

RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Ramsey First (Hollow) Internal Drainage Board
held at Ramsey Golf Club on Thursday the 28th June 2018

PRESENT

D J Caton Esq (Chairman)	S E Johnson Esq
A C Roberts Esq (Vice Chairman)	J M Palmer Esq
C C Armstrong Esq	D C Roberts Esq
J C Armstrong Esq	R E Stacey Esq
D E Stokes Esq	

Miss Samantha Ablett (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Christopher Convine (representing the Consulting Engineers) were in attendance.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from T Caton Esq, P A Drinkwater Esq, T E A Noble Esq and B Rignall Esq.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Sam Johnson who was attending his first meeting of the Board.

The Chairman enquired whether ALL Board members were happy for the meeting to be recorded. All members were in agreement.

B.801 Declarations of Interest

Miss Ablett 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.

B.802 Inspection of District

Prior to the Meeting those Members present undertook an Inspection of the District which embraced (inter alia):-

i) Hollow Pumping Station

The Chairman reported that there had been another theft of gas oil from the pumping station. He added that, the installation of CCTV may not be effective due to camera height limitations, but the Consulting Engineer had mentioned putting sensor levels in the fuel tanks to highlight any sudden drop in capacity.

The District Officer reported that should the control panels fail he was unable to operate any pumps, either electric or diesel, and enquired whether these could be started without the control panel. Mr Convine advised that the Mechanical and Electrical Engineer had confirmed that the 24v batteries in the pump house could start the new diesel engine.

The District Officer considered that it would be useful if the Consulting Engineers could provide written procedures showing how to start the new engine with the batteries during a power

failure and for these to be kept in the building where the control panel for the new diesel engine was sited. He added that a demonstration of how to follow the instructions would also be beneficial.

Members inspected the control panel for the 2 electric pumps, situated in the old pumping station. The Chairman reminded Members that the Board had previously obtained an estimate for moving the electric pumps control equipment from the old diesel building into the GRP enclosure at the new station, which had amounted to £55,000. However, in view of the condition of the building, the Board needs to consider the options available to protect the control panel should any problems arise especially in view of health & safety requirements. Members discussed this and enquired whether a separate building could be built or some container unit installed within the existing station.

ii) Emergency Piling Works

The Chairman reported that the work to be carried out at Meggs Drove last year had been postponed as there had been a bank slippage on part of the drain between points 2-11, which resulted in emergency piling works being carried out by the Middle Level Commissioners to stabilise the bank. Members inspected the piling and expressed their satisfaction with the work carried out.

iii) Meggs Drove

Members inspected the corner of the drain at Meggs Drove. The Chairman advised that the Board was experiencing problems at this point with fly tipping. He reported that a provisional sum of £1,600 had been included in the budget to allow for bank levelling and the installation of a gate and fencing along reach 24-25.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Consulting Engineers contact the District Officer:-
 - a) To discuss the options available to the Board for protecting the control panel kept in the old pumping station. i.e. a separate building within the old building or a container unit
 - b) In relation to the procedures necessary in the event of a power failure to start the new engine and to provide written instructions in relation thereto.
- ii) That the Consulting Engineers contact the Chairman to discuss the options available to prevent or reduce further theft of diesel, i.e. fuel level monitoring, CCTV, audible warning system and to advise of the costs involved.

B.803 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 29th June 2017 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.804 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED

That Mr D J Caton be appointed Chairman of the Board.

B.805 Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED

That A C Roberts Esq be appointed Vice Chairman of the Board.

B.806 Board Membership

Further to minute B.762, Miss Ablett reported that Mr Sam Johnson had accepted the invitation to join the Board.

B.807 Election of Members of the Board

Miss Ablett reported that, as the number of candidates for membership of the Board did not exceed the number of persons to be elected (twelve), the following candidates were elected as Members of the Board for a period of three years from the 1st November 2014, viz:-

ARMSTRONG Cedric Charles
ARMSTRONG Jacob C
CATON David James
CATON Tom
DRINKWATER Paul Andrew
JOHNSON Sam E

NOBLE Thomas Edwin Arthur
RIGNALL BEN
ROBERTS Andrew Charles
ROBERTS David Charles
STACEY Robert E
STOKES David Ernest

(NB) – Councillor J M Palmer is also a Member of the Board as the nominee of Huntingdonshire District Council under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

B.808 Appointment of District Officer

RESOLVED

That C C Armstrong Esq be appointed District Officer to the Board during the ensuing year.

B.809 Appointment of Clerk

RESOLVED

That the Middle Level Commissioners be appointed Clerk to the Board for the ensuing year.

B.810 Clerk's fee

The Board gave consideration to the Clerk's fee for 2018/2019.

RESOLVED

That there be no increase in the fee paid to the Clerk for the year 2018/2019

B.811 Warboys Landfill Site

Further to minute B.766, the Chairman advised that, together with the District Officer and Mr Convine, he had attended a meeting with the Parish Council to inspect the plans for the proposed Biomass facility. He tabled plans that had been amended following the meeting and advised that the blue line, which represented a storage tank around the site, had been added. The idea of the storage tank was to hold surface water, much like an attenuation pond, however should there be a spillage at the site, this may result in the tank also containing leachate.

Mr Convine advised that, due to the nature of the works, an application had been made to both Huntingdonshire District Council and Cambridgeshire Councils in January 2018. However, as a full environmental assessment was now required the application was to be considered in July.

Members discussed the proposed plans and expressed their concerns that, although the facility was outside the Board's area, it was within the Highland area, and should any spillage occur, this would discharge into the Main Drain within the District and ultimately into the Middle Level system and for these reasons were opposed to it.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to Cambridgeshire County Council advising of the Board's concerns regarding potential leaks from the facility, which could result in leachate discharging into both the Board's District and that of the Middle Level Commissioners.

B.812 Contravention of byelaws

Further to minute B.767, the District Officer referred to the problem with flytipping at the corner of Meggs Drove and of the gate and fence to be installed, as discussed at the inspection. He reported that there were trees in close proximity to the Board's drain at Froghall Farm which, although outside the 9 metre maintenance strip their canopy could, in time, overhang the strip thus restricting access for maintenance works.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to the Occupier of the bungalow to which 2 acres of field is attached (at Froghall Farm) advising of the Board's 9 metre byelaw strip and of the landowners responsibility to cut down any branches should they overhang the maintenance strip in the future.

B.813 Water Transfer Licences

Further to minute B.769, Miss Ablett 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.814 Consulting Engineers' Report

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

Ramsey First (Hollow) I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – June 2018

Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

The maintenance works carried out last year generally accorded with the recommendations approved by the Board at its last annual meeting.

During last summer an area of bank subsidence was identified along reach 2-11, adjacent to Bungalow Farm. With the Chairman's prior approval bank revetment works were carried out to return the bank to its original profile and prevent any further threat of subsidence to the adjacent property or nearby Long Drove. It was agreed to postpone the approved barrier and fencing works at Meggs Drove, utilising the expenditure to complete the required revetment works at Bungalow Farm.

Following a request from the Chