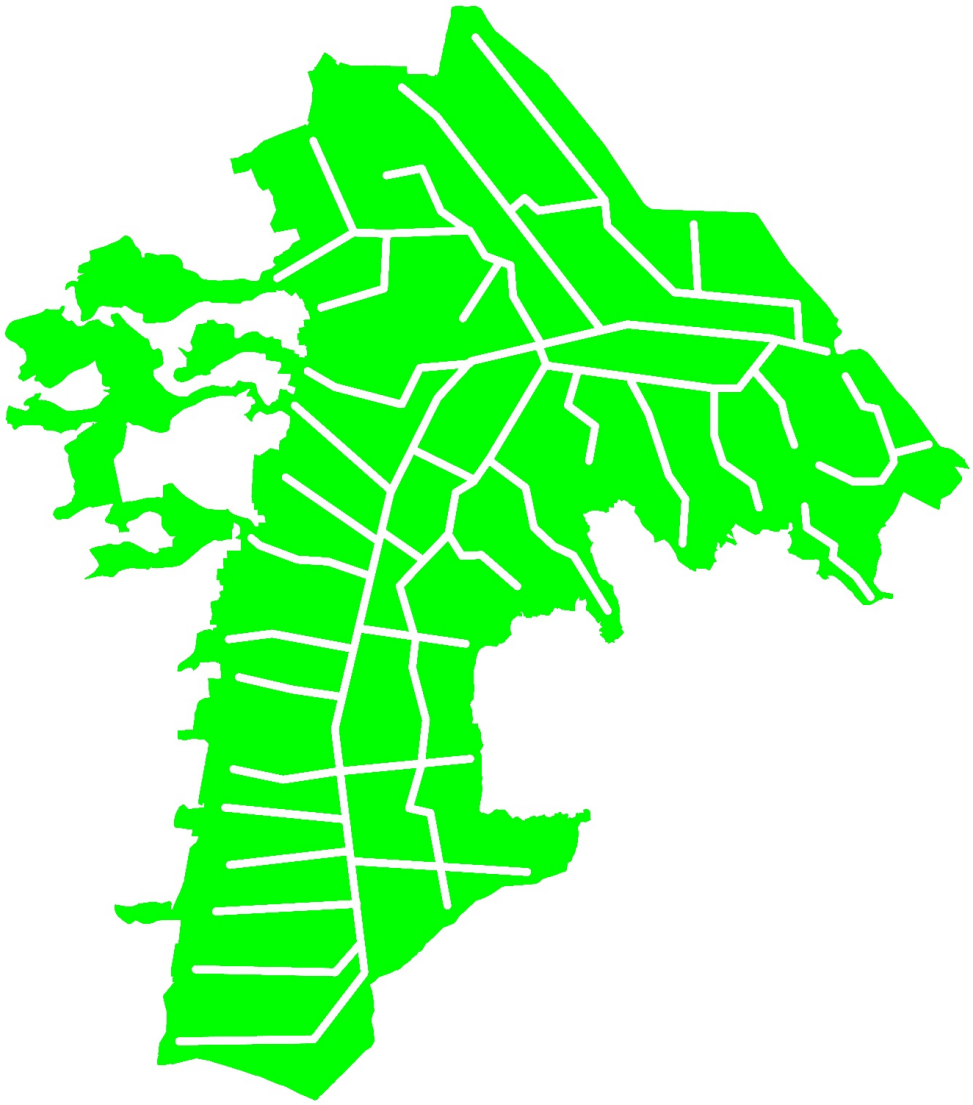
BLACK SLUICE

INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD



Joint Works Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 6th October 2026 at 2:00pm

Station Road, Swineshead, Lincolnshire PE20 3PW

Black Sluice
Internal Drainage Board

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Our Ref: DW/JP/B10 Your Ref: Date: 29th September 2026

To all Northern and Southern Works Committee Members

Notice is hereby given that a Meeting of the Joint Works Committee will be held at the Offices of the Board on Tuesday, 6th October 2026 at 2pm at which your attendance is requested.

Yours sincerely

D. Withnall
Chief Executive

A G E N D A

1. Recording the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence.

3. Declarations of Interest.

4. To receive and, if correct, sign the Minutes of the last Meeting of the Southern Works Committee held on 24th March 2026 **(pages 4 - 16)**

5. Matters Arising from the Southern Works Committee Minutes.

6. To receive and, if correct, sign the Minutes of the last Meeting of the Northern Works Committee held on 12th May 2026 **(pages 17 - 28)**

7. Matters Arising from the Northern Works Committee Minutes.

8. (a) Update on IDB Recovery Fund - Finances & delivery **(pages 29 & 30)**
   (b) Update on Grant Schemes - Finances & Delivery **(pages 31 - 33)**
   (c) Update on Board Funded Schemes **(pages 34 - 36)**
   (d) **CONFIDENTIAL** - Report on the South Kyme, Ewerby & Trinity College Embankment Repair works completed by Jackson Civil Engineering **(pages 37 – 41)**
   (e) Maintenance Report **(pages 42 - 46)**

9. To receive a report on enforcement actions **(pages 47 & 48)**

10. To receive a report on the Lincolnshire Reservoir **(pages 49 & 50)**

11. Rainfall **(pages 51 & 52)**

12. Any Other Business.

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
M I N U T E S

of the proceedings of a Meeting of the
Southern Works Committee

held at the Offices of the Board on the
24th March 2026 at 2pm

Members

Chairperson - * Mr C Wray

* Mr W Ash	Mr G Atkinson
* Mr V A Barker	Mr M Mowbray
* Mr J Casswell	* Mr R Dorrington
* Mr K Casswell	* Cllr M Geaney
* Cllr Z Lane	* Mr A Mair
* Mr M Taylor	*Mr D Leverton

(* Member Present)

In attendance:

Mr D Withnall	(Chief Executive)
Mr P Nicholson	(Projects Director)
Mr S Harrison	(Maintenance Director)
Mrs A Chamberlain	(Finance & Admin Director)
Mr P Holmes	(Chairperson of the Board)
Mr M Rollinson	(Executive Committee)
Mr M Leggott	(Executive Committee)
Cllr P Bedford	(Executive Committee)
Cllr S Evans	(Executive Committee)

2612 Recording the Meeting - Agenda Item 1

Members were informed that the meeting would be recorded.

2613 Apologies for absence - Agenda Item 2

Apologies for absence were received from Mr R Needham, Mr M Mowbray, Mr G Atkinson, Mr R Start (invited guest), and Mr M Rollinson only attended the tour.

2614 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3

There were no declarations of Interest.

2615 Minutes of the last meeting - Agenda Item 4

The Minutes of the Joint Works Committee, which was held on 7th October 2025, copies of which had been circulated, were considered. It was AGREED that the Minutes should be signed as a true record.

2616 Matters Arising - Agenda Item 5

Cllr M Geaney pointed out she thought she did attend the meeting on 7th October 2025 and it is marked she didn't attend. The CEO confirmed this will be investigated.

2617 Discuss the Operations Report and Inspection - Agenda Item 6

The Maintenance Director led discussions On the Operations report with an accompanying presentation.

1. Point of Interest – Excavator Access Routes and Proposed Culvert Installation.

The Maintenance Director updated the Board are constantly evaluating access points for the machines, cutting the cost of moving the machines and implementing alternative bank cutting in accordance with the Biodiversity Action Plan.

To cut the cost of moving the machines, which is quite costly, two sites have been identified and a budget of £31,750 has been approved to facilitate the installation of culverts. This will be completed in the next financial year from April up to the cutting season in August. The locations are behind the Europa Tyre depot in Gosberton and the other site in Swaton.

The Projects Director led discussions about the inspection, as follows, with an accompanying presentation.

2. View / discuss Donington Northings Pumping Station

Site visit: The site visit commenced with a discussion regarding the proposed contribution from Network Rail towards the roadway associated with the site. It was noted that the roadway had originally been installed using Internal Drainage Board (IDB) funding, following discussions that began over ten years ago concerning the need for a new access point. This requirement was driven not only by the deteriorating condition of the culvert but also by significant safety concerns at the level crossing, where there have been two fatalities. Ongoing negotiations with Network Rail were acknowledged as challenging and protracted, with efforts continuing to secure agreement, particularly in relation to the closure of the crossing and potential financial contributions. It was emphasised that the crossing is no longer required operationally and is used only by the Board, and that it is now considered unsafe. A proposal was put forward to reduce the height of the culvert while retaining the box structure to avoid destabilising the railway embankment, with a request for Network Rail to contribute financially to these works.

The discussion then moved on to the pumping station refurbishment scheme. Members were informed that a budget of £2 million had been allocated for refurbishment works at this site and at Wyberton Chain Bridge. The planned works include the installation of new pumps and motors, all of which must meet fish and eel-friendly requirements.

While restrictions posed by existing infrastructure, particularly outfall pipe configurations, were acknowledged, it was confirmed that the new pumps would incorporate less damaging fish and eel impellers.

The project has reached the tender stage, with three contractors invited to proceed and site inspections scheduled imminently. Due to pump lead times and operational constraints, installation is anticipated to begin from May of the following year.

Further details of the refurbishment were provided, including the installation of a new Motor Control Centre (MCC) to improve automation and control. Additional works include structural steel refurbishment, where corroded support stanchions have been replaced, and shot blasting and repainting have been carried out across most sites. Gosberton pumping station remains outstanding due to difficulties in installing a new access door, pending input from structural engineers. Site improvements at the current location also include enhanced access to the lower pump room and general refurbishment of internal structures, alongside planned upgrades to crane operations within the building.

Discussion also covered water management proposals, specifically the potential installation of a tilting weir across two gravity channels discharging into the South Forty Foot Drain. This would allow improved control of water levels, which are currently dictated by downstream conditions. However, there remains uncertainty as to whether such works are eligible under grant funding criteria, and further investigations are ongoing. Members also discussed operational improvements, including the introduction of variable speed drives for pumps, which would enhance efficiency and reduce energy consumption compared to the current fixed-speed operation. It was noted that existing pumps operate on an on/off basis and cannot adjust output dynamically, whereas new systems would provide greater flexibility and improved operational efficiency.

Further technical discussion addressed system design considerations, including the positioning of pumping stations relative to drainage channels and the implications for efficiency. It was concluded that while right-angle configurations may not significantly affect larger stations, they can have greater impacts in smaller systems. Members also discussed the benefits of increased capacity in new pumps to account for climate change projections, with a minimum uplift of approximately 10%. However, it was recognised that increased pumping capacity may not yield benefits if downstream capacity is constrained.

At the committee's meeting later: Discussion returned to matters concerning Network Rail and the culvert at the crossing. It was noted that engagement with Network Rail has been difficult and fragmented, with limited progress despite over a decade of discussions. While the Board had initially anticipated that Network Rail would undertake or fund much of the work associated with closing the crossing and providing alternative access, this has not materialised. Concerns were raised regarding the structural stability of the railway embankment should the culvert be modified or removed, particularly given the risk of bank slippage if vegetation and existing structural support are disturbed.

Members debated possible approaches, including leaving the culvert in its current state until failure occurs, undertaking partial removal to mitigate immediate risks, or proactively modifying it while retaining sufficient structural integrity.

It was suggested that formally notifying Network Rail of intended works, rather than seeking prolonged discussion, may be a more effective approach. The ownership and responsibility for the culvert remained unclear, though it was believed to date from schemes implemented in the 1960s.

Safety concerns were emphasised, with consensus that the current condition of the crossing presents a hazard and cannot be left unaddressed indefinitely. Proposed interim measures included removing unstable elements such as loose blocks, retaining supporting structures on the railway side, and installing physical barriers to prevent use by vehicles. It was also suggested that Network Rail should formally close the crossing and install permanent fencing. Members acknowledged the need to balance cost, safety, and long-term liability, noting that failure of the culvert during high flow conditions could result in additional operational challenges.

3. Visit / discuss Horbling – Overflow Spillway

***Site visit**:* The visit proceeded with a discussion on the Horbling spillway works. Members were reminded that the scheme had been undertaken approximately one year prior, around early spring. Reference was made to previous site discussions where the Board had outlined intended measures to mitigate overtopping onto the adjacent roadway. It was confirmed that the agreed works had now been completed; however, it was emphasised that these measures were not expected to fully resolve the issue. Instead, they were anticipated to provide only partial alleviation, as the fundamental problem of a low point in the road profile remains unchanged. It was noted that during high water events, water is still likely to overtop at this low point despite the implemented interventions.

Members were informed that feedback had been received from a local landowner, who reported observing water beginning to trickle over the bank following the works. While this provided some early insight into the scheme's performance, it was acknowledged that no sufficiently significant storm event had yet occurred to fully test the effectiveness of the solution. Consequently, a definitive assessment of the scheme's success could not yet be made. The Board reiterated that the completed works involved lowering the bank height to better manage overtopping flows, alongside the presence of an existing siphon beneath the road, which transfers water into the adjacent drain system. This siphon had been referenced in past correspondence from the landowner, and the matter itself has a long history, with previous considerations dating back to the early 2000s under successive Chief Executives.

Attention was drawn to a potential operational implication arising from the works, namely that additional water may now be diverted into the Horbling Fen catchment, potentially exceeding what would naturally occur. It was noted that under normal conditions, this water would be expected to flow toward the Environment Agency's main river system. Members clarified that the drain in question had been de-mained in 2018, transferring responsibility from the Environment Agency to the Board, which has since resulted in a more proactive management approach to the issue.

Further discussion considered potential future mitigation options should overtopping persist. Suggestions included raising the road level or installing additional drainage features such as gullies; however, these options were acknowledged to be constrained by practical limitations. In particular, the absence of a roadside verge and the close proximity to the highway would necessitate involvement from the local highway authority (Lincolnshire County Council), and significant engineering challenges would likely arise.

It was also noted that previous temporary measures by the Environment Agency had included the use of sandbags, though these were not considered a sustainable solution.

Members concluded that, while the implemented works represent a reasonable and proportionate response, they do not eliminate the underlying issue caused by the road's low point. It was also highlighted that the works had been carried out largely in response to the requests and proposals of the tenant landowner. The Board considered that it had fulfilled its obligations in undertaking the requested measures and that, should the scheme prove ineffective in future flood events, there may be limited further action available without causing adverse impacts elsewhere. Specifically, it was acknowledged that preventing overtopping in this location could potentially transfer flood risk to adjacent land, thereby creating wider management challenges.

4. View / discuss Gosberton Pumping Station

***Site visit**:* The tour continued with a detailed briefing on the operational status and planned works at Gosberton Pumping Station. Members were informed that the station is broadly comparable to Donington, comprising a three-pump configuration with a similar overall capacity. However, it was noted that the Board is required to undertake significant investment at this site as part of its ongoing capital and maintenance programme. Specifically, the existing pumps are scheduled for refurbishment, which will be carried out sequentially to maintain operational continuity; each pump will be removed, refurbished, and reinstated before progressing to the next unit.

In addition to pump refurbishment, structural repair works are required at the site. While a budget has been allocated, progress has been delayed pending resolution of access constraints. The primary issue concerns the installation of a new access door from the weed screen deck to the lower pump room. The preferred location for this door was found to be directly beneath a structural support beam, raising concerns regarding structural integrity. Following a prolonged period awaiting guidance from consulting engineers (Stantec), it has recently been confirmed that the proposed location is not feasible. Consequently, alternative options are now being explored to identify a suitable position for the new access point.

The creation of a lower-level access door remains a priority due to the operational and safety benefits it would provide. At present, access to the lower pump room is via a hatch and internal steps, which constitutes a confined space. This necessitates adherence to strict confined space entry procedures, including additional personnel requirements for supervision and safety compliance. By installing a direct access door at low level, the site could eliminate the need for confined space entry protocols, thereby improving efficiency and reducing resource requirements for maintenance activities.

Members were advised that the Board has invested in specialist equipment, including a core drilling system, to facilitate the creation of new access openings through substantial concrete walls, typically 18–24 inches in thickness. This approach has already been implemented successfully at other sites, improving accessibility and operational efficiency, and it is intended that similar improvements will be made at Gosberton once a suitable design solution is agreed.

The discussion also highlighted broader refurbishment plans, noting that Gosberton will eventually be incorporated into a wider programme aligned with prioritisation criteria, particularly those relating to fish and eel compliance requirements. It was acknowledged that regulatory obligations are a key driver for these works, and failure to comply could expose the Board to potential legal challenges. As such, alignment with environmental standards and regulatory expectations remains a critical consideration in project planning.

Structural issues identified during inspections were also reviewed. In particular, corrosion and deterioration of steel support stanchions, especially at the base of I-beam sections within wet-dry zones, have been observed across multiple sites, including Gosberton. These elements have been or will be replaced as necessary to maintain structural integrity. While it was not considered that the deterioration posed an immediate risk of structural failure, members agreed that replacement was essential given the role these supports play in spanning significant widths within the pumping station structure.

Finally, members revisited the earlier discussion regarding recent plant acquisitions. The new Energreen Alpha machine, although delivered later than anticipated, is now operational and has not presented any issues to date. Similarly, the newly acquired mobile elevated working platform was discussed in more detail. While its maximum height capacity exceeds typical requirements, the key advantage lies in its extended outreach, which allows safe access to otherwise difficult-to-reach areas, particularly where physical proximity to structures cannot be achieved.

5. View / discuss Dunsby Fen Pumping Station - New Weed Screen Cleaners

Site visit: The meeting continued with a detailed update on planned works and operational improvements at Dunsby Pumping Station. Members were advised that provision has been made within the current budget to fully replace the existing weed screen cleaner, which has proven unreliable and subject to frequent breakdowns. It was noted that this unit operates inconsistently and often fails, and therefore full replacement is considered necessary to ensure dependable and efficient operation at the site.

Dunsby is also included within a wider programme of works covering five sites scheduled for upgrades to pump motors and associated control systems. One site, at Ewerby, has already been completed, while the remaining four sites, including Dunsby, are still to be delivered. The principal cause of delay was identified as constraints relating to electrical supply upgrades.
The installation of larger pump motors incorporating variable speed drive technology requires an enhanced power supply, necessitating the installation of new, higher-capacity transformers at each site.

At Dunsby, it was explained that the new transformer will be pole-mounted and will require an H-pole configuration due to its size. Two potential siting options have been identified by National Grid; however, only one location is considered suitable by the Board, as the alternative would adversely impact access to the pumping station and present safety concerns. Progress has been delayed pending the securing of necessary consents, including either a wayleave agreement or a Flood Risk Activity Permit (FRAP) from the Environment Agency, owing to the site’s proximity to the South Forty Foot drain.

Members were informed that the FRAP application process has been a significant contributing factor to delays, with approximately one year having elapsed without meaningful progress. Despite this, all connection offers issued by National Grid have been accepted and paid for, and the Board is now awaiting the necessary approvals before works can proceed and installation dates can be confirmed.

The proposed upgrades are expected to deliver substantial operational benefits. The introduction of new motors and modern control panels will provide improved flexibility and efficiency in pump operation. In particular, the adoption of variable speed drives will enable pumps to operate at lower, sustained outputs during routine conditions, reducing the need for frequent start-stop cycles. It was noted that under the current system, pumps operate at full capacity for short durations before shutting down, leading to repeated restart cycles that are energy-intensive and costly. The upgraded system is therefore expected to reduce energy consumption and improve overall efficiency.

A suggestion was raised regarding the potential installation of a second, smaller pump to improve operational flexibility. While this was considered, it was noted that the planned upgrades already offer significant improvements in control and efficiency. Furthermore, it was explained that the original IDB funding programme required delivery within a single financial year, which constrained the ability to consider more extensive redesign options at the time. It was acknowledged that this timeframe was ultimately impractical, given the delays encountered, and that a longer funding window may have allowed for different design decisions. However, it was also recognised that, without external funding, the Board would not have been in a position to undertake any work.

At the committee's meeting later: Further discussion was held regarding the condition and replacement requirements of the weed screen cleaner at Dunsby Pumping Station. Members were informed that multiple attempts had been made to secure external funding for its replacement through the IDB funding streams; however, these applications had been unsuccessful. It was noted that this item was one of the few projects that did not receive approval under the initial funding round, and a subsequent application under Tranche 2 was also unsuccessful. Despite this, the need for replacement remains clear, as the existing weed screen cleaner is currently unreliable and fails more frequently than it operates effectively.

The operational importance of the weed screen cleaner was emphasised, particularly given the volume of weed accumulation experienced at the site. Although Dunsby is a single-pump station, the quantity of debris and weed present can be significant, as evidenced by observed conditions at the site. As such, the proper functioning of the weed screen is critical to maintaining efficient pump operation and preventing blockages or reduced performance.

Members also discussed ongoing issues related to the electrical supply and pump performance at the station. It was highlighted that the current motors are susceptible to overheating and failure during periods of high water levels when the pumps are required to operate against a high hydraulic head. While Dunsby is not considered the most problematic site in this regard compared to others within the Board's network, it remains one where failures do occur and therefore requires attention as part of the wider upgrade programme.

6. Point of interest – Culvert Issue - Quadring

Mr V Barker declared an interest.

The Planning officer has set up a site meeting with LCC to discuss a way forward. The main issue is the concern of the culvert's restricted flow and the integrity of the downstream headwall.

7. Enforcement Issue – Gosberton Clough

Mr V Barker declared an Interest.

The Board has been proactive and has contacted the adjacent property owner who will remove the overhanging trees by April 2026. Once this has been completed the Board will be able to gain access and will be able to maintain the drain from either side.

8. Proposed New Culvert

This had been covered by the Maintenance Director in the Operations Report and Inspection.

9. Tilting Weir - LAPSIP

These are fully functional and operational now. The telemetry is sorted and will be used to control water levels as was agreed within the funding application.

During the discussion, Mr K. Casswell queried whether the scheme had been delivered within the approved budget. In response, the Projects Director confirmed that the works had been completed on budget, providing assurance to members regarding both financial control and effective project delivery.

10. Enforcement Issue

The Projects Director presented a report on a further enforcement matter, which had been brought to the Board's attention by a member present. Officers confirmed that an initial site visit had been undertaken following notification of the issue, with photographic evidence from the first inspection included in the meeting papers.

Subsequently, it was identified that a culvert had been installed within the watercourse as part of the ongoing works, prompting a second site visit to assess compliance with the approved specifications.

It was reported that the culvert installed by the contractor did not meet the required specification. While the installed pipe was believed to be no larger than 900mm in diameter, the approved specification required a 1500mm culvert. Despite initial observations suggesting that the workmanship appeared generally satisfactory and fit for purpose, the deviation from the agreed design was considered unacceptable. As a result of discussions with the contractor, it was confirmed that the undersized culvert has since been removed and replaced with a correctly sized pipe, with works being undertaken to ensure compliance with the original consent.

The Board confirmed that it will continue to monitor the situation closely to ensure that the reinstatement is carried out fully and in accordance with the approved specification. Ongoing oversight will be maintained to ensure compliance and to protect the integrity of the watercourse and surrounding infrastructure.

10. Wetland Project – Bourne Fen

The meeting received an update on progress at the Bourne Fen Wetlands project. Members were advised that works have been underway on site since late November to early December, with Board involvement ongoing throughout this period. Although a site visit had been undertaken by officers in early December, it was noted that one of the Board's machines has remained continuously deployed on site since mobilisation, supporting delivery of the scheme.

The project is being delivered in phases, with Phase One enabling a defined scope of works aligned with the funding currently secured. The Board has committed to supporting the scheme as previously agreed, including the provision of quotations for works undertaken and the supply of hired plant and equipment as required. It was noted that the current phase is expected to conclude by the end of the month, with a return to site planned for mid-May to continue with subsequent works. These will include further drainage operations, specifically the rerouting of the weir drain around the perimeter of the site.

During the discussion, Mark Taylor declared an interest in relation to the new cut associated with the weir drain and culvert levels. Concern was raised regarding the potential for raised water levels to adversely impact adjacent landholdings. In response, it was advised that any concerns should be formally raised at the earliest opportunity with the relevant parties, including the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, and through appropriate planning channels. It was emphasised that this stage of the project represents the appropriate opportunity to address such issues before works are finalised.

Members also considered the implications of allocating Board plant and labour resources to the project. A query was raised regarding whether this commitment was impacting delivery of the Board's own maintenance programme, particularly desilting works.

It was confirmed that the Board currently has one machine and one operator assigned to the site; however, this does represent a proportion of available operational capacity. Despite this, officers confirmed that desilting activities are continuing, with mitigation measures implemented to maintain overall programme delivery.

It was further noted that the duration of plant deployment at Bourne Fen has exceeded initial expectations, largely due to delays associated with planning approvals. However, this had been anticipated within the Board's operational planning to some degree. Additionally, efficiency savings identified within the desilting budget, alongside the implementation of overtime working over recent weeks, have enabled the Board to recover productivity.

Officers confirmed that, based on current progress, all scheduled desilting works are expected to be completed by the end of April. Members were therefore reassured that, notwithstanding the allocation of resources to support the Bourne Fen Wetlands scheme, this has not resulted in any material delay to the Board's core maintenance obligations.

11. Proposed New Culvert

This had been covered by the Maintenance Director in the Operations Report and Inspection.

12. Cliff Beck

The Maintenance Director confirmed the Cliff Beck is classed as a low consequence system. It was confirmed that the watercourse is not included within the current year's maintenance programme due to its classification. However, members were advised that representations have been made to the Environment Agency to review this status in light of significant planned development within the catchment. In particular, it was highlighted that approximately 1,500 new homes are being constructed at the upper end of the system, and that, following changes in criteria effective from 1 April, post-2012 developments can now be considered when assessing watercourse classification. The Environment Agency has acknowledged this request and is reviewing the applicable methodology, with the potential for reclassification being considered, particularly in relation to the impacts on areas such as Handley Chase and the wider Quarrington and Silk Willoughby locality.

