

BENWICK INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Benwick Internal Drainage Board
held at the Lakeside Lodge, Pidley on Thursday the 14th June 2018

PRESENT

D R Stokes Esq (Chairman)	R G Few Esq
M Jackson Esq (Vice Chairman)	P N Corney Esq
D J Caton Esq	J M Palmer Esq
R E Stacey Esq	

Miss Lorna McShane (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Morgan Lakey (representing the Consulting Engineers) were in attendance.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from T R Butcher Esq, R A Dring Esq, M Fisher Esq, A Miscandlon Esq and N G Thacker Esq.

B.1105 Declarations of Interest

Miss McShane reminded Members of the importance of declaring an interest in any matter included in today's agenda that involved or was likely to affect any individual on the Board.

The District Officer declared an interest in agenda item 18.

Mr Palmer declared an interest in all planning matters as a member of Huntingdonshire District Council.

B.1106 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 12th June 2017 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1107 Board Membership

Further to minute B.1071, Miss McShane reported that Mr Ricky Dring had accepted the invitation to join the Board.

B.1108 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED

That D R Stokes Esq be appointed Chairman of the Board.

B.1109 Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED

That M Jackson Esq be appointed Vice Chairman of the Board.

B.1110 Election of Members of the Board

Miss McShane reported that, as the number of candidates for membership of the Board did not exceed the number of persons to be elected (eleven), the following candidates were elected as Members of the Board for a period of three years from the 1st November 2017, viz:-

CATON David	FOUNTAIN Philip Neil
DRING Ricky Anthony	JACKSON Martin
FEW Reginald George	STACEY Robert E
FISHER Mark	STOKES David Robin
THACKER Nigel Gary	

Miss McShane also reported that Messrs Tom Burton and Robert Pickard did not seek re-election to the Board and consequently there were now two vacancies on the Board.

(NB) – Councillors T R Butcher and A Miscandlon, as the nominees of Fenland District Council, and Councillor J M Palmer, as the nominee of Huntingdonshire District Council, are also Members of the Board under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

B.1111 Filling of vacancies

Consideration was given to the filling of the two vacancies in the membership of the Board caused by the resignation of Messrs Burton and Pickard.

RESOLVED

That the Vice Chairman be authorised to approach Paul Johnson with a view to filling a vacancy.

B.1112 Water Transfer Licences

Further to minute B.1075, Miss McShane referred to a letter received from ADA dated the 27th October 2017 and to the Clerk's response to Defra and also to the fact that licencing of water transfers came into force on the 1st January 2018. She advised that, as a licence is only required for transfers from EA main river and no inter-IDB transfers require licencing, this new arrangement will not directly impact the Board.

B.1113 Member training and the appointment of a Health and Safety Officer

Miss McShane reported that ADA has been encouraging member training for a number of years and Defra will, from 2018, require Boards to report upon any training that has been provided to members. This was to be reported by way of an entry on the IDB1 forms and the listed topics on this form are; Governance, Finance, Environment, Health, safety and welfare, Communications and engagement, amongst others. The Board may wish to pick an area where they consider specific

tailored training is pertinent for it in a given year or alternatively might ask that the Middle Level Commissioners arrange some joint training with other Boards which they are happy to do.

On Health and Safety, after reviewing arrangements for a number of Boards, it has become clear that it would be helpful if Boards could appoint a member to be in charge of Health and Safety matters. This person would take overall responsibility for Health and Safety supported by Croner through the Middle Level Commissioners. This will help provide clarity going forward as ultimately it is the Boards' role to ensure that sites, equipment and working practices are as safe as can be reasonably expected. Whilst IDBs have an enviable record on safety and much that is needed is likely to already be in place, the HSE would probe the organisational structure should a reportable accident occur and would take a dim view if clarity on the lines of responsibility were unclear.

RESOLVED

- i) That the District Officer be appointed Health and Safety Officer.
- ii) That the District Officer be provided with the health and safety templates for completion.
- iii) That the Board agree that the sum of £400 be allowed for the services of the Health and Safety Officer.
- iv) That the Board participate in any training organised through the Middle Level Commissioners.

B.1114 Association of Drainage Authorities – Further Research on Eels

Further to minute B.1087(d), the Board considered making a further contribution towards the research on eels.

RESOLVED

That the Board contribute an additional £100 towards further research on eels for 2018/2019.

B.1115 Consulting Engineers' Report

The Board considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers, viz:-

Benwick I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – May 2018

Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

The maintenance works carried out last year generally accorded with the recommendations approved by the Board at the last Annual Meeting.

With the Chairman's prior approval the programmed machine cleansing works, on reach 55-54, was extended along the private watercourse to the north west side of Benwick village (see following plan). This unadopted length of watercourse is considered to be a vital part of the Benwick village drainage system and conveys large quantities of water during rainfall events along reach 53-56. It is recommended that any future programmed machine cleansing works within this area include this small length to maintain its current standard. The Board may wish to take this opportunity to consider if it wishes to add this short reach of watercourse to its list of maintained watercourses shown on the plan overleaf.

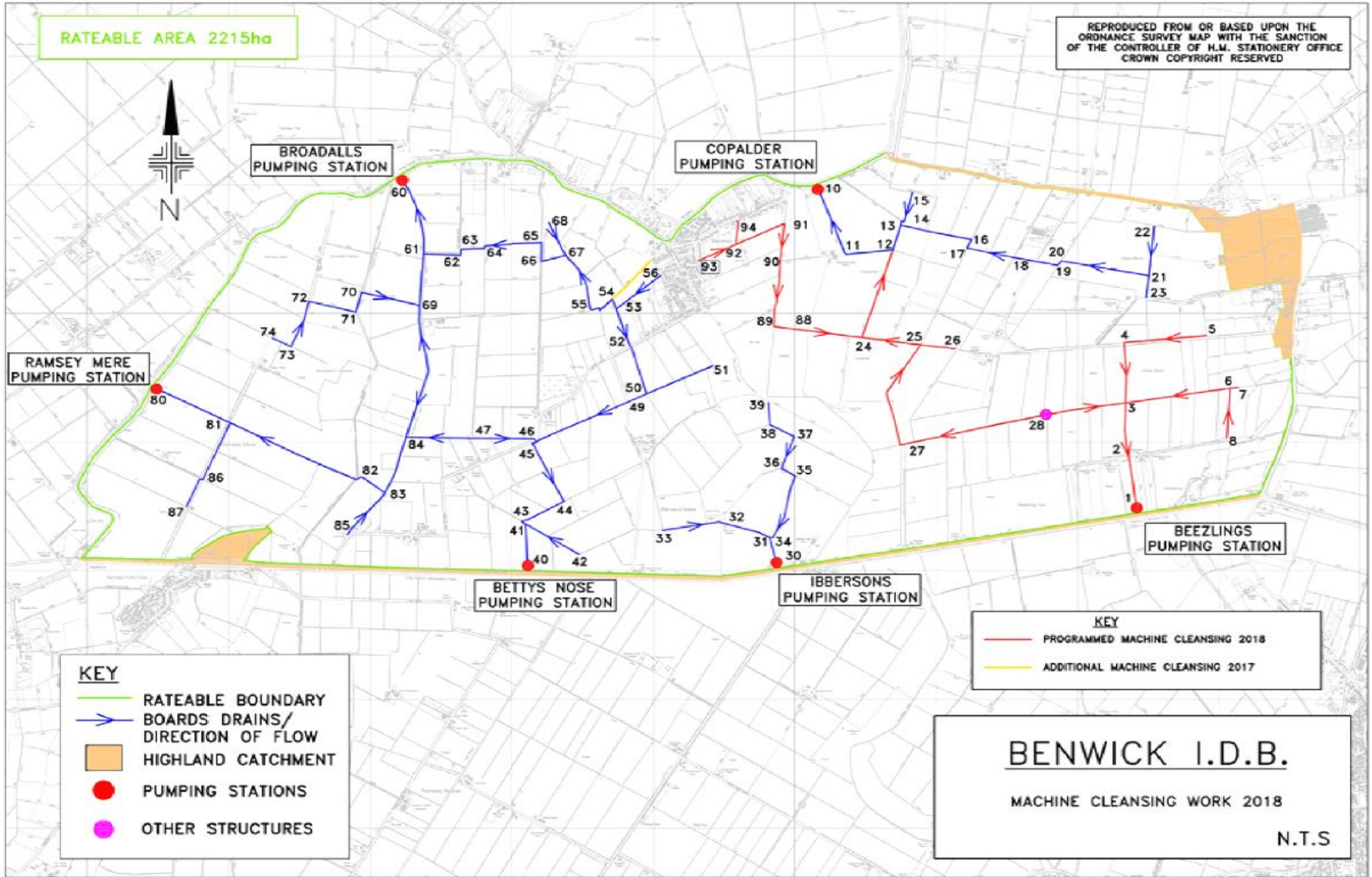


**Lilyholt drain, reach 92-94
after the sapling removal**

Due to the prolific growth of self-sown willow saplings in the Lilyholt drain last season, reach 92-94, an excavator mounted forestry flail was required to remove the woody willow stems that had become established. Any further growth later this year will be flail mown and treated with an application of Roundup herbicide to prevent any re-infestation.

Advanced notices of this year's machine cleansing programme (approved by the Board at its 2007 meeting) have been sent out.

A recent inspection of the Board's drains revealed that they are generally in a satisfactory condition and being maintained to a good standard. However, stands of reed and emergent aquatic vegetation are now becoming prevalent and showing signs of active regrowth throughout the district. It is recommended that Roundup herbicide is applied to drains within this year's phased machine cleansing works, and to any other



Board's drains where it is deemed necessary to control reed and emergent weed growth. A sum for the cost of Roundup treatment has been included within the estimated costs.

Flail mowing in advance of the machine cleansing works will be required to afford the machine operator maximum visibility. The Board's flail mowing contractors, Messrs Ashman, have indicated that they are available to undertake the Board's flail mowing requirements this year. A sum for the completion of this work has been included within the Board's estimated costs.

A provisional sum has been included within the Board's estimated costs for any emergency cleansing, culvert clearance or bank reinstatement works that may be required later in the year.

The estimated costs of this year's recommended maintenance works are as follows:

1 Machine Cleansing (Phased Programmed Works)

Bezzlings Area

Reach 1-2-3-4-5	2000	m	@	1.10	£2200.00
Reach 28-3-6-7-8	1800	m	@	1.10	£1980.00

Copalder Area

Reach 12-24-25-26	1400	m	@	1.10	£1540.00
Reach 25-27-28	2000	m	@	1.10	£2200.00
Reach 24-88-89-90-91-92-93	2100	m	@	1.10	£2310.00
Reach 92-94	200	m	@	1.10	£220.00

2	Allow sum for Roundup application to control reed and emergent aquatic weed growth	Item	Sum		£1250.00
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3	Flail mowing in advance of machine cleansing works	Item	Sum		£4000.00
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4	<u>Provisional Sum</u> Allow sum for emergency Machine cleansing, culvert Clearance or bank Reinstatement works	Item	Sum		£2000.00
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5	Fees for the inspection, Preparation & submission of report to the Board. Arrangement & supervision of herbicide applications & maintenance works	Item	Sum		£1900.00
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£19,600.00

Orders for the application of herbicides are accepted on condition that they are weather dependant and the Middle Level Commissioners will not be held responsible for the efficacy of any treatments

Pumping Stations

Other than the matters described below, only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant at each of the stations is mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition.

Benwick Mere

The timber pump house doors were in a poor condition and have been replaced with vandal proof steel doors.

The delivery pipe is cracked and requires welding.

Beezlings

At its last meeting the Board indicated that it planned to install automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment and a replacement weedscreen at this installation and requested quotations be obtained. At this early stage only two budget quotations have been obtained from the two cheapest suppliers in the market, and are as follows:

CWE Group....	£60,495
Metalcraft.....	£72,000

Broadalls

As reported at the Board's last meeting the Broadalls' pumpset, Type: SB40.09.06, Serial No. P1203/1 had a mechanical seal failure and suffered water ingress and hence was returned to its manufacturer, Bedford Pumps, for inspection and repairs

In accordance with the Board's instructions an order was placed with Bedford pumps to carry out a full overhaul including the replacement of the impeller, which has lost material through corrosion following adverse operating conditions. This was to be in Aluminium Bronze to provide improved resistance to corrosion over the original ductile iron component.

Repairs were completed during late July 2017 and the pump reinstalled and returned to service a month later.

Other pumps have failed due to similar faults, these in the past were covered by our previous company's engineering insurance, and therefore a claim was lodged with the Board's new insurer, AXA/HSB which does include Engineering Insurance cover for sudden and unforeseen breakdown of pumping plant. This was on the basis that this pump is fitted with mechanical seals which are not regarded as perishable and rarely wear out because of old age, but more usually fail due to some other reason. Traditionally land drainage pumps have low running hours and typically

provide 20 years or more service before attention is required. The pumps are inspected and tested every 3/6 months; therefore, we consider the failure to be sudden and unforeseen.

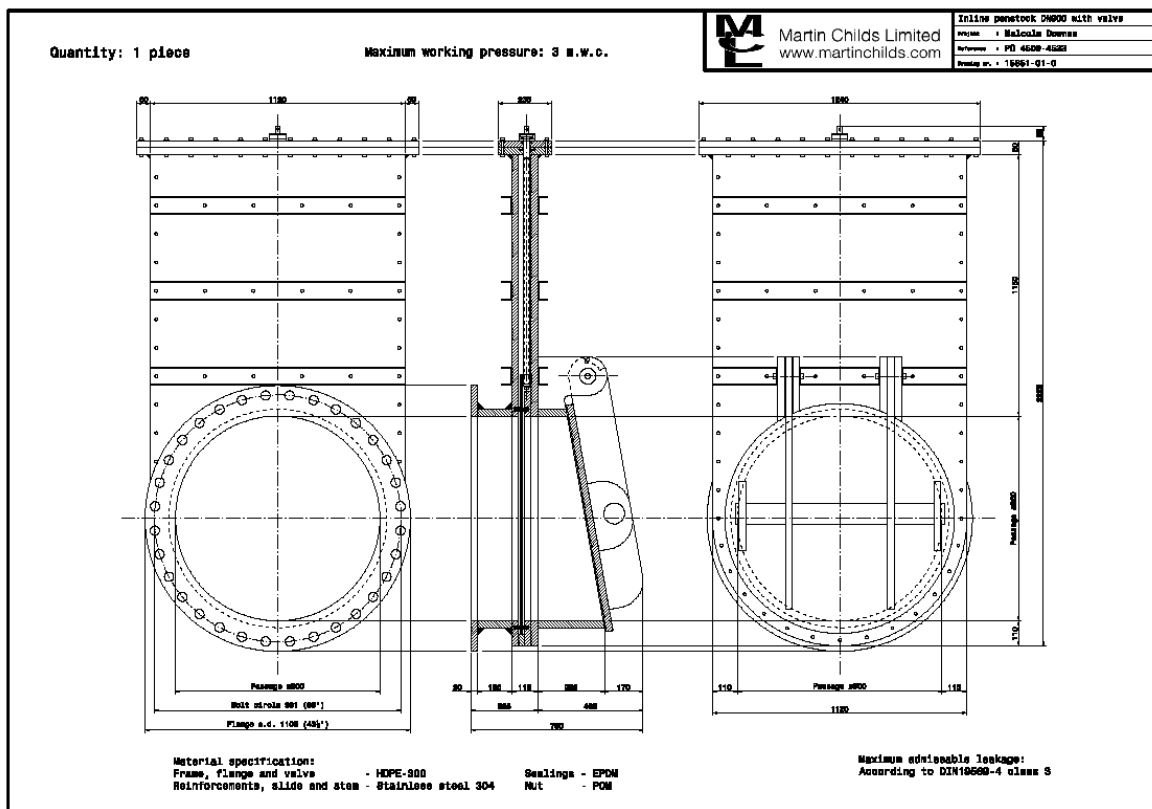
However, this and two recent claims made by local IDBs were rejected as AXA/HSB considered that the pumps should have been removed for service on a 5 yearly frequency. This was contested by the MLC and the frequency extended to 10 years; however even this is considered unacceptable in most instances, hence an alternative insurer is being sought. In the interim there is no cover in place.

Copalder

As reported at the Board's last meeting the budget price of £10k, for supply only, was previously obtained for a special pumped flow flap valve with an integrated penstock assembly from Aquatic Control Engineering (ACE) for the Copalder Pumping Station. This then increased to £18,590 when ACE provided a firm quotation, and the Board therefore asked for further quotations to be obtained.

Two other companies Dutchtch and Martin Childs Ltd (MCL) were approached, no response was received from Dutchtch and a price of £7,608.08 delivered was received from MCL.

With the Chairman's approval an order was placed with MCL at the end of July 17 for the assembly shown below:



The new assembly was delivered during October 2017 and its installation completed by the end of October (see below)



Following the above installation, a walkway together with safety hand railing fabricated to allow access to the penstock operator position was installed. It should be noted that the penstock should be exercised at regular intervals to ensure that it remains in operation.

Ramsey Mere

The pump drive motor winding insulation resistance whilst low remains at a satisfactory level. The situation will be monitored and a rewind carried out if the resistance deteriorates further.

The weedscreen cleaner is working normally but on dwell timer only. The hydraulic hoses are corroded and need replacing this summer.

Inlet

A new inlet penstock and pipework have been obtained and are awaiting the Chairman's instruction regarding installation.

Pumping Hours between 2017/2018 – 2022/2023

Pumping station	Total hours run 2017-2018	Total hours run 2018-2019	Total hours run 2019-2020	Total hours run 2020-2021	Total hours run 2021-2021	Total hours run 2022- 2023
Beezlings	335					
Benwick Mere /Ibbersons	153					
Betty's Nose	220					
Broadalls	17					
Copalder	111					
Ramsey Mere	31					

Pumping Hours between 2011/2012 – 2016/2017

Pumping station	Total hours run 2011/2012	Total hours run 2012/2013	Total hours run 2013- 2014	Total hours run 2014- 2015	Total hours run 2015- 2016	Total hours run 2016- 2017
Beezlings	7	424	210	212	151	132
Benwick Mere /Ibbersons	23	295	211	102	75	84
Betty's Nose	30	553	629	137	129	99
Broadalls	50	500	70	92	6	24
Copalder	8	324	205	169	87	87
Ramsey Mere	1	60	123	15	72	31

Pumping Hours between 2005/2006 – 2010/2011

Pumping station	Total hours run 2005/2006	Total hours run 2006/2007	Total hours run 2007/2008	Total hours run 2008/2009	Total hours run 2009/2010	Total hours run 2010/2011
Beezlings	78	305	43	225	171	3
Benwick Mere /Ibbersons	30	133	77	217	220	209
Betty's Nose	133	70	134	44	424	186
Broadalls	44	140	47	243	437	170
Copalder	36	119	137	171	249	104
Ramsey Mere	3	186	191	152	100	157

Eel Regulations

Following sustained pressure from the IDB sector, notification has been received that a paper was presented to the EA Executive Directors' Team proposing some changes to their current regulatory process. It is understood that Executive Directors supported the recommendations in the paper and that work is now underway to establish how the EA will transition the changes and what this means in the interim for operators such as IDBs.

