response and over pumping at the Board's Littlemoor Pumping Station.

While both pumps are still in reasonable working order, both have had to have running repairs and are not considered reliable enough to call on in an emergency, additionally there is a shortage of suitable pipework to deliver the water any amount of distance.

While the Board do not consider themselves an emergency responder to flooding, recent events have found us with no choice but to help, and short of the right equipment. It is suggested that two new pumps are purchased with the correct pipework to serve as both operations and response pumps.

Therefore, based on the information detailed above it is suggested the committee recommend to the Board the approval to purchase two replacement pumps and pipework at a net estimated cost of **£80,000.00 plus VAT**

M. Leggott - asked if there were any plans for the old pumps? The Chief Engineer confirmed that they would be retained for emergency situations.

4.5 **Additional Plant**

As detailed in section 4.4 above the Boards officers and staff were all involved in the response to Storm Babet. All the initial response was handled late in the evening, in the dark. In some cases, this involved setting up mobile pumps in remote locations with no lighting and near water.

*Therefore, based on the information detailed above it is suggested the committee recommend to the Board the approval to purchase a new mobile light tower at a net estimated cost of between **£5,000.00 and £10,000.00 plus VAT**

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 these items be purchased.

After discussion it was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND That the Board purchase:

- (1) JCB JS180 Excavator at a net estimated cost of £180,000.00 plus VAT
- (2) Toyota Hilux Pick-up at a net estimated cost of £33,000.00 plus VAT.
- (3) 3No. Weedbaskets 5.5m, 5.0m & 4.3m at a net estimated cost of £36,000.00 plus VAT
- (4) 2No. 150mm dia. Pump Sets at a net estimated cost of £80,000.00 plus VAT
- (5) Light Tower at a net estimated cost of between £5,000.00 and £10,000.00 plus VAT

6 **Pumping Stations Estimate 2024/2025**

The Chief Engineer confirmed the increase in the estimate reflected the anticipated cost of increase in electricity costs as the Board was no longer tied into a fixed rate tariff. Together with the Chief Executive numerous suppliers had been compared and it was decided to go with a company called Corona and an 18-month contract. Meter readings from the last 10 years had been reviewed and an average use was obtained. This was then plugged into the new rates to obtain the best price. Other issues were being considered in an effort to reduce costs such as night pumping and increased sluicing. However, there would obviously be occasions where it would be necessary to pump during daytime hours.

After discussion it was

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND That the Chief Engineers estimate of £1,032,994.00 for 2023/24 (2022/23 £598,897.00) be approved.

7 **Workshop and Depot Estimate 2024/2025**

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

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND That the Chief Engineers estimate of £53,000.00 for 2024/25 (2022/23 £43,500.00) be approved.

8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business, and the meeting was closed at 2.55pm.

Chairman