Members noted that the Board's drainage network receives flows from these developing areas, with particular reference to downstream impacts where previous issues have been recorded. It was considered important to monitor the effect of recent clearance works on the system, including the Cliff Beck and North Beck channels, as well as potential impacts on downstream villages should a significant rainfall event occur. It was confirmed that the North Beck has also been cleared by riparian landowners, which should improve conveyance capacity and provide a more continuous flow path through the system.

Further discussion addressed recent works undertaken to assess the condition of the watercourse. It was clarified that initial clearance had been carried out primarily to enable inspection and surveying, allowing officers to better understand the condition and identify required works.

Members were advised that the condition of the watercourse was better than previously anticipated, with much of it found to be in reasonable order following clearance works undertaken by landowners. While some constraints remain—notably access difficulties, dense vegetation, and the presence of several mature willow trees within the channel—it was estimated that a relatively modest investment (approximately £55,000) would be sufficient to bring the watercourse up to an acceptable standard for potential adoption or ongoing maintenance by the Board. This represented a significant reduction compared to earlier estimates, which had suggested substantially higher costs prior to inspection.

The meeting also considered the broader funding and governance context for maintaining such watercourses. It was noted that a paper is to be presented to the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) in April, proposing a review of the demaining arrangements implemented in 2018. Specifically, it was suggested that consideration be given to utilising the IDBs' collective precept contribution (approximately £2.2 million) to support maintenance of low consequence watercourses. This proposal aligns with current RFCC funding allocations, whereby an additional £1.5 million of local levy is being directed toward medium consequence watercourses.

Members discussed the view that increased central government funding should support medium consequence systems, thereby allowing locally raised funds to be redirected to manage lower consequence assets more effectively.

2618 Receive the Engineer's Report - Agenda Item 7

The Projects Director updated much of the report was discussed during the tour and can be taken as read.

Graft Drain
Mr V Barker highlighted the Graft Drain has a full drain up to the tunnels that were put in at the Pinchbeck end. Is the assumption to be something is wrong or someone has made a mistake with the levels?

In response, it was suggested that the situation may be attributable to a combination of factors. Officers advised that the system operates across a relatively flat gradient, which inherently limits the efficiency of water conveyance. It was also noted that recent maintenance works have been completed across parts of the system, with remaining works at the upper end scheduled for completion within the current and following financial year, for which budget provision has already been made.

Members discussed the potential for improving flow within the system, including whether lowering levels within the drain might provide a more effective solution. However, it was confirmed that investigations into downstream culvert capacities had already been undertaken, and it was considered unlikely that enlarging these structures would significantly improve conditions. Instead, it was suggested that there may be a low point within the system, potentially contributing to water backing up and creating standing water. Comparisons were made with similar issues elsewhere in the catchment, where land settlement or shrinkage has resulted in depressions within the channel profile, further restricting flow.

The Board acknowledged that while recent works, including culvert replacements and channel improvements, have enhanced the condition of the drain compared to its previous state, water levels remain relatively high. This is compounded by substantial reed growth within the channel, which can further impede flow and reduce conveyance capacity.

A suggestion was made to install gauge boards both upstream and downstream of the affected section to provide a visual reference for water levels during future inspections. While it was noted that existing level data, including invert levels of culverts, is already available and generally aligns with design expectations, members agreed that additional monitoring could provide a clearer understanding of system performance over time. Officers indicated that they would review this suggestion and consider appropriate measures, including further level surveys, to inform any future actions.

Dunsby Bank Repair
Mark Leggott raised concerns regarding the condition of the South Forty Foot bank in the vicinity of Dunsby Fen Pumping Station that the Environment Agency (EA) appeared to have effectively created a spillway by lowering and hardening a section of the bank with aggregate, thereby allowing water from the South Forty Foot drain to overtop into the adjacent fen.

It was observed that the bank at this location appeared notably low and did not represent an improvement on the previous condition. It was suggested that this could result in increased flood risk to agricultural land and surrounding areas.

In response, officers acknowledged that similar concerns had been raised previously and that the Board shared reservations about the works undertaken. It was noted that the situation may appear more pronounced at present due to the absence of established vegetation, which previously masked the low point. However, it was accepted that the level of the bank remains questionable. Officers confirmed that, based on discussions with the EA, the works undertaken were not intended to represent an improvement but rather a reinstatement to what the EA considered to be the original condition. The bank had initially been raised to approximately 3.05m but was subsequently reduced to around 2.95m following EA instruction, on the basis that enhancements beyond the original level were not permitted under their guidelines.

Members expressed frustration with this approach, particularly as overtopping at this location results in water being redirected into the Board's drainage system, effectively creating a cycle of pumping water back into the same catchment. It was noted that the EA had undertaken the works primarily to stabilise the bank and prevent structural failure by armouring the surface, ensuring that, if overtopping occurs, the bank itself would not erode.

The broader rationale behind the EA's approach was discussed, with officers explaining that the Agency operates within strict regulatory and legal guidelines which prevent them from raising bank levels where doing so would transfer flood risk elsewhere. It was suggested that their strategy is to retain and manage known low points, allowing overtopping to occur in predetermined locations rather than risking uncontrolled flooding at unknown or potentially more sensitive locations. This approach was described by some members as effectively creating a "designated" or "stealth" floodplain, often to the detriment of agricultural land.
Members voiced significant concern that this policy places disproportionate impact on farmland, with the risk that repeated overtopping could adversely affect agricultural productivity and land value. It was emphasised that the Board has consistently sought parity between the protection of agricultural land and residential property; however, it was felt that the EA's current approach undermines these efforts. It was further noted that the precise identification of low points remains uncertain, with historical interventions elsewhere having failed to demonstrate expected overtopping behaviour, suggesting that the system is not fully understood.

Officers confirmed that the Board has made repeated representations to the EA regarding this issue, both independently and alongside affected landowners, but that progress has been limited. It was acknowledged that the EA's position is largely constrained by policy, guidance, and legal advice, and that their ability to undertake enhancements is therefore restricted.

The possibility of undertaking independent surveying, including the use of modern technologies such as drones and remote sensing, was raised as a means of identifying critical levels and improving understanding of the system. However, it was concluded that while such data may provide additional insight, it would have limited practical value given that the Board does not have jurisdiction over the watercourse or the bank in question and therefore cannot act unilaterally. Resources were considered better directed toward the Board's own assets and responsibilities.

A further query was raised regarding the potential for landowners to undertake their own mitigation measures; however, it was noted that such matters would require careful consideration and should not be discussed in an open forum.

2619 Report on Rainfall - Agenda Item 8

The rainfall figures at Black Hole Drove were circulated. The Committee RESOLVED that this report be noted.

2620 Any Other Business - Agenda Item 9

The Chairperson queried the scheduling of the Southern and Northern Works Tours and why the usual arrangement, whereby the Southern and Northern Works Tours alternate their timing within the year, had not been followed. It was noted that, traditionally, one tour is scheduled earlier in the year whilst the other takes place later, typically in more favourable weather conditions.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 15:06

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

M I N U T E S

of the proceedings of a Meeting of the
Northern Works Committee

held at the Offices of the Board on the
12th May 2026 at 2pm

Members

Chairperson - * Mr M Rollinson

*Mr T Ashton	*Mr P Holmes
*Mr M Leggott	*Mr P Robinson
Mr R Needham	*Cllr P Bedford
*Cllr R Austin	*Cllr C Rylott
*Cllr D Scoot	Cllr S Welberry
Cllr N Drayton	*Cllr J Cantwell
*Cllr R Pryke	*Cllr S Evans
*Cllr A Hagues	*Mr D Casswell
*Mr J Pocklington	Mr R Welberry
Mr J Emerson	*Mr M Brookes
*Mr S Pugh	*Mr Joshua Casswell
Mr B Hammond	Mr C Wray
	(* Member Present)

In attendance: Mr D Withnall (Chief Executive)
Mr P Nicholson (Projects Director)
Mrs A Chamberlain (Finance & Admin Director)

2701 Recording the Meeting - Agenda Item 1

Members were informed that the meeting would be recorded.

2702 Apologies for absence - Agenda Item 2

Apologies for absence were received from Mr C Wray, Mr J Emerson, Mr B Hammond, Mr R Welberry, Cllr S Welberry, Cllr N Drayton & Mr S Harrison.
Mr R Needham and Mr K C Casswell attended the tour only.
Cllr D Scoot & Cllr A Hagues only attended the meeting.

2703 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3

There were no declarations of interest.

2704 Minutes of the last meeting - Agenda Item 4

The Minutes of the Joint Works Committee, which was held on 7th October 2025, copies of which had been circulated, were considered. It was AGREED that the Minutes should be signed as a true record.

2705 Matters Arising - Agenda Item 5

There were no matters arising.

2706 Discuss the Operations Report and Inspection - Agenda Item 6

The committee visited the following sites, with discussion as follows.

(a) Trinity College Pumping Station

Site visit: The visit began with a guided walk around the perimeter of the site, during which it was explained that the current access arrangements, comprising temporary stone trackways, culverts, and working platforms, form part of enabling works installed to facilitate contractor access. These temporary measures will be removed upon completion of the permanent works.

Reference was made to supporting documentation illustrating historic flow paths and seepage routes around the pumping station structure. It was noted that these issues are not unique to Trinity College Pumping Station but are also present, to varying degrees, at Ewerby, South Kyme, and Damford, with South Kyme identified as the most severely affected. The principal engineering solution involves the removal of existing flood walls, which were historically constructed without adequate foundations, and their replacement with sheet piling installed to depths of approximately 6 to 6.5 metres, tied together with a reinforced concrete capping beam. This approach is intended to address long-term structural movement and significantly reduce seepage risk.

In conjunction with the piling works, ground improvement measures have been implemented through resin injection to stabilise the surrounding soils and fill subsurface voids. This technique, which is particularly effective in granular soils such as those found at the site, creates an expanded matrix within the ground that limits water migration. It was noted that piling operations disturb treated ground, and therefore a further phase of resin injection will be undertaken following pile installation to ensure continued integrity in critical areas.

Progress on one section of the site was reported to be temporarily constrained due to an existing underground electricity supply cable crossing the proposed alignment of the sheet piles. Arrangements have been made with the Distribution Network Operator to divert this cable, enabling completion of the remaining piling works. Once this activity is complete, temporary works will be removed, and the site profile restored to its final level.

Particular emphasis was placed on managing the interface between the pumping station structure and surrounding flood defence works, which is typically a key point of failure for seepage. To mitigate this, a reinforced concrete connection detail will be constructed at the junction between the piling and the existing building. This will incorporate a hydrophilic sealing strip that expands upon contact with water to form a watertight barrier. The connection will also be structurally reinforced with dowel bars drilled into the existing structure, ensuring that the new works and the original building act as a unified system.

Prior to these interventions, voids around the structure were filled with cementitious grout, with approximately 1.8 cubic metres used at Trinity College Pumping Station, compared to significantly higher volumes at South Kyme, reflecting the severity of voiding at that site.

(b) Heckington Fen Pumping Station

Site visit: The committee reviewed the mechanical and electrical components of the pumping station. Concerns were noted regarding the age and condition of certain assets, including the transformer and electrical supply infrastructure. Internally, the pump system was explained, highlighting the role of the motor, shaft, and impeller configuration. It was identified that wear within the rubber couplings connecting sections of the pump shaft has resulted in operational play, and these components are scheduled for replacement. This work is considered a relatively low-cost maintenance activity, estimated at approximately £5,000, with the majority of costs associated with labour and lifting operations.

Wider asset management strategy was also discussed, particularly in relation to planned refurbishment works at other sites. Projects at Chain Bridge and Donington are currently at tender stage, with contract awards anticipated shortly. These schemes, each valued in excess of £2 million, involve comprehensive upgrades to pumping equipment, electrical systems, and supporting infrastructure, with the objective of extending operational life by approximately 20 years. The long-term strategy is to adopt a comprehensive refurbishment approach across all stations.

Environmental compliance requirements were a significant focus of discussion. It was noted that updated regulations require the installation of “less damaging” pumps to reduce impacts on fish and eel populations. While full compliance through fish-friendly systems is not always achievable in retrofit scenarios, improvements such as variable speed drives, pump design modifications, and adjustments to siphon breakers are being implemented where feasible. Existing exemptions relating to screening requirements will continue but are expected to align with refurbishment timelines, thereby increasing delivery pressure. It was acknowledged that the cost of implementing such measures is substantial, and external funding, particularly through Flood Defence Grant-in-Aid, will be essential.

The discussion also included consideration of eel passage and ecological enhancements, which will be assessed on a site-by-site basis across the affected pumping stations, depending on catchment suitability and habitat conditions. Monitoring and research activities, including studies of fish behaviour around pumping stations, were noted as informing ongoing decision-making.

Operational considerations such as the installation and use of weed screen cleaners were also reviewed. While automated systems are desirable, factors such as accessibility, maintenance requirements, reliability, and cost mean that implementation will be prioritised and phased. It was noted that although automation can reduce routine manual intervention, equipment failure can result in significant operational challenges, requiring manual clearance by site teams.

(c) Ewerby Pumping Station

Site Visit: The committee reviewed ongoing works and reflected on conditions observed during the previous visit to Trinity College Pumping Station. It was noted that, while Ewerby had experienced significant seepage issues, it was not considered the most severe site, with South Kyme identified as the worst affected based on visible flow paths and structural impact. However, historical observations at Ewerby highlighted serious concerns, particularly where high water levels resulted in rapid flow around the station, ultimately forcing a void beneath the existing concrete flood wall and through the embankment.

Attendees were reminded that during previous high-water events, seepage at Ewerby had manifested through multiple routes, including a notable flow path where water bubbled up through the embankment before returning to the drainage channel. These issues were attributed to weaknesses at structural interfaces and potential voids beneath concrete slabs. It was confirmed that remedial works had been undertaken, including the removal of an existing concrete slab and the application of resin injection along the affected side of the structure. On the far side of the station, away from the door, a substantial void had previously been identified and required filling with pumped grout prior to resin treatment.

It was explained that works will be completed by reinstating the slab once remaining activities on adjacent areas are finalised. The group then moved to review piling works on the opposite side of the structure, where it was demonstrated how sheet piling has been installed and prepared for a reinforced concrete capping beam. The piling operation was undertaken using a piling rig operating from a temporary piling mat, with piles vibrated into position. Approximately 43 piles have been installed at this location. Attendees observed the formwork and shuttering system, which is supported by brackets fixed to the piles, enabling the casting of the capping beam without extensive additional groundwork.

Further explanation was provided regarding the ground treatment process, including the use of cementitious grout, typically mixed at a ratio of approximately 6 to 1, which is pumped into voids with venting arrangements to confirm full fill. Following this, resin injection is applied to penetrate surrounding soils and provide additional stabilisation. It was noted that the resin expands significantly, up to 17 to 20 times its original volume, particularly when it comes into contact with moisture, forming a dense, foam-like structure within the soil matrix. This process enhances ground stability and reduces permeability, although visible expansion at the surface is more pronounced where the material is unconfined.

The construction of the concrete capping beam was described as the next key stage, with shuttering in place to encase the piles and form a continuous reinforced structure. It was confirmed that the new wall will be set at a slightly higher level than the previous structure, although this required agreement with the Environment Agency, who generally discourage raising defences due to the risk of transferring flooding elsewhere. It was also noted that the alignment of the new wall has been adjusted slightly to ensure it is tied into the main structure of the pumping station rather than an annex, improving overall structural integrity and eliminating potential weak points where seepage could occur.

The works were described as a long-term solution, expected to significantly outperform the original construction from the late 1950s. It was noted that similar issues have arisen across multiple stations constructed during this period, including Trinity College, South Kyme, and Damford, suggesting common design or construction limitations of that era. By contrast, the current approach incorporates modern engineering practices, including deeper foundations, improved materials, and integrated structural connections, which should provide resilience for several decades.

Discussion also referenced the specific case of Damford Pumping Station, where seepage issues were confined to the embankment rather than the structure itself, allowing a more straightforward solution involving piling within the existing bank. This highlighted the need for tailored interventions depending on site conditions, despite common underlying causes.

Operational considerations were also discussed, including watercourse maintenance responsibilities, with confirmation that maintenance activities are undertaken on the main river between August and January, on behalf of the Environment Agency and include vegetation management. While environmental considerations require the retention of marginal vegetation, such as reed fringes, the main body of vegetation is removed to maintain conveyance. It was noted that these practices balance flood risk management with ecological enhancement.

The discussion also touched on historical context, noting that many of the pumping stations were designed and constructed during a period when agricultural productivity was prioritised, resulting in simpler design standards compared to modern requirements. It was acknowledged that current design approaches now require a more complex balance between flood protection, environmental regulation, and sustainability considerations.

Discussion continued at the meeting, as follows*:*

The Projects Director opened the discussion by highlighting the value of visiting operational and construction sites, noting that while Trinity College was not fully operational during the visit, the presence of ongoing works provided useful context. He emphasised that the tour enabled members to better understand both the temporary works required to access sites and the engineering processes involved, thereby providing greater clarity on the overall costs associated with delivering such schemes. It was noted that, once completed, visible works at each site would largely comprise concrete capping beams on either side of the pumping stations, with much of the complexity arising from groundwork and access arrangements rather than the final structure.

Reference was made to documentation provided within the meeting papers, particularly pages 12 to 15, which illustrated the extent of seepage and structural issues at Trinity College and other affected stations. The Committee discussed how visible surface flow paths represent only part of the problem, with unknown but potentially significant subsurface impacts. The Projects Director reiterated concerns observed at Ewerby and South Kyme, where high water pressure had previously forced the creation of voids beneath flood walls, resulting in holes within the embankment.

It was acknowledged that once water establishes a flow path, erosion accelerates, increasing the likelihood of eventual structural failure. This risk had driven the Board's decision to intervene, recognising that failure to act could have resulted in catastrophic consequences for flood defence infrastructure.

The Committee was reminded that securing funding for the works had been a significant challenge. Initial efforts to obtain Grant-in-Aid funding were unsuccessful, however the project was ultimately made viable through the IDB Recovery Fund. It was noted that early estimates obtained through a framework contractor had indicated a cost of approximately £7.5 million across the four sites, whereas the current programme is being delivered for approximately £1.7 million. This substantial cost reduction was recognised as representing significant value for the public purse, particularly given that the funding is publicly sourced. The works are being delivered by two contractors, with Damford completed under a standalone tender and the remaining sites delivered by Jacksons.

An update on programme delivery confirmed that works remain underway, with Ewerby expected to be largely complete once capping beam concreting is finalised, after which temporary works will be removed and the site reinstated. However, concerns were raised regarding the approach to resource allocation, with one team operating sequentially across multiple sites. While this reflects a staged delivery model, the Projects Director questioned whether this approach was the most efficient, particularly in light of earlier delays caused by weather, land access issues, and coordination challenges. Members were informed that additional resource deployment had been suggested to maintain programme timelines.

Specific concern was raised regarding delays in the diversion of an electrical supply cable at Trinity College, which had been identified as a constraint as early as August of the previous year. Despite early discussions involving National Grid and the contractor, the cable had not yet been relocated, leading to programme delays. Responsibility for this issue was attributed to shortcomings in contractor liaison with National Grid, and it was confirmed that further monitoring of this risk would be required.

The Committee discussed contractual safeguards, with confirmation that the works are subject to a fit-for-purpose requirement, meaning that any failure to address seepage during future high-water events would require remedial action by the contractor. It was further clarified that works are being carried out in accordance with detailed designs prepared by engineering consultants, Stantec, who are also providing oversight through site supervision. Any proposed changes to design are subject to formal review and approval processes, ensuring quality and compliance.

Attention was also given to programme deadlines, with the target completion date confirmed as 31 March 2026. During discussion on contractual provisions, it was noted that payments are linked to completion, providing a degree of financial control over delivery. Delays were partly attributed by the contractor to issues relating to land access, however members disputed this claim, noting that appropriate engagement, by the contractor, with landowners had not taken place in some instances.

Members reflected on whether the scheme represented value for money, particularly given the relatively simple appearance of the works when viewed on site. The Chief Executive and other members clarified that, while the engineering may appear straightforward, the depth of piling, ground treatment requirements, structural integration, and access logistics contribute significant complexity and cost. The reduction from initial estimates was highlighted as a key indicator of improved value compared to earlier procurement routes.

The importance of the scheme was emphasised in the context of flood risk management, with members noting that affected stations had been close to failure during previous storm events. It was agreed that the investment was necessary to avoid far greater financial and environmental consequences, including uncontrolled flooding and inefficient pumping operations. The Chief Executive expressed confidence that the works, once complete, would provide a long-term solution, potentially extending the operational life of the assets by several decades.

Looking ahead, the Chief Executive raised concerns regarding other pumping stations constructed during the 1960s, which may share similar vulnerabilities. It was noted that approximately 20 to 25 additional stations could require future assessment and potential intervention. Members agreed that the current programme provides a useful model for addressing such risks in a proactive manner.

The discussion broadened to consider increasing environmental and operational pressures, including a notable rise in the frequency and intensity of storm events. It was reported that six emergency events had occurred within a single recent winter period, compared to fewer than ten events over the previous 16 years combined. Members attributed this change to evolving weather patterns, increased runoff from development, and saturated ground conditions, which collectively lead to faster system response and heightened flood risk.

It was further noted that modern conditions differ significantly from historical operating environments, with increased hard surfacing resulting in more rapid runoff into the drainage system. This reinforces the importance of maintaining resilient infrastructure and highlights the growing role of the Board in flood risk management. Members agreed that the value and importance of Internal Drainage Boards has increased significantly in recent years.

The Chairperson concluded the discussion by noting general confidence in the quality and robustness of the works observed during the tour, and the importance of completing the programme ahead of future flood events. Members agreed that the site visits had provided valuable insight into both the engineering challenges and strategic importance of the works.

2481 Receive the Engineer's Report - Agenda Item 7

Capital Asset improvements

2026/27 Defra/EA Funded Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Grant in Aid (GiA) Schemes

(i) Wyberton Chain Bridge Pumping Station Refurbishment - Estimate £2,758,848 Includes 60% OB (£802,188)

The Projects Director further updated the Committee on additional capital schemes referenced earlier in the day, specifically the refurbishment works planned at Donington Northings and Chain Bridge Pumping Stations, both located within the Southern Works area. These projects form part of the Board's wider programme of major asset improvements, with indicative scheme values outlined in the meeting papers. It was noted that all major capital schemes include a significant contingency allowance, reflecting the inherent uncertainties associated with engineering works, particularly where ground conditions, existing infrastructure, and operational constraints may present unforeseen challenges. This contingency ensures that sufficient funding is available to address issues should they arise without compromising delivery.

The Committee was informed that tendering for these refurbishment works has progressed, with submissions received and currently under evaluation. The procurement process is being managed through the SCAPE framework, with Stantec providing professional support in overseeing the tender assessment. It is anticipated that a preferred contractor will be appointed following evaluation, enabling the works to proceed in accordance with programme requirements.

Delivery of the refurbishment works is currently scheduled for summer 2027, with the timing driven by two primary considerations. Firstly, it was emphasised that decommissioning pumping assets during the winter period presents an unacceptable operational risk, given the increased likelihood of high flow and flood events. Secondly, it was highlighted that there are significant lead-in times associated with the procurement and manufacture of pump units, particularly where specification decisions must be finalised prior to order. These factors combined necessitate careful programme planning to align procurement, installation, and operational requirements.

During discussion, clarification was sought by the Chief Executive regarding the reference to "60% OB" within the project cost estimates. The Projects Director confirmed that this refers to Optimism Bias, a standard allowance applied to infrastructure projects to account for the tendency of early cost estimates to underestimate true delivery costs. It was explained that an optimism bias of approximately 60% is typically applied at early stages of project development, although this may be adjusted depending on the complexity and level of design certainty associated with each scheme.

(ii) Cooks Lock Pumping Station Structural repairs – Estimate £215,000

Following inspections by the engineering consultants, this pumping station is undertaking structural repairs to shot blast and paint the exposed steel and replace excessively corroded stanchion supports. A new access door from the weedscreen deck has been installed by the Board.

(iii) Great Hale Fen Pumping Station Structural repairs – Estimate £432,000

Following inspections by the engineering consultants, this pumping station is undertaking structural repairs to shot blast and paint the exposed steel and replace excessively corroded stanchion supports. A new access door from the weedscreen deck has been installed by the Board

(iv) Swineshead Pumping Station replacement - £1,000,000 – Current allocation received – study £500,000

The Committee continued discussion with a focus on Swineshead Pumping Station, where concerns were raised regarding the condition of the existing structure and the anticipated timeframe for delivering a permanent solution. A member proposed that, given the likely lead-in time for a full replacement scheme, consideration should be given to appointing a structural or mechanical engineer to assess the feasibility of implementing temporary stabilisation measures, such as structural props or steel supports, to maintain the integrity of the building in the interim. It was emphasised that there is a responsibility to take reasonable preventative action to mitigate the risk of structural failure, particularly given the potential consequences for landowners and the wider catchment.

The Projects Director acknowledged these concerns and confirmed that delivering a new pumping station from initial approval through to commissioning could take approximately four years, during which time the existing asset would remain in operation. While the station is currently still functional, albeit not operating at full duty capacity, it continues to play a role during flood events. It was noted that upstream and downstream stations, including Donington Northings and Wyberton Chain Bridge, may provide some level of operational support; however, their ability to compensate is limited, particularly during peak event conditions when each station is required to operate at full capacity within its own catchment. The Projects Director agreed that exploring interim mitigation measures would be appropriate, and further discussions with the proposing member were supported.

Further discussion addressed funding arrangements associated with the Swineshead project. It was confirmed that, in the absence of confirmed Grant-in-Aid funding, initial feasibility work has been supported through the reallocation of funds originally intended for Gosberton Fen Pumping Station. This decision was taken on the basis that progressing Swineshead was considered a higher priority due to its current condition.

The reallocated funding has enabled early-stage feasibility work, including site assessments by engineering consultants and initial considerations regarding location, hydraulic requirements, and pump specification.

The Projects Director explained that the development of a new pumping station scheme requires a staged approach, beginning with feasibility analysis to determine site constraints, hydraulic head requirements, and appropriate pump selection. These factors directly influence the design, layout, and overall cost of the scheme. Based on benchmarking against comparable projects undertaken by other Internal Drainage Boards, it is currently estimated that the cost of delivering a new pumping station at Swineshead could be in the order of £10 -15 million.

The Chief Executive provided additional context, noting that the Board's Officers are in the process of finalising a comprehensive long-term investment plan covering all pumping stations within the network. This review has assessed each station based on structural condition, operational requirements, and compliance with fish and eel regulations. A prioritised programme of works has been developed, which will be presented to the Executive Committee in June, outlining proposed refurbishment and replacement strategies. It was noted that this may require reprioritisation of previously planned works, including those at Gosberton, to ensure that resources are directed to the highest-risk assets.

The Projects Director further reflected on the Board's evolving approach to capital investment, noting that historically, smaller grant-funded interventions were pursued opportunistically. However, changes in funding frameworks and operational requirements now necessitate a more strategic and comprehensive approach to asset management. This includes aligning structural refurbishment programmes with environmental compliance obligations, particularly in relation to fish and eel passage requirements, and ensuring that investments deliver long-term resilience.

It was recognised that the scale of the programme presents a significant challenge. With approximately 34 pumping stations within the Board's portfolio, and multiple sites requiring substantial intervention, a structured delivery approach is required. The Projects Director outlined a proposed delivery model whereby schemes would progress through a three-year cycle, comprising feasibility and option development, detailed design, and construction. Assuming delivery of approximately two major schemes per year, it was acknowledged that it will take a considerable number of years to address all assets across the network.

The Chairperson noted that this programme represents a continually evolving asset management challenge, given the age profile of existing infrastructure, with many stations dating back to the 1950s and 1960s. The Projects Director reinforced that, while existing infrastructure can often be refurbished to extend operational life, there are inherent limitations in retrofitting modern standards to legacy civil structures.

As such, while refurbishments can achieve significant improvements, they may not fully meet all current design and environmental requirements, particularly where full replacement is not viable.

The Committee noted the update and acknowledged the need for a balanced, long-term approach to asset investment, incorporating risk management, regulatory compliance, and financial planning to ensure the continued resilience of the Board's infrastructure.

(v) Holland Fen Pumping Station Structural Repairs – Estimate £492,000

Following structural inspections by the engineering consultants the recommendations were to shot blast and paint the exposed steel, which has been completed.

(vi) Wyberton Marsh Pumping Station Structural Repairs

Following structural inspections by the engineering consultants the recommendations were to shot blast and paint the exposed steel, which has been completed. A new access door from the weedscreen deck has been installed by the Board.

(vii) Black Sluice Catchment Strategy

The Inception Study is currently being completed.

(viii) Cooks Lock Pumping Station new transformer – Estimate £55,000

The new transformer is now part of a bigger scheme of refurbishment for this site which is in its final stages. The proposal is to replace all HV transformers that are currently owned by the Board, with new ones. This will hand over the future responsibility and maintenance to National Grid which is beneficial to them as at certain sites they will have a power supply to tap into.

IDB Recovery Fund Works

Attention was then drawn to pages 26 and 27, which outline the status of projects funded through the IDB Fund programme. It was reported that a number of schemes have now been completed, while others remain in progress across the Board's area.

Particular reference was made to the embankment improvement works across three sites, with the total value of these projects noted as being in excess of £1.5 million. The Committee was informed that completed works, including those at Damford Grounds PS, had been delivered under budget, with expenditure of approximately £72,000 against an approved allocation of £105,000. This was acknowledged as a positive outcome and reflective of effective project delivery and cost control.

The Chairperson invited any further questions from members, and with none raised, it was confirmed that the Committee was satisfied with the update provided.

2708 Report on Rainfall - Agenda Item 8

The rainfall figures at Swineshead were circulated. The Committee RESOLVED that this report be noted.

2709 Any Other Business – Agenda Item 9

Cllr S Evans highlighted this was his first inspection tour which he found very interesting and educational.

There being no further business and the meeting closed at **14:40**.

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

JOINT WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING - 06 OCTOBER 2026

AGENDA ITEM 8(a)

Update on IDB Recovery Fund Finances & Delivery

Tranche 1

(a) Helpringham Fen Pumping Station Pump Refurbishment - £219,709

£12,329 brought forward with commitments to completion of £16,194 expecting an overspend of £3,865.

This funding was achieved to replace the original pump electric motor to improve reliability and efficiency, along with a variable speed drive(VSD), and new Motor Control Centre(MCC). The pump motor, VSD, MCC have all been purchased. As discussed at previous meetings there have been some technical issues that National Grid Energy Distribution(NGED) have required confirmation on which has taken some time to clarify from our suppliers. A new upgraded electrical connection to this site is required has been paid for and due to the location of the supply are now waiting for NGED to complete a wayleave on adjacent land prior to a completion date.
It has now been confirmed by NGED that they have other works that require completion on their network, therefore a generator will be provided on site by NGED whilst supply changes are completed.
The new MCC, VSD and pump motor upgrade works will be completed after the electricity upgrade supply changes, have been completed by NGED.

(b) South Kyme Fen Pumping Station Pump Refurbishment – £289,709

£16,200 brought forward with commitments to completion of £25,345 expecting an overspend of £9,145.

The electricity supply change upgrades along with the new MCC, VSD,s and two new pump motors at this station have been completed.

(c) Ewerby Fen Pumping Station Pumping Refurbishment - £419,709

£44,000 brought forward for the refurbishment of the road as required.

The electricity supply change upgrades along with the new MCC, VSD,s and two new pump motors at this station have been completed.

(d) Dunsby Fen Pumping Station Refurbishment - £204,709

£12,600 brought forward with commitments to completion of £23,150 expecting an overspend of £10,550.

The electricity supply change upgrades along with the new MCC, VSD,s and two new pump motors at this station have been completed.

(e) Pinchbeck North Fen Pumping Station Refurbishment - £164,000

£89,865 brought forward with the full amount expecting to be spent.

This is a single pump station as with Helpringham Fen PS a wayleave is required, which at the time of writing this report is waiting for a signature.

Tranche 2a

(f) Damford PS Refurbishment - £155,000

£47,075 was brought forward in to 2026/27 with only £194 being spent as the project was substantially completed in 2025/26. The total underspend is £46,881.

This work was completed prior to the claim being submitted in 2025/26.

Tranche 2b

(g) Embankment Projects Ewerby Fen, South Kyme and Trinity College £1,555,000

This project continued to run into 2026/27 due to unavoidable delays. The figure brought forward was £328,952 with commitments to completion of £748,717. This £419,765 overspend detail has been reported to the Executive Committee and a summary will be presented to this committee later in the Agenda.

At these 3 sites the original application was based upon a high level estimate of £1,000,000 per site from the engineering consultants commissioned by the Board to provide a design to go out to tender. As the design was developed, and tenders received the request for funding and achieved is now £1,555,000. An approved contractor has been agreed, contracts almost finalised, works to be completed by March 2026.

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

JOINT WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING – 06 OCTOBER 2026

AGENDA ITEM 8(b)

Update on Grant Schemes

(a) Allan House PS outfall repair - £1,077,033

£307,721 of grant was brought forward into 2026/27, but only £70,383 of this is expected to be spent. The balnce to be returned to the EA when all costs have been identified.

This scheme is to locate the line of the pipe outfall from the pump chamber in Asda car park at Boston through to the outfall, and complete replacement of failed last section of pipeline.

Four new manhole chambers have been constructed to enable access into the outfall pipe for CCTV condition surveys to be completed.

Works will also include alterations to the existing PS building to replace and raise the MCC for resilience. To enable the electricity supply change for this site a wayleave is required by National Grid from ASDA, which at the time of writing this report has yet to be completed.

(b) Black Sluice Catchment Study - £385,000

£84,283 was brought forward into 2026/27. We are currently waiting the report from Stantec before any further work is undertaken. There is currently £79,986 uncommitted.

A high-level model to give a strategic overview of the whole system which will provide the Board with priority areas to focus future studies and investments. The study will need to consider assessing the following areas:

- Pump efficiency – current vs alternative rules, this will enable a ranking of the pumps by the scale of the opportunity.
- Pump running costs
- Catchment combination/pumping station decommissioning
- Flood risk & future flood risk
- High level assessment of benefits available within the catchment

The Inception Study is currently being completed.

The total FCERM GiA currently applied for to complete this scheme is £385,000.

Currently the existing catchment is being modelled based upon a division into 12 catchments, results expected in March 2026

(c) Wyberton Marsh Pumping Station New Transformer – Estimate £167,000

£79,405 brought forward with commitments to completion of £75,896 expecting an underspend of £3,509.

A condition survey of the Boards 9 transformers has identified that some are at end of life and require replacement.

This transformer at this site is 18 years older than its design life.
A Low Voltage supply has also been requested as this would prove a more cost-effective proposal option for funding at this particular site and also would not require replacement as would the transformer at the end of its operational life.

This has been agreed with National Grid Energy Distribution(NGED).

NGED have requested additional space to place their equipment, causing a delay to installation as land purchase is required from the adjacent landowner.

The land has been purchased and all legals are in place, and an installation commencement date of 23/11/2026 provided by NGED

(d) Swineshead Pumping Station replacement - £10m – £20m

£127,788 brought forward and another £355,000 available to claim this year for this multi year project. It is expected that this years allocation will not be required and there could be C£32k to carry forward to next year.

Stantec commissioned and completing a feasibility study to determine the type of pumps that could be used, when complete this will influence the design of the new Pumping Station.

(e) Holland Fen Pumping Station Structural repairs - £896,000

£355,364 brought forward with commitments to completion of £45,622 expecting an underspend of £309,742, to be returned to the EA when all costs have been identified.

The original scheme estimate allowed for structural inspections to be undertaken by lowering water levels and isolating sections of the watercourse through temporary damming. However, the survey specification was subsequently revised, and a specialist dive team was commissioned to carry out the inspections in situ. The resulting survey report identified some corrosion-related reduction in steel pile thickness within both the intake and outfall chambers. Whilst deterioration was noted, the findings concluded that the extent of corrosion is not currently significant enough to warrant remedial intervention.

(f) Great Hale Fen Pumping Station Structural repairs - £795,000

£281,954 brought forward with minimal commitments this year, there in another £792,000 that can be claimed in the current financial year, but due to delays in Stantec providing the specification to be able to go out to tender, construction of a new concrete slab is likely to be delayed until 2027/28 and the funds will only be claimed in the financial year they are required.

The HV supply to this site is to be changed to LV, the new connection offer from NGED has been agreed and the works have been programmed in for November 2026

(g) Horbling Fen Pumping Station Structural repairs - £150,000

£59,577 brought forward with commitments to completion of £20,361 expecting an underspend of £39,216, to be returned to the EA when all costs have been identified.

(h) Cooks Lock Pumping Station Structural repairs - £506,000

£47,568 brought forward with an additional £65,000 available to claim this year and it is expected that the full amount available will be claimed and spent in the current financial year to complete this project.

(i) Gosberton Fen Pumping Station Structural repairs - £325,000

£77,143 brought forward with commitments to completion of £43,699 expecting an underspend of £33,444, to be returned to the EA when all costs have been identified.

(j) Donington Northings Pumping Station Structural repairs

This Scheme has been converted into a Major Refurbishment Scheme detailed below.

(k) Chain Bridge Pumping Station Structural repairs

This Scheme has been converted into a Major Refurbishment Scheme detailed below.

(l) Blackhole Drove Pumping Station Structural repairs - £50,000

£45,168 brought forward with another £120,000 available to claim in 2026/27.

(m) Wyberton Marsh Pumping Station Scheme - £195,000

£27,540 brought forward with commitments to completion of £474 expecting an underspend of £27,066.

(n) Donington North Ings Pumping Station Major Refurbishment - £2,145,510

£331,459 brought forward with another £1,078,244 available to claim in 2026/27.

After a tender process completed by Stantec, Aquatic Control Engineering(ACE) have been appointed as main contractor for both Donington Northings and Chain Bridge sites. The order for the new pumps at both sites with a lead time of up to 40 weeks was placed in July 2026, with a programmed installation of May 2027

(o) Chain Bridge Pumping Station Major Refurbishment - £2,151,660

£327,898 brought forward with another £922,732 available to claim in 2026/27.

After a tender process completed by Stantec, Aquatic Control Engineering(ACE) have been appointed as main contractor for both Donington Northings and Chain Bridge sites. The order for the new pumps at both sites with a lead time of up to 40 weeks was placed in July 2026, with a programmed installation of May 2027

(p) Bank Refurbishments Specifications

£16,045 brought forward which will be offset against the overspend detailed above.

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

JOINT WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING - 06 OCTOBER 2026

AGENDA ITEM 8(c)

Update on 2026/27 Board Funded Capital Schemes

(a) SFFD Desilting Guthrum to Black hole Drove PS – £105,000
£105,000 brought forward from 2025/26, scheduled to be completed January to March 2027.

This 2500m Board maintained section of the South Forty Foot Drain(SFFD) is programmed to be desilted.

(b) Jetting to Major Pipelines - £50,000
£50,000 included in the 2026/27 budget, programmed to be completed January to March 2027.

The jetting and condition surveying of these pipelines will continue in the catchment area.

(c) North Forty Foot desilting - £80,000
£20,000 brought forward from 2025/26 with an additional £60,000 in the 2026/27 budget. This was due to be completed March/April 2026 but other works were prioritised. This is now programmed for Jan – Mar 2027 to lower water levels and remove silt from this watercourse.

(d) Claydyke Desilting - £130,000
£130,000 in the 2026/27 budget, programmed for Jan – Mar 2027, to lower water levels and remove silt from this watercourse.

(e) Holland Fen Under Pump Inspections - £28,000
£28,000 in the 2026/27 budget to desilt and inspect under Holland Fen Pumping Station to coincide with the desilting of the Claydyke above.

(f) New Access Culverts for alternate bank cutting - £31,750
£31,750 included in the 2026/27 budget to install two new access culverts at Swaton and Gosberton Clough. Total complete cost is £36,893 overspending £5,143.

(g) Graft Drain - £45,000
£45,000 has been included in the 2026/27 budget to complete this long running project with some pipes left to be surveyed and potentially lined.

(h) Depot storage and concrete hardstanding - £100,000
£100,000 was initially included in the 2026/27 budget to concrete the remaining area of the depot to make it useable all year round and to construct some kind of lean to to store the new pumps and diesel bowsers acquired using the IDB Recovery Fund. The concreting alone expended this budget and with the requirement to replace the gate the Executive Committee authorised the extension of the budget to £154,000 for just the concreting and gate replacement.

Over half of the concreting has been completed and the gate has been replaced improving security and complying with all health and safety legislation.

This work will be completed following the cutting season depending on resources available to ensure all our other drain maintenance and scheme works are completed.

(i) General culvert replacement contributions - £5,000
This is a budget allocated towards a benefit contribution from the Board in relation to the Board's use as a crossing point for their maintenance activities, for any culverts that are replaced within the Board's maintained watercourses that are the responsibility of the landowner and enable access to their land.

2026/27 Pumping Station Schemes

(f) Dunsby Fen PS replacement weedscreen cleaner – £150,000

£150,000 was included in the 2026/27 budget to replace the weedscreen cleaner at Dunsby PS which had become unreliable and was deemed to expensive to refurbish. The new weedscreen cleaner is ordered and in construction.

(g) Kirton Marsh Pumping Station replace MCC – £80,000
£56,414 was brought forward for this project, which is expected to be spent. Interlec are currently on site.

The MCC at this station has now been replaced.

(h) Great Hale Fen Pumping Station replace MCC – £85,000
£47,444 was brought forward for this project with £52,300 having been spent with an overspend of £4,856.

The MCC at this station has now been replaced.

(i) Wyberton Marsh Pumping Station Road Refurbishment - £20,000
£20,000 was included in the 2026/27 budget for the road to the pumping station to be refurbished but these costs have now been included in the Major Refurbishment Project.

(j) Horbling Fen Pumping Station Road Refurbishment – £20,000
£20,000 was included in the 2026/27 budget for the road to the pumping station to be refurbished but these works were completed in 2025/26 as part of the structural repairs scheme as improved access was required.

(k) Heckington Fen Pumping Station - Pump Coupling Refurbishment – £5,000
£5,000 was included in the 2026/27 budget. This work has been completed and we are waiting on final costs depending on the level of refurbishment required.

(l) Wyberton Marsh Pumping Station - Pump Coupling Refurbishment – £5,000
£5,000 was included in the 2026/27 budget. This work has been completed and we are waiting on final costs depending on the level of refurbishment required.

Project	B/F Grant	B/F Board	Grant Income 2026/27	Board 2026/27	Spent To Date 2026/27	Remianing to Spend 2026/27	Details	Commited	Remianing to Spend 2026/27
B/F IDB Recovery Fund - Helpringham PS Refurbishment	£12,329				£119	£12,210	£6475 - Interlec £7600 - PSM £500 - Mini digger hire £1500 - Workforce £3865 overspend	£16,075	-£3,865
B/F IDB Recovery Fund - South Kyme PS Refurbishment	£16,200				£19,145	-£2,945	PSM & Telehandler = £6200 Interlec installation???? Overspend	£6,200	-£9,145
B/F IDB Recovery Fund - Ewerby PS Refurbishment	£44,000					£44,000	Underspend = £44,000 was for Roadway		£44,000
B/F IDB Recovery Fund - Dunsby Fen PS Refurbishment	£12,600				£49,330	-£36,730	-£26180 - Dormant pump & Bowser adjusment £10,550 overspend	-£26,180	-£10,550
B/F IDB Recovery Fund - Pinchbeck PS Refurbishment	£89,865				£67,623	£22,242	Waiting National Grid wayleave & EA FRAP Returned £67,623 to IDB fund	£22,242	£0
B/F IDB Recovery Fund Embankments	£328,952				£71,439	£257,513	Final Jackson's Invoice to pay £92594 Retention to be paid £1647 - Booths Crops Loss £2500 - Lentons Access	£677,278	-£419,765
B/F IDB Recovery Fund - Damford PS Refurbishment	£47,075				£194	£46,881	Underspend = £46881		£46,881
B/F B/F Allan House PS Scheme	£307,721				-£44,496	£352,217	£49670 - Perrys Pumps £13474 - Wells raising the roof £1500 - Legals £3235 - Interlec £40,000 - Wells Block & Bollards £7,000 - Kev & Steph time for installation Underspend as not had to line the pipes	£114,879	£ 237,337.88
B/F Black Sluice Catchment Modelling Study	£84,283				£4,297	£79,986	Waiting for final report from Stantec		£79,986
B/F Wyberton Marsh Transformer	£79,405				£15,896	£63,509	Everything in place waiting for install date Interlec - £20k Trenching - £15k Lighting - £5000 Roadway Refurbish - £20k	£60,000	£3,509
B/F Swineshead Structural Repairs	£127,788		£355,000		£1,430	£481,358	Might spend £50k in prep work, £44k owing to Stantec. Waiting for feasibility study from Stantec	£94,000	£387,358
B/F Holland Fen Structural Repairs	£355,364				£5,622	£349,742	£40k - Interlec £294k underspend expected?????	£40,000	£309,742
B/F Great Hale Structural Repairs	£281,954		£792,000		-£45,217	£1,119,171	Concrete Slab to be replaced. Potential delay to 2027/28. waiting on Stantec providing Design by end of October. £19,274 to be paid to Stantec £30,000 Interlec lighting & trenching for National Grid	£49,274	£1,069,897
B/F Horbling Fen Structural Repairs	£59,577				-£317	£59,894	Lighting - £5k £15,678 - Officer time £39,216 underspend	£20,678	£39,216
B/F Cooks Lock Structural Repairs	£47,568		£65,000		£6,898	£105,670	£23,175 in 2025/26 on wrong code Claiming £65k. All allocated	£105,670	£0
B/F Gosberton Structural Repairs	£77,143				£23,021	£54,122	Lighting - £5k £15,678 - Officer time £33,444 underspend	£20,678	£33,444
B/F Black Hole Drove Structural Repairs	£45,168		£120,000		£12,364	£152,804	Divers? £5500	£5,500	£147,304
B/F Wyberton Marsh Structural Repairs	£27,540				£474	£27,066	Underspend = £27066		£27,066
Donington NI PS - Structural Repairs	£331,459		£1,078,244		£181,803	£1,227,900	How much to claim in 2026/27??	£0	£1,227,900
B/F Chain Bridge Refurbishment	£327,898		£922,732		£192,234	£1,058,396	How much to claim in 2026/27??	£0	£1,058,396
B/F South Kyme PS Bank Repair Specification	£9,119					£9,119	Underspend		£9,119
B/F Trinity College PS Bank Repair Specification	£6,926					£6,926	Underspend		£6,926
B/F SFFD Desilting Guthrum to Blackhole Drove PS		£105,000				£105,000	Programmed for Jan - Mar 2027	£105,000	£0
Jetting to major pipelines				£50,000		£50,000	Programmed for Jan - Mar 2027		£50,000
NFF Desilting		£20,000		£60,000		£80,000	Programmed for Jan - Mar 2027		£80,000
Claydyke desilting				£130,000		£130,000	Programmed for Jan - Mar 2027		£130,000
Holland Fen PS under pump inspections				£28,000		£28,000	Programmed for Jan - Mar 2027		£28,000
New Access Culverts (Swaton & Gosberton Clough)				£31,750	£36,893	-£5,143	Overspend		-£5,143
Graft Drain				£45,000		£45,000	Surveys & potential lining		£45,000
Depot storage and concrete hardstanding				£100,000	£60,054	£39,946	Gate = £15,000		£39,946
General culvert replacement contributions				£5,000		£5,000	TBC		£5,000
Dunsby Fen PS replacement weedscreen cleaner				£150,000	£63,448	£86,552			£86,552
B/F Kirton Marsh PS replace MCC		£56,414			£36,776	£19,638	Currently on site - waiting on recharges & Interlec installation costs	£19,638	£0
B/F Great Hale Fen PS replace MCC		£47,444			£52,300	-£4,856	Overspend = £4,856		-£4,856
Wyberton Marsh PS Roadway Refurbishment				£20,000		£20,000	Part of Refurb scheme so underspend		£20,000
Horbling Fen PS Roadway Refurbishment				£20,000		£20,000	Done in 2025/26 so underspend		£20,000
Heckington Fen PS Pump Coupling refurb				£5,000		£5,000	In Progress	£5,000	£0
Wyberton Marsh PS Pump Coupling refurb				£5,000		£5,000	In Progress	£5,000	£0

£2,719,934	**£228,858**	**£3,332,976**	**£649,750**	**£811,330**	**£6,120,188**	**£4,779,256**
£6,931,518						

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

JOINT WORKS COMMITTEE - 06 OCTOBER 2026

AGENDA ITEM 08(e)

MAINTENANCE REPORT

1. Annual Summer Flail mowing/Cutting

The summer flail mowing and cutting programme commenced on 03 August 2026, with three flail mowers and all five excavators beginning work. Works are progressing well due to the favorable weather conditions, earlier crop harvesting, and minimal breakdowns.

To maintain productivity, the Aebi has again been utilized alongside the 19-plate Twiga SPV2s and the new Energreen Alpha, which is performing extremely well. The Hooby has been carrying out flailing and cutting works on its own designated route again this year.

A sixth 13-tonne excavator, operating one of the Board's 4m cutting baskets, has been hired from Pell Plant Hire and will be carrying out work for approximately 16 weeks across the Board's drainage network.

The 67km high-profile watercourses within the Northern and Southern Works areas are being monitored to determine whether a second flail and/or cut is required. At this stage, a number of these watercourses are likely to require a second cut.

Approximately half of the Board's hand-roding programme has now been completed.

The South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) (approximately £28k) hand rodding contract has not been continued this year. A quotation was submitted in April 2026 and, despite follow-up correspondence from both the Maintenance Director and CEO, no response has been received from SKDC regarding the works.

The Board is continuing with its annual maintenance work for the Environment Agency under the Public Sector Cooperation Agreement (PSCA).

Completed cutting and flailing works are shown on the maps further in the report.

2. Prior Notice Given for Summer Cutting

Notice was issued within the 2026/27 Drainage Rates Brochure, together with a provisional works programme, advising landowners and farmers that the weekly updated summer cutting programme can be viewed on the Board's website.

Landowners and farmers were requested to contact the Board regarding any summer cropping issues throughout the cutting season.

3. Summer Crop Loss/Damage Compensation

In line with the summer cutting programme, landowners and farmers are encouraged to permit the Board's machinery to travel through standing crops where practical. Where crop damage or loss occurs, the Board will agree to appropriate compensation. This is often more cost-effective than removing machinery and returning once harvesting has been completed, particularly where a replacement crop may already have been established.

The cutting programme included within the Drainage Rates Brochure, together with updates published on the Board's website, provides landowners adjacent to Board-maintained watercourses with advance notice of the Board's intention to undertake summer vegetation flailing and cutting works, enabling them to manage field operations accordingly.

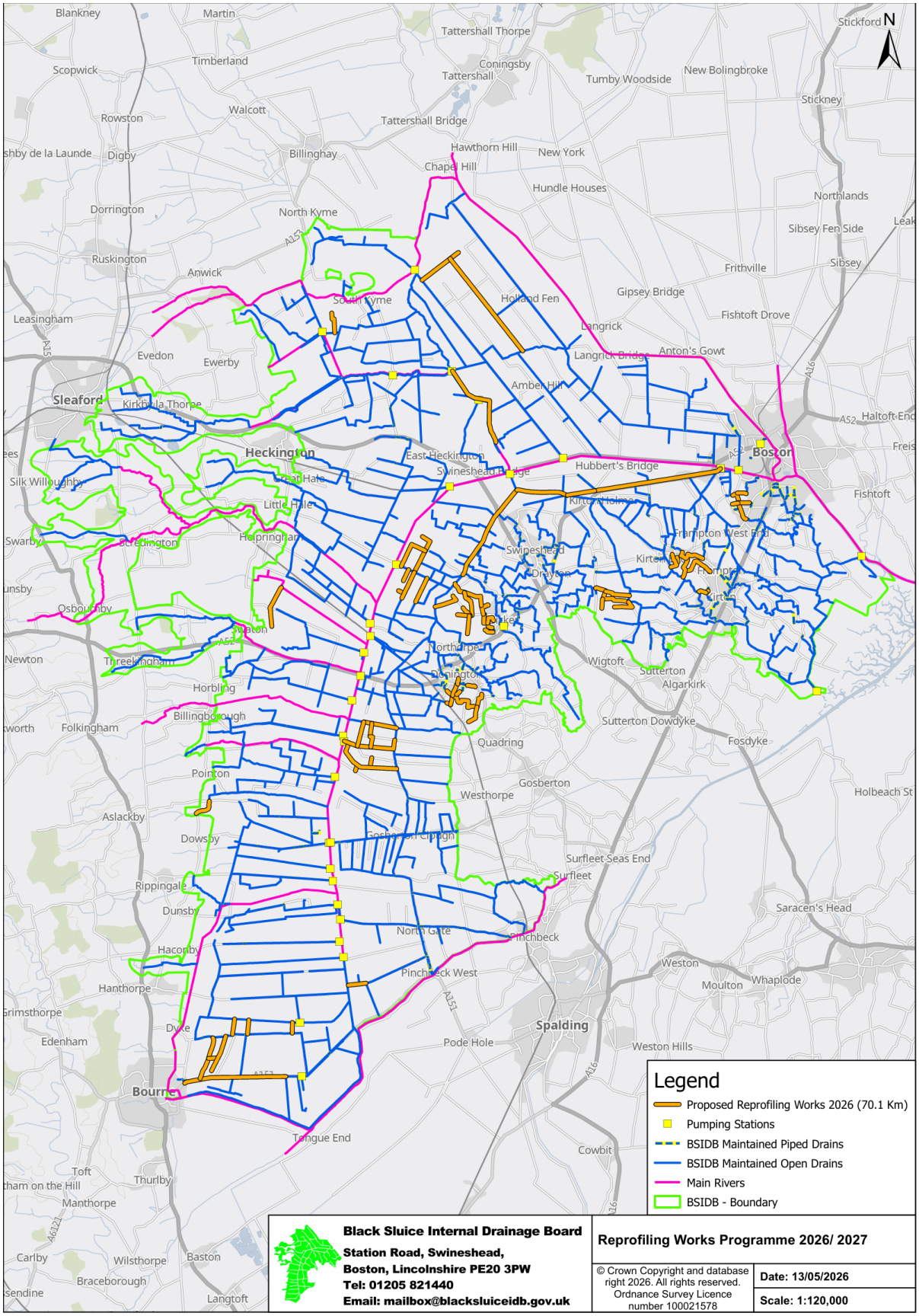
The programme should also assist with the timely removal of any obstructions, including electric fencing, bird scarers, irrigation pumps and pipes.

4. Proposed Desilting, Bushing and Cleansing Works

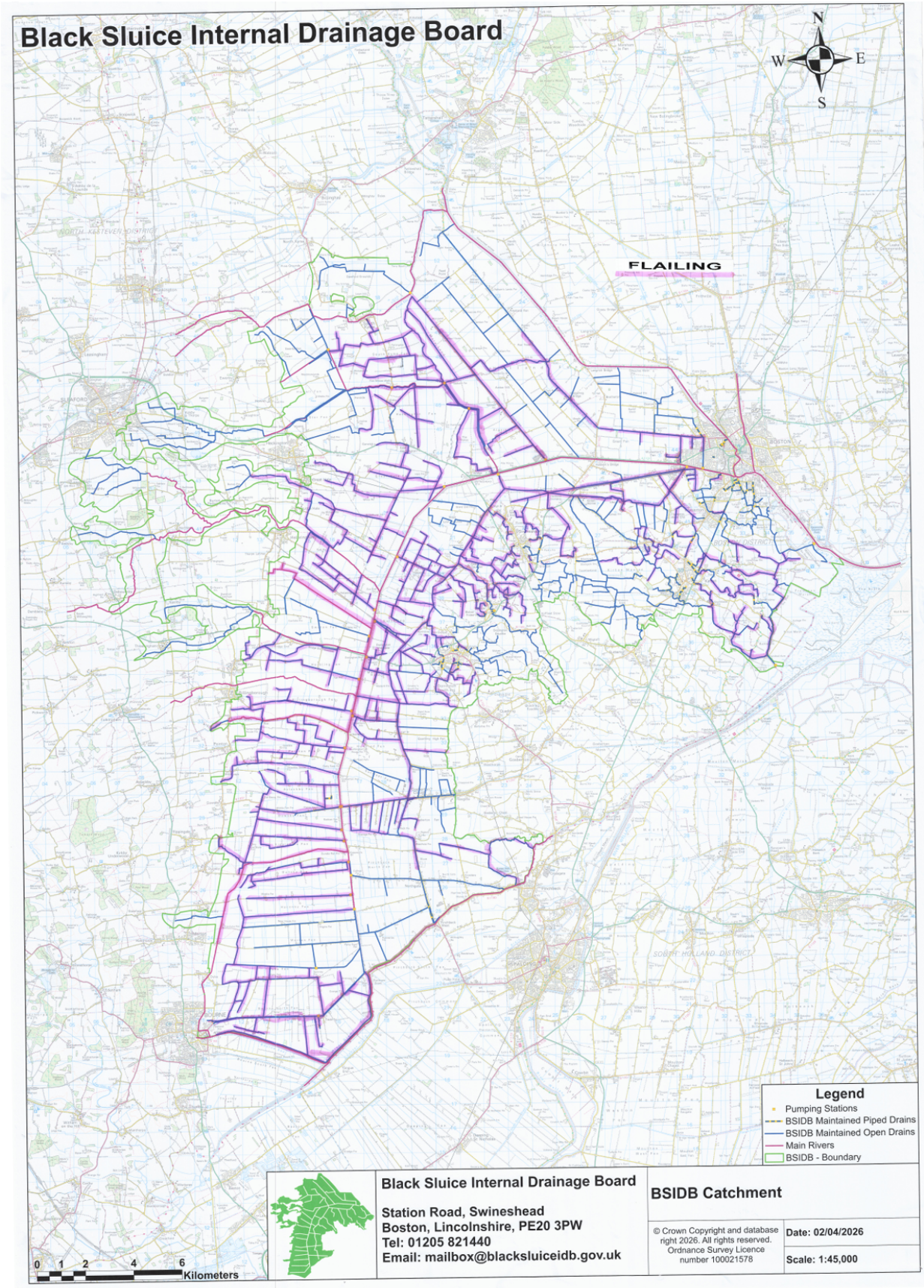
This years proposed works involve the desilting of watercourses and the re-profiling of adjacent banks totalling approximately 70.1KM. Undertaking both activities concurrently provides an efficient and cost-effective approach to maintaining the drainage network.

Over time, Board banks have become steep, uneven, or weakened through erosion, animal activity, weathering and previous maintenance works. Re-profiling restores the bank to the desired design profile, improving long-term stability and reducing the risk of collapse or slippage and providing a safer access for future maintenance works.

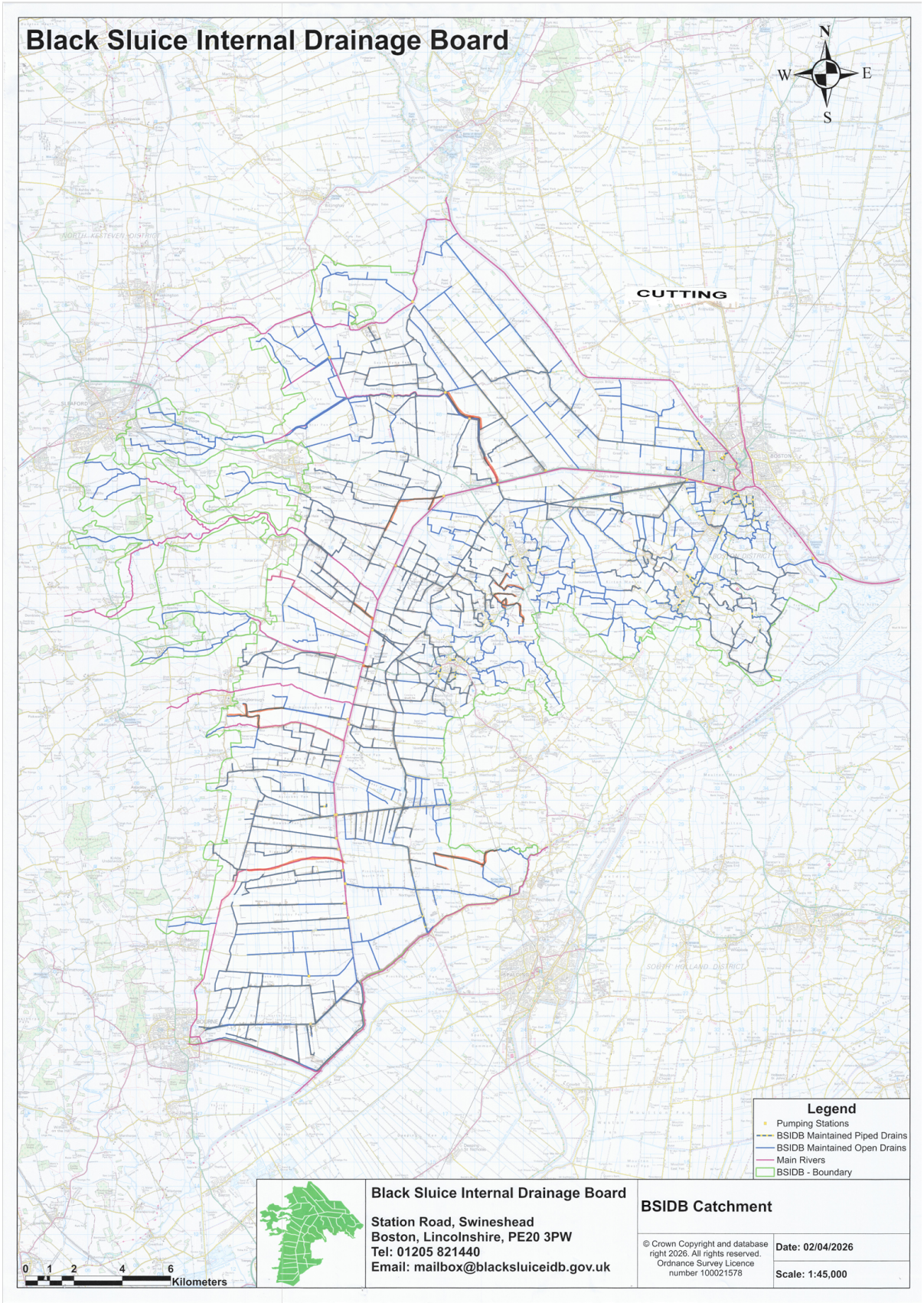
Where appropriate, bushing works will also be undertaken alongside the desilting and reprofiling works to improve access, visibility and future maintenance efficiencies.


N
Legend
Proposed Reprofiling Works 2026 (70.1 Km)
Pumping Stations
BSIDB Maintained Piped Drains
BSIDB Maintained Open Drains
Main Rivers
BSIDB - Boundary
Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board
Station Road, Swineshead,
Boston, Lincolnshire PE20 3PW
Tel: 01205 821440
Email: mailbox@blacksluiceidb.gov.uk
Reprofiling Works Programme 2026/ 2027
© Crown Copyright and database right 2026. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100021578
Date: 13/05/2026
Scale: 1:120,000

Current Completed Flailing



Current Completed Cutting



BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

JOINT WORKS COMMITTEE – 06 OCTOBER 2026

AGENDA ITEM 09

Enforcement Actions – August & September 2026

Eleven Acre Lane – TM site visit 06.08.26 – soil now cleared from drain to allow flow of water. No further action.

Little Hale Solar Farm – site visit following report of excavations in various locations. All found to be to plans but advised 4 piles of soil/stone placed on top of B.S maintained drain which must be removed due to weight & potential damage of bank top.

Bicker Drove – culvert installed by AGR solar farm contractors approx. 1M too high so not fit for purpose. B.S carried out survey to arrive at this calc. TM arranged office meeting w/c 10.08.26 having made site manager aware to discuss removal and re-instatement. Further meeting at B.S office on 25.08.26 with James Riggall (Site Manager) – following meeting, CEO advised James can provide a drawing/plan to cut out bottom of culvert to allow water to flow but it would require signing off by an engineer prior to any agreement or, remove the culvert completely. Await communication with James.

West End Rd, Wyberton – site visit following numerous complaints from residents of vegetation growing over their fences causing damage to fencing etc. Email sent to S.H asking if there is a budget for this to be cleared, flailed and de-silted. Dale happy to pencil work in for approx. Jan 2027 if so. Await response from S.H.

Cavendish Drive, Wyberton (Town Drain) – resident complaining patio and fence collapsing in rear garden due to bank slippage. TM arranged for Lee to survey prior to visiting Mr Hyde at his property. Advised properties should never have been allowed to have garden boundaries on top of banks due to this exact issue and provided info re being a riparian responsibility. However, the situation is a H&S issue & advised cannot expect residents to cut back the vegetation so Dale happy to also pencil this works in for approx. Jan 27 if S.H can arrange funding.

Spalding Rd, Bourne – Dale noted rubbish piled on bank top. TM wrote to owner/occupier same day allowing 7 days to remove. Owner called & advised waste is indeed his, which led into conversation of elders/bushes growing from his side of the drain. TM advised re riparian responsibility which he was not aware of so he will now also de-vegetate alongside his boundary. No further action.

Donington Site (Bernards Close) – Workforce reported fencing erected & non access through gate to allow flailing. TM visited site, took pics and wrote to all 3 residents. Appears B.S had given consent in 2022 so met with builder who demonstrated fences are removable & we now have a key for access. No further action.

B&M, Boston – site visit to check site & watercourse is free of litter/rubbish. Area is clean & tidy.

Harrisons Drove – resident planted shrubs & dumped grass cuttings on top of dyke. TM sent letter advising removing and provided advice this is not an extension of their front garden and will be damaged when flailing starts on this watercourse. Checked 14 days later, all obstructions removed and bank top returned to acceptable condition.

East Heckington – consent provided to extend culvert to allow access for combines. This is also access used by B.S. Culvert pipe extended but no headwall and stone thrown on top. TM made contact & landowner stated had been done quickly due to harvest. Inspected 09.09.26 & no further work carried out. Letter to be sent advising headwall must be installed to B.S specification.

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

JOINT WORKS COMMITTEE – 06 OCTOBER 2026

AGENDA ITEM 10

Lincolnshire Reservoir Programme

Overview

Since the previous Executive Committee update, engagement with Anglian Water on the Lincolnshire Reservoir project has continued through the regular Black Sluice IDB liaison meetings and a recent stakeholder briefing held ahead of Consultation 3. Key discussions have focused on the reservoir's upstream water transfer proposals, flood risk and operational impacts on the Board's drainage network, and proposals for a temporary rail siding to support reservoir construction.

Upstream Water Transfer

A significant development is Anglian Water's decision to reassess a direct pipeline transfer from the River Trent to the proposed reservoir. While the current preferred option remains the open channel transfer route via the Fossdyke and River Witham, new water quality evidence has identified potential requirements for a substantial inter-catchment treatment plant to meet Water Framework Directive requirements. Anglian Water advised that this introduces additional cost, carbon emissions and operational complexity and is therefore prompting a renewed comparison between the open channel and direct pipeline options. A multi-disciplinary assessment covering technical, environmental, commercial, stakeholder and deliverability considerations is now underway, with a preferred option expected to be identified by March 2027.

During discussions, both Historic England and Natural England raised concerns regarding a pipeline solution. Historic England highlighted the need to consider archaeological impacts and mitigation requirements within future cost and carbon assessments, whilst Natural England reaffirmed its preference for open-water transfer solutions due to the potential impact of a large buried pipeline on habitats, soils and ecological connectivity. Anglian Water confirmed that stakeholder responses will form part of the option appraisal process and invited feedback through Consultation 3.

The Board has continued to emphasise that any increase in flood risk or adverse impacts to the Board's drainage and pumping infrastructure would be a significant concern. Previous discussions highlighted the need for Anglian Water to demonstrate how flows currently managed through the reservoir footprint will be accommodated in the future and what implications there may be for Black Sluice IDB pumping stations and highland carrier systems. Anglian Water acknowledged these concerns and committed to further engagement as design development progresses.

Flood Risk and EDD Discussions

Flood risk and External Drawdown Design remain key areas of interest. Anglian Water confirmed that discussions with the Environment Agency are ongoing and recognised the importance of direct engagement with Black Sluice IDB. The project team advised that EDD discussions are progressing and are expected to involve both the Board and the Environment Agency during the autumn and winter as proposals become more developed. The Board has consistently maintained that any increased flood risk arising from the project would represent a significant issue from both an operational and consenting perspective.

Rail Siding Proposals

At the recent stakeholder briefing, Anglian Water presented emerging proposals for a temporary rail siding to support reservoir construction. The project will require approximately two million cubic metres of imported construction materials, including sand, gravel and rock armour, and rail transport is being explored as a means of reducing HGV traffic, transport costs and carbon emissions. Each train could replace approximately 85 HGV movements, with up to three train deliveries per day during peak construction periods.

Following appraisal of seven potential locations, a site between the reservoir and Helpringham has emerged as the preferred option. Anglian Water advised that the facility would be temporary and removed once construction material imports are complete. Further work will be undertaken to assess and mitigate potential impacts on nearby heritage assets and local communities, particularly noise impacts. Historic England encouraged additional archaeological investigations to inform the design process at an early stage.

Discussion also confirmed that Anglian Water's current intention remains to retain and reuse excavated material within the site wherever possible and that significant off-site export of spoil is not currently anticipated. Stakeholders raised questions regarding the relationship between material reuse, reserve embankment heights and previous design discussions, which Anglian Water agreed to review and clarify through future engagement.

Consultation and Future Engagement

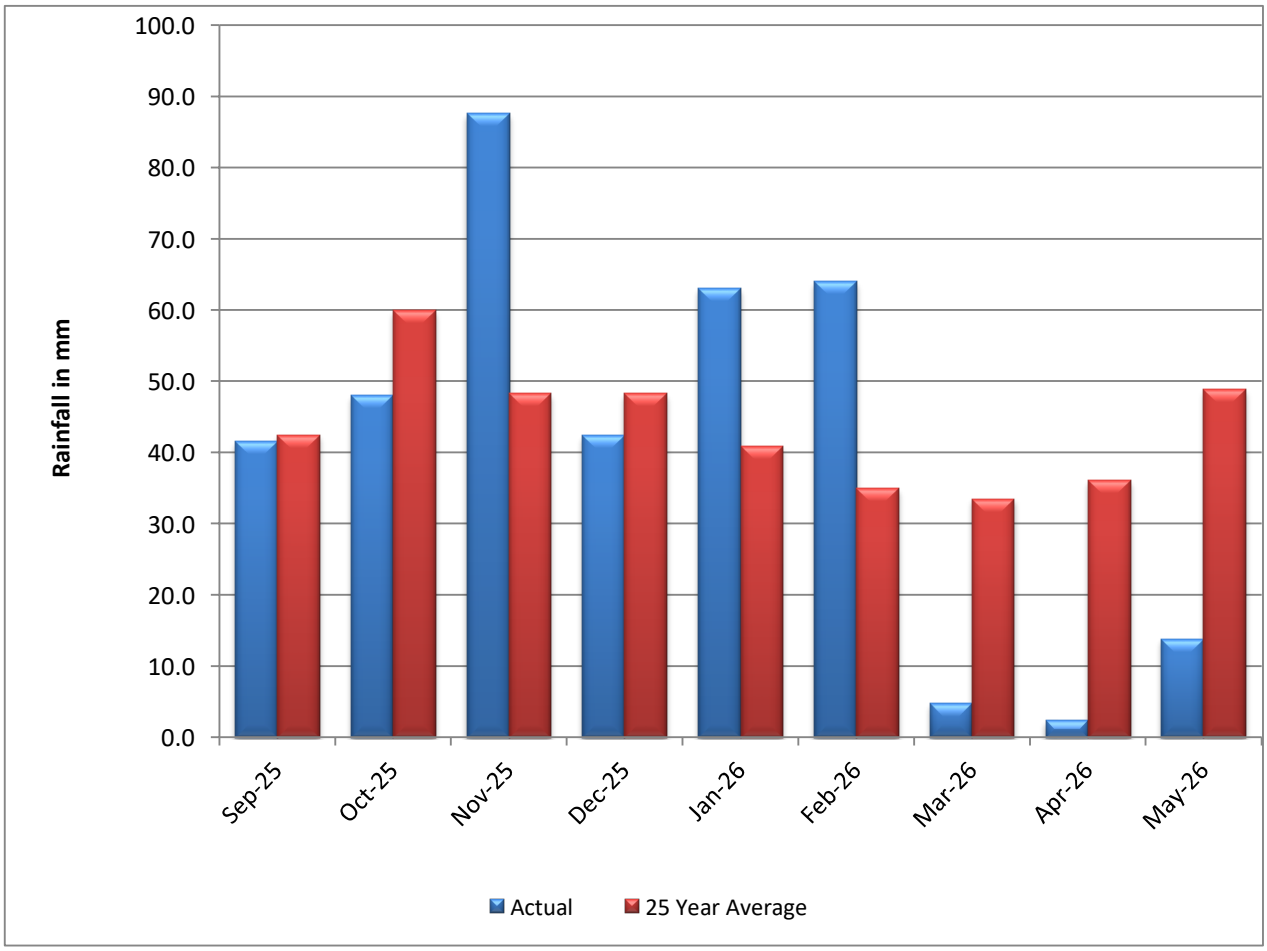
Anglian Water intends to launch Consultation 3 on 21 October 2026, with stakeholder briefings taking place beforehand. The consultation will include updates on the revised upstream transfer assessment, rail siding proposals and wider project design development. Anglian Water has also confirmed that formal scoping activities have been delayed until Spring 2027 following advice from the Planning Inspectorate, allowing greater refinement of project options before progressing to the next stage. Additional technical engagement is expected over the coming months covering water quality, Water Framework Directive compliance, habitats, flood risk, salinity and master planning.

Black Sluice IDB Position

The Board's key priorities remain understanding and mitigating any impacts on flood risk management, drainage operations and pumping station infrastructure. Particular attention is now being given to the emerging Emergency Discharge proposals associated with the reservoir. The reassessment of a direct transfer pipeline from either the River Witham or River Trent has the potential to introduce additional water into the Black Sluice catchment; however, under normal operating conditions this water should be retained and managed within the reservoir system. The principal concern for the Board is therefore centred on the arrangements for Emergency Discharge and the circumstances under which water may need to be released from the reservoir to the receiving catchment. The Board will continue to engage with Anglian Water to ensure that any emergency discharge arrangements are fully understood, appropriately modelled and demonstrated not to adversely increase flood risk, impact drainage operations or place additional pressure on the Board's pumping station network and watercourse systems. Close scrutiny of the Emergency Drawdown Design proposals will remain a key focus as the project progresses through Consultation 3 and into the next stage of option development and assessment.

BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
Rainfall at Black Hole Drove Pumping Station

MONTH	Rainfall		Actual / Average
	Actual	25 Year Average	
	mm	mm	%
Sep-25	41.6	42.5	97.88%
Oct-25	48.0	60.0	80.00%
Nov-25	87.6	48.3	181.37%
Dec-25	42.4	48.3	87.78%
Jan-26	63.0	40.9	154.03%
Feb-26	64.0	35.0	182.86%
Mar-26	4.8	33.5	14.33%
Apr-26	2.4	36.1	6.65%
May-26	13.8	48.9	28.22%
Jun-26	36.0	52.9	68.05%
Jul-26	0.0	61.3	0.00%
Aug-26	52.8	55.0	96.00%
Totals	456.4	562.7	81.11%



BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
Rainfall at Swineshead

MONTH	Rainfall		Actual / Average
	Actual	25 Year Average	
	mm	mm	%
Sep-25	20.8	47.9	43.42%
Oct-25	64.4	63.3	101.74%
Nov-25	71.8	51.1	140.51%
Dec-25	58.6	49.4	118.62%
Jan-26	64.8	44.7	144.97%
Feb-26	54.6	37.7	144.83%
Mar-26	20.8	34.3	60.64%
Apr-26	6.2	36.4	17.03%
May-26	28.8	53.5	53.83%
Jun-26	67.4	53.6	125.75%
Jul-26	0.0	69.6	0.00%
Aug-26	69.8	61.0	114.43%
Totals	528.0	602.5	87.63%