In line with what IDBs have been calling for, there is to be a new approach identifying the best achievable eel protection (BAEP), in terms of what is technically feasible and generally affordable. The EA also proposes to change when and where it applies its eel cost benefit analysis tool; how it considers affordability of eel protection at individual sites; and how it balances costs with risk to eel at individual sites. The EA will also investigate where there are opportunities to revise its current programming approach to optimise outcomes for eel. Finally, it will work with sector leads in developing new guidance and processes.

However, it is important to note that the EA will not be in a position to introduce its new regulatory approach until it has developed all of the new, interdependent, components of the process which the EA advise will take up to 12 months.

Internal Consultation with the Board

The process of “internal consultation” between the Commissioners and the Board (usually, but not always, with the Chairman and/or District Officer) to seek the Board’s comments and thus aid the decision-making process, is generally working well and will be continued and reviewed at a later date.

Planning Procedures Update

Informatives on Decision Notices

From the planning applications listed below, only three had informatives advising the applicants of their separate legal obligation to comply with the requirements of the Board’s Byelaws and the Land Drainage Act (LDA). All of these were in the Fenland District Council area.

It is left to the Board’s discretion whether it wishes the Commissioners to make a formal response to the Councils concerned directly on its behalf, or whether it requests that its Council representatives ensure that such informatives are requested.

Planning Agents Training Day

Having identified engagement issues between “Developers” and the Commissioners and Associated Boards, a Training Day was held in late October. Approximately 50 invitations were sent out to a cross section of interested parties representing developers, agents and consultants and including all the LPA areas that we deal regularly with. Council Officers were also invited. The event was oversubscribed with twenty-five people attending but several others are on a ‘short list’ if another similar event is held. The feedback suggests the event was well received.

The format of the event was to inform those attending of the unique nature of the area; where the IDBs fit into the development process; what the issues are; and how the Middle Level Commissioners deal with them.

Analysing the figures very crudely 46% of attendees were agents; 34% consultants; 18% developers and less than 1% Council Officers. The areas covered were 37%, predominantly consultants, all the LPAs; 45% Fenland and 18% West Norfolk. There was no specific representation from Huntingdonshire District, East Cambs District, South Cambs District or Peterborough City Councils.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 15 new applications have been received and dealt with since the last meeting:

<i>MLC Ref</i>	<i>Council Ref.</i>	<i>Applicant</i>	<i>Type of Development</i>	<i>Location</i>
293	F/YR17/0451/PNH	Mr & Mrs Spencer	Residence (Extension)	Primrose Hill, Doddington
294	F/YR17/0348/O	Mrs V Kirk & Mrs J Crossley	Residential (up to 2 plots)	Doddington Road Benwick
295	F/YR17/0586/F	Mr R Few	Residence	Forty Foot Bank, Ramsey*
296	F/YR17/0579/O	Land & Building Solution Ltd	Residence	Green Lane, Benwick*
297	F/YR17/0723/F	Mrs J Walker	Residence	Benwick Road, Doddington
298	F/YR17/0780/F	Mr & Mrs Shepherd	Residence	Dykemoor Drove, Doddington
299	F/YR17/0894/F	Mr & Mrs Berridge & Mrs Croft	Residence (Garage)	Ramsey Road, Benwick
300	F/YR17/0939/F	Mr & Mrs Berridge	Equestrian	Ramsey Road, Benwick
301	F/YR18/0025/O	Mrs Mitchell	Residential (9 plots)	Doddington Road, Benwick
302	F/YR18/3002/COND	Proway Building Ltd	Residential (4 plots)	Doddington Road, Benwick
303	F/YR18/0064/F	Mr M Hay	Residence (Extension)	24 Doddington Road, Benwick
304	F/YR18/0057/F	Mr R Few	Residence	Forty Foot Bank, Ramsey*
305	F/YR18/0179/F	Mr & Mrs Shepherd	Residence	Dykemoor Drove, Doddington
306	F/YR18/0198/O	Mrs J Montgomery & Mrs F Perry	Residential (up to 15 plots)	Doddington Road, Benwick
307	F/YR18/0257/F	Mrs J Walker	Residence	Benwick Road, Doddington

***Planning applications ending 'PNH' relate to household permitted regulations notification
Planning applications ending 'COND' relate to the discharge of relevant planning conditions***

Developments that are known to propose direct discharge to the Board's system are indicated with an asterisk. The remainder are understood to propose surface water disposal to soakaways/infiltration systems or sustainable drainage systems, where applicable. The applicants have been notified of the Board's requirements.

For his extension at Doddington Road, Benwick (MLC Ref No 303), Mr M Hay chose to use the soakaway self-certification process and, in doing so, agreed that if the soakaway was to fail in the future he would be liable for discharge consent.

No further correspondence has been received from the applicants or the applicants' agents concerning the following developments and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests:

- *Scoping Opinion for Wind Farm at Mere Farm at north of Sunny Cottage, Forty Foot Bank, Ramsey Forty Foot - RES UK & Ireland Ltd (MLC Ref No 261)*
- *Erection of 4 x 2 storey 3 bed dwellings involving the demolition of existing buildings at land east of 2A Doddington Road, Benwick - Leigh Property Investments Ltd (MLC Ref No. 266)*

In view of the absence of recent correspondence and any subsequent instruction from the Board it will be presumed, unless otherwise recorded, that the Board is content with any development that has occurred and that no further action is required at this time.

Erection of a retail unit and 1 x 1-bed and 2 x 2-bed flats above involving demolition of existing building at land west of 40 Lilyholt Road, fronting High Street, Benwick – Mr B Sisodiya (MLC Ref Nos 249 & 259)

As requested at the last meeting letters have been sent to the parties concerned but a response has yet to be received. In the meantime a note on the Local Land Charges Register (LLCR) has been requested.

Residential development on land north east of 13 Doddington Road, Benwick - Harnson Homes Ltd (MLC Ref No 254) and Proway Building Ltd (MLC Ref No 302)

Further to the 2014 meeting report, a discharge of condition application for the provision and implementation of foul and surface water drainage for plots three and four, 3 and 5 Heron Way, was submitted to the District Council in November but was not validated until January.

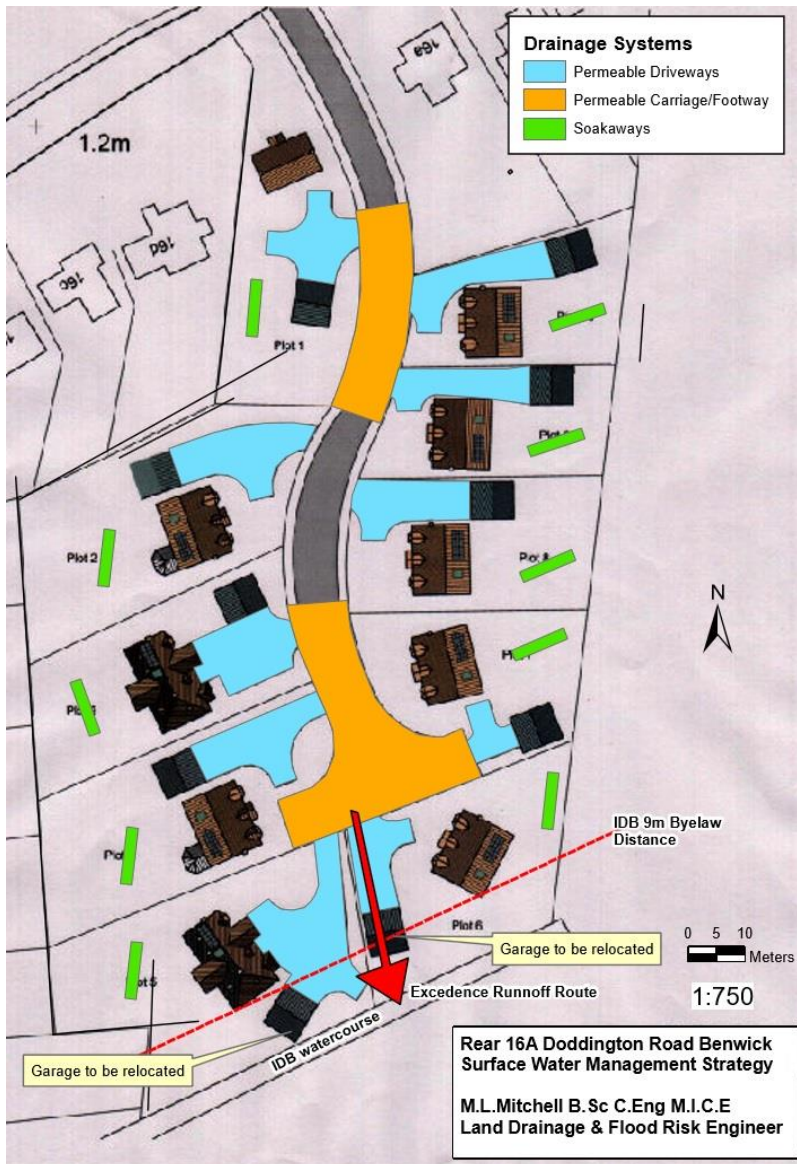
The applicants' agent, The Hunting Lodge Cottingham Limited, has advised that surface water disposal is to soakways and foul water to Benwick WRC. The documentation in respect of surface water disposal remains outstanding.

According to the District Council's Public Access web page a decision remains pending.

Erection of up to 10 no dwellings (outline application with all matters reserved) at land south of 16A Doddington Road, Benwick – Mrs Mitchell (MLC Ref No 301)

This planning application for a residential development was submitted to the District Council in November but not validated until January, originally for ten dwellings the development was reduced to nine in order to miss the minimum threshold for involving the LLFA.

Planning permission was refused in April. One of the reasons for refusal was because the development is in Flood Zone three and the applicant failed to provide evidence in respect of the Sequential Test.



Extract from ML Mitchells Surface Water Management Strategy Plan

Erection of up to 15no dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) involving demolition of buildings at land north of 17 Doddington Road, Benwick - Mrs J Montgomery & Mrs F Perry (MLC Ref No 306)

This planning application for a site to the north east of Heron Way was submitted to the District Council in February.

According to the District Council's Public Access web page a decision remains pending.



Extract from L Bevens Associates Ltd Drawing Number CH17/LBA/433/OP-1-101 Rev. B

Fenland District Council (FDC)

No further correspondence has been received from FDC concerning the Neighbourhood Strategy and no progress has occurred with its District Wide Level 2 SFRA.

No further action has been taken in respect of the Board’s interests.

FDC Liaison Meeting

A meeting attended by representatives from the Commissioners and FDC was held in November to improve working relations between the two authorities.

The actions arising from the meeting included:

- Development of a joint protocol/leaflet to clarify the inter-relationship between FDC, CCC (in its role as the LLFA), the Commissioners & associated IDBs and the EA in relation to flooding and surface water drainage for developers.

- The Commissioners to offer a seminar for “planners”.
- The Commissioners to review their approach to responding to planning applications with a focus on major schemes/Broad Concept Plans (BCP's).
- Meeting to discuss the potential tourism opportunities on our waterways perhaps initially focusing on March.
- Communication opportunities for FDC to promote/signpost the Commissioners' information and pre-application process or to join this up with its own processes.
- Investigate whether the FDC Local Validation List review can include requirements to benefit the Commissioners or drainage in general.

Another meeting is to be held in May this year.

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) Local Plan to 2036

The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission and its supporting documents were submitted for independent examination to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government via the Planning Inspectorate on 29 March.

The Secretary of State has appointed Kevin Ward from the Planning Inspectorate to carry out an independent examination of the Local Plan. The Inspector's task is to establish whether the Huntingdonshire Local Plan is 'sound'. He will then report on his findings, including advising if modifications are needed to make the Local Plan sound.

Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)

A consolidated version of the HELAA has been produced to support the Proposed Submission Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. This incorporates all site assessments from the HELAA documents published for consultation in July and October 2017. It also reflects the outcomes of the Call for Sites which accompanied the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036: Consultation Draft 2017.

Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

Note. *SFRAs are high level strategic documents and, as such, do not go into detail on an individual site-specific basis and are developed using the best available information at the time of preparation.*

The note referring to the SFRA 2010 mapping for the Middle Level Commissioners' area remains on the Council's website.

Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership (CFRMP)

The Commissioners' Planning Engineer has represented both the Middle Level Commissioners and their associated Boards since the Board's last meeting. The main matters that may be of interest to the Board are as follows:

The Great Ouse Tidal River Baseline report

This EA document is complete and available in PDF format. The report sets out the status of flood risk management on the tidal River Ouse. One of the most critical/important maps highlights cost benefits in terms of GiA and other funding sources. The report also sets out issues going forward with regard to long term funding of managing the catchment.

The Future Fenland Project

Phase 1 of this EA project, which concerns all of the Fens, has commenced. This will take a couple of years to complete and will include Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire. Workshops for stakeholders were held in January and March 2018. One of the aims of this phase is to outline the total cost benefit analysis of maintaining the Fens.

Phase 2 will assess how the Fens may change in the future based on information from phase 1. This may include considering changes in land use and funding streams.

There are varying views on the future of the Fens and the development of the project. One of the concerns raised was the source of future funding for the management of the Fens and the conflicting views on how it should be managed.

Programme Development Unit (PDU)

This EA team will focus on helping partners deliver projects more efficiently. There are a number of large EA projects that the PDU will be involved with, therefore a hierarchy of projects will need to be established to ensure clarity of their involvement.

Flood risk activities: environmental permits (formerly flood defence consents)

There is currently a proposal by the EA to raise the costs of permitting in stages from the current £170 minimum potentially up to £1441.

Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) has advised that the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) has also been involved in a similar process with ADA. A response has been prepared by ADA and for more detail see item 27 on the Agenda.

Members will be aware that the statutory fee for obtaining consent stated within the Land Drainage Act has, for many years, been only £50.00 which does not cover the real costs of processing such a consent.

Cambridgeshire County Council – Flood and Water Team – Ordinary watercourse consents have been considered and issued when required.

The Bedford Group of IDBs has advised that Ordinary watercourse consents in its area were not originally considered with protected provisions in the Development Control Order (DCO), a planning document. A legal agreement was subsequently agreed that reflects IDBs' byelaws and protected provisions.

It is understood that the EA had a similar situation at Peterborough on a Main River, even though it was a stakeholder in the project.

IDBs are reminded that they are not Statutory Consultees in such consultations but do need to be aware of forthcoming schemes in order to protect their interests.

Rain Gauges Project

Note. *The Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU - previously called OJEC, the Official Journal of the European Community) is the publication in which all tenders from the public sector which are valued above a certain financial threshold according to EU legislation, must be published. The legislation covers organisations and projects that receive public money, such as Local Authorities, NHS Trusts, MOD, Central Government Departments and Educational Establishments.*

The Eastern Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC) area (largely Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex) will be joining this Central RFCC project which is likely to be Project Managed by the EA.

The gauges will be located on secure and accessible EA or Anglian Water Services Ltd (AWSL) structures, such as water recycling centres (WRCs), and the Botanical Gardens in Cambridge.

It is intended that information from the rain gauges will be for the use of all partners for flood investigations etc with all sites available via telemetry using a web interface, possibly with three levels of membership – Administrator, Partners and the Public - and associated viewing rights within the web interface with the latter only seeing “local” information. This interface will be based on the software that AWSL already uses for its existing rain gauges and combined sewer overflows (CSOs). The data will not be directly compatible with EA data however a widget will be developed for this purpose. Discussions/negotiations are ongoing with the Met Office regarding a data swap.

The size of the project is causing delays but draft OJEU tender documents, a business case and inter LLFA and AWSL legal agreements are currently being drafted.

As members of the CFRMP, the Middle Level Commissioners have been asked to comment on the proposed location of rain gauges. The LLFA advises that the proposed new gauges have been chosen because they are adjacent to major areas of population and known “wet spots”. The

nearest rain gauges to the Commissioners' area are at March WRC (EA gauge) and the Middle Level Commissioners' Office. In respect of the Board's interests the District Council suggested a rain gauge within the town itself, on Anglian Water's facility off Creek Road (MRCCSM), near River Down.

Strategic Flood Risk Planning Advisor

Funded by the Local Levy the EA has employed a Strategic Flood Risk Planning Advisor on a two year contract. The role will include providing input to LPA's Local Plans (most of which, within Cambridgeshire, are approaching completion) and highlighting flood mitigation opportunities within strategic development proposals.

Integrated FRM PhD research project

A PhD researcher at the Flood Hazard Research Centre (FHRC) Middlesex University is working on integrated flood risk management within Cambridgeshire with the aim of understanding the connectivity between different networks (such as the RFCC, CFRMP, catchment partnerships, local resilience forums, enterprise partnerships) and to see how these influence the integration of different FRM objectives (preventing new risk, reducing existing risk and managing residual risk) and other wider sustainable development objectives. An interview attended by the Chief Executive and Planning Engineer was held with the researcher on 5 January to discuss their roles and the role of IDBs and partnership working, amongst other things.

Fenland Flooding Issues Sub-Group

Following the extreme rainfall event experienced within March during August 2014, a March Flood Investigation Sub-Group was formed. The meetings associated with this investigation have proven beneficial to all the stakeholders involved and may lead to the resolution of many historical issues and, as a result, the responsibilities of the Sub-Group were extended to cover any local flooding issues within the District Council's area. There are currently no issues within the Board's catchment.

Consulting Engineer

29 May 2018

Benwick(303)\Reports\May 2018

Mr Lakey referred to the Chairman's approval of the programmed machine cleansing works on reach 55-54 which had been extended along the private watercourse to the north west side of Benwick village. He confirmed that this section will be cleaned out when the Board's drain is attended to.

It was reported that there had been a prolific growth of willow saplings in the Lilyholt Drain last season and works had been carried out to remove the woody stems that had become established. It was further advised that any further growth later in the year would be flail mown and treated with an application of Roundup herbicide to prevent further regrowth.

Beezlings Pumping Station

Members considered the quotations received for the installation of automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment at Beezlings Pumping Station.

Miss McShane advised that, since completion of the Consulting Engineer's report, the Clerk had written to all Chairmen advising that investigations were being made in regards to an alternative insurer. Unfortunately, it has been impossible to obtain insurance without a requirement to lift and service pumps every ten years and, consequently, the Clerk has advised that there is no value in taking out such insurance where claims are likely to be rejected in most instances and hence there was no longer insurance cover in place for sudden and unexpected mechanical equipment failure.

The Chairman reported that a new inlet penstock and pipework had been obtained and that he would arrange future installation in conjunction with the Consulting Engineers.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) Weed Control and Drain Maintenance
That the works referred to in the Report be undertaken.
- iii) Beezlings Pumping Station
That the quotation received from Metalcraft for the automatic weedscreen cleaner in the sum of £72,000 be accepted.
- iv) That, if an alternative insurer could not be found, the Board set aside a sum each year to fund future pump replacements.
- v) A Pump Replacement fund be created with £4,000 to be transferred from reserves for 2018/2019.
- vi) That the Consulting Engineers be requested to assist with the fitting of a new inlet penstock.

(NB) – Mr Few declared an interest in the planning applications (MLC Ref: 295 & 304) received for Mr R Few.

B.1116 Public Works Loan

Further to minute B.1078(iii), Miss McShane referred to the Indicative Costs for a Public Works Loan for an automatic weedscreen cleaner at Beezlings pumping station.

RESOLVED

That an amount not exceeding £80,000 be borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board, over a period of 10 years, for the automatic weedscreen cleaner at Beezlings pumping station.

B.1117 Capital Improvement Programme

Members considered the Board's future capital improvement programme.

RESOLVED

That the Capital Programme be approved in principle and kept under review.

B.1118 District Officer's Report

The Board considered the Report of the District Officer.

The District Officer reported that the District was generally in good order and there had been no flooding incidents.

RESOLVED

That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved and that the Officer be thanked for his services during the year.

B.1119 Environmental Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Miss McShane referred to the Environmental Officer's Newsletter, previously circulated to Members.

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report, together with the information sheets about floating pennywort.

Since writing his report, the Environmental Officer had advised that there were reports of two otters found drowned in the Old River Nene at different locations between Wells Bridge and Ramsey Mereside pumping station.

Miss McShane reported that Cliff Carson had recently filmed a piece on otters which had been shown on the BBC Spring Watch programme on Monday the 11th June 2018. She reported that Cliff was due to retire at the end of June and that his replacement had been appointed.

RESOLVED

That the Board make a contribution towards a gift for Cliff Carson's retirement and that the Middle Level Commissioners' Treasurer be authorised to make a contribution in line with that of other Boards.

B.1120 District Officer's Honorarium and Pumping Station duties

- a) The Board gave consideration to the District Officer's Honorarium for 2018/2019.
- b) The Board gave consideration to the payment in respect of pumping station duties for 2018/2019.

RESOLVED

- i) That Mr D Caton be appointed as District Officer and that there be no change in the District Officer's honorarium for 2018/2019.
- ii) That the Board agree that the District Officer be allowed the sum of £400 for undertaking health and safety duties for 2018/2019.
- iii) That the Board agree that the sum of £3,000 (£500 per station) be allowed for the provision of pumping station duties for 2018/2019.

(NB) – The District Officer and Mr Few declared a financial interest when this item was discussed.

B.1121 Maintenance work in the District

The Chairman outlined the maintenance work to be carried out during the course of the year.

B.1122 State-aided Schemes

Consideration was given to the desirability of undertaking further State-aided Schemes in the District and whether any future proposals should be included in the capital forecasts provided to the Environment Agency.

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time

B.1123 Environment Agency – Precepts

Miss McShane reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2018/2019 in the sum of £7,824 (the precept for 2017/2018 being £7,709).

B.1124 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

- a) Miss McShane reported that the sum of £880.47 (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency (£1,058.70 representing 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2017/2018 less £178.23 overpaid in respect of the financial year 2016/2017).
- (b) Further to minute B.1086(b), Miss McShane referred to the discussions with the Environment Agency over the monies available to fund highland water claims.

RESOLVED

That the position be noted and the situation kept under review.

B.1125 Association of Drainage Authorities

Miss McShane reported:-

a) Annual Conference

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities would be held in London on Wednesday the 14th November 2018.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk be authorised to obtain a ticket for the Annual Conference of the Association for any Member who wishes to attend.

b) Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse Branch

On the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association held in Prickwillow, Ely on Tuesday the 6th March 2018 and the fact that the administration of this branch has now been passed to the Middle Level Commissioners.

Miss McShane advised that the new members elected to the Branch's Executive Committee included the Middle Level Commissioners' Operations Engineer, Jonathan Fenn and the Chairman, Marc Heading who was appointed Vice Chairman (with Harry Raby of the Bedford Group being appointed Chairman). She added that the agreed aim of this reworked branch will be to be more pro-active and accordingly it was expected that the Executive Committee will meet periodically to discuss catchment wide issues and will then report back to the Branch at its Annual Conference on what it has achieved over the year.

c) Subscriptions

That it was proposed by ADA to increase subscriptions by approximately 1% in 2018, viz:- from £609 to £612.

RESOLVED

That the increased ADA subscription be paid for 2018.

d) Liability of Board Members

Miss McShane referred to, and the Board noted, a Guidance Note received from ADA dated the 28th September 2017 which summarised the issue of when Members of an Internal Drainage Board may be held personally liable for actions which they take in that capacity.

Miss McShane advised that the Board had management liability insurance in place, which was in respect of claims made as a result of a wrongful act against members of the Board arising from the management and operations of the Board and that the cover attached was £5,000,000.

e) Updating IDB Byelaws

Miss McShane referred to a letter received from ADA dated the 20th October 2017.

Miss McShane reported that most of the IDBs in the area have a set of Byelaws which were made under Section 34 of the Land Drainage Act 1976 for the secure and efficient working of the drainage system in their area.

Defra have now suggested that the Byelaws which have been adopted by IDBs should be updated to include within their purpose powers in relation to environment matters. To do this it will be necessary to update the current Byelaws in line with the standard model byelaw published in October 2012.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk be requested to draft new Byelaws to include compliance with the environment regulations for consideration by the Board at their next meeting.

f) New Model Policy Statement

Miss McShane referred to the publication of the new model Policy Statement issued in late April by ADA.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk be requested to draft a new Policy Statement for consideration by the Board at their next meeting.

g) Floodex 2019

That Floodex 2019 will be held at The Peterborough Arena on the 27th and 28th February 2019.

B.1126 Capital Programme Strengthening and Delivery

Miss McShane referred to, and the Board noted, the slides presented by the Environment Agency at the Great Ouse IDB and EA Strategic Group meeting on the 19th April 2017.

B.1127 Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

Miss McShane reported that a meeting of the Chairmen of all of the Middle Level Commissioners' administered Boards met on the 8th March 2018 to discuss the challenges facing Boards. Innes Thomson, Chief Executive of ADA, spoke on the arrangements adopted by other Boards around the country.

Matters raised included:-

- 1) Advantages, disadvantages and barriers to amalgamation.
- 2) Future meetings and the opportunity for Boards to request items be added to the agenda.
- 3) Reviewing Board membership numbers.
- 4) Frequency of Board meetings.

B.1128 Defra IDB1 Returns

Miss McShane referred to a letter received from Defra dated the 24th April 2018 and reported on the proposed changes to the Annual Defra IDB1 Returns.

She advised that the IDB1 form is completed each year in accordance with the Land Drainage Act 1991 and is submitted to Defra, the Environment Agency and to each Council which pays an IDB Special Levy. The form provides information on such items as income, expenditure, a policy delivery statement, the bio-diversity action plan, asset management and governance matters.

Miss McShane reported that for the year ended 31st March 2017 the IDB1 return was amended and additional information requested, such as details of board membership, attendance at meetings, whether elections are held and confirmation that the complaints procedure is accessible from the home page on an IDB's website. This information will enable Defra to gather more data in relation to IDBs.

For 2018 the IDB1 form will be further expanded. The additions were developed in co-operation with the Environment Agency, ADA and invited IDB representatives including David Thomas on behalf of the Middle Level Commissioners. The inclusion of items within the form which would either be difficult to report on or provide information which collectively would be of little value have been resisted and the new IDB1 form should, as a result, allow Defra to gain a much clearer insight into what IDBs deliver annually. It is hoped that this in turn will assist with raising further the profile of IDBs.

B.1129 Requirements for a Biosecurity Policy

Miss McShane reported that, from 2018, Board's will be required to advise (through the IDB1 returns) whether they have in place a Biosecurity Policy. This is considered necessary following increased concern over the spread of alien invasive weeds from one waterbody to another, possibly through the use of contracted or shared plant which can carry elements of such plants if not properly cleaned after being moved from contaminated locations. ADA have stated that they support the principle of having a policy in place and, conscious that for most boards the policy requirements will be identical, they are producing a model document. The Board were asked to confirm that they were content to adopt a policy as long as it is suitable and will not include overly onerous steps which might restrict their activities.

RESOLVED

That the draft policy be reviewed by the Board at their next meeting.

B.1130 The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Miss McShane referred to the Guidance Note on the implementation of the GDPR and that all organisations must become fully compliant by the 25th May 2018.

RESOLVED

That Miss Lorna McShane, Solicitor and Assistant Clerk be appointed the Board's Data Protection Officer.

B.1131 Charging for Environmental Permits

Miss McShane reported on the consultation on charging for Environmental Permits which closed on the 26th January 2018. It is suggested within the consultation that charging should be designed to recover costs and as such there may be significant increases in the charges for obtaining Environment Agency permits for some IDB activities which require such consents. ADA have responded on behalf of the industry and their response is available on their website, www.ada.org.uk/2018/01/ada-responds-environment-agency-charge-proposals-2018.

B.1132 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2016/2017

- a) The Board considered and approved the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2017.
- b) The Board considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2017.

B.1133 Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England

Miss McShane referred to the recently issued Practitioners' guide to proper practices to be applied in the preparation of statutory Annual Accounts and Governance Statements which will apply to Annual Returns commencing on or after 1st April 2018.

B.1134 Budgeting

Miss McShane referred to the budget comparison of the forecast out-turn and the actual out-turn for the financial year ending 31st March 2018.

B.1135 Review of Internal Controls

- a) The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with the current system of Internal Controls.
- b) The Board considered and approved the appointment of Whiting & Partners as Internal Auditor for the three period 2018/2019 to 2020/2021.
- c) The Board approved the Audit Strategy and Audit Plan.

B.1136 Risk Management Assessment

- a) The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with their current Risk Management Policy.
- b) The Board considered and approved the insured value of their buildings and considered having a revaluation of the Board's real estate assets, as required for audit purposes.

RESOLVED

That no changes be made to the valuation at this time and for the matter to be reviewed again at the next annual meeting.

B.1137 Appointment of External Auditor

Further to minute B.1057, Miss McShane referred to the decision by the Commissioners to join the Sector Led Auditor Appointment Body for the appointment of the External Auditor and that the Smaller Authorities' Auditor Appointments (SAAA Ltd) had formed for this purpose. She reported that they had now confirmed the appointment of PKF Littlejohn to carry out the external audit of the Commissioners for a five year period commencing with the financial year 2017/2018.

B.1138 Exercise of Public Rights

Miss McShane referred to the publishing of the Notice of Public Rights and publication of unaudited Annual Return, Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and the Notice of Conclusion of the Audit and right to inspect the Annual Return.

B.1139 Annual Governance Statement – 2017/2018

The Board considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended on the 31st March 2018.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2018.

B.1140 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £102,055.09 which had been made during the financial year 2016/2017.

(NB) – The District Officer and Mr Few declared interests in the payment made to them.

B.1141 Anglia Farmers

The Board considered their contractual arrangements with Anglia Farmers for the supply of electricity.

Miss McShane reported that the contract with Anglia Farmers ceases on the 30th September 2018 and advised that, in view of the problems encountered over the past 15 months with the operation of the contract, a report had been sent to all Chairmen.

Miss McShane further advised that, although the Clerk was able to recommend to the Board that they remain with Anglia Farmers for a further contract period, usually 18 months to 2 years, during which time the service provided by them will be monitored, it was the Board's decision and

should they wish to be removed from the buying group then it would be the Board's responsibility to negotiate its own separate electricity contract with a supplier.

Miss McShane reported that the Chairman had agreed for the Board to remain with Anglia Farmers.

RESOLVED

That the actions of the Chairman be approved and the current arrangements be continued for a further contract period, during which time the service provided by them, in relation to the running of the contract, be monitored.

B.1142 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2017/2018

The Board considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2018 as required in the Audit Regulations.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Return, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2018.
- ii) A Pump Replacement fund be created with £4,000 to be transferred from reserves for 2018/2019.

B.1143 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2018/2019

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2018/2019 and were informed by Miss McShane that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by special levy on local billing authorities would be respectively 68.78% and 31.22%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £85,279 be raised by drainage rates and special levy.
- iii) That the amounts comprised in the sum referred to in ii) above to be raised by drainage rates and to be met by special levy are £58,661 and £26,618 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 16.70p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v)
 - a) That a Special levy of £24,574 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
 - b) That a Special levy of £2,044 be made and issued to Huntingdonshire District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.

- vi) That the seal of the Board be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levies referred to in resolution (v).
- vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levies by such statutory powers as may be available.
- viii) That the sum of £4,000 be transferred from General Funds towards the future provision for pump replacement and that a similar sum be set aside for 2019/2020.

B.1144 Display of rate notice

RESOLVED

That notice of the rate be affixed within the District in accordance with Section 48(3)(a) of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

B.1145 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Monday the 10th June 2019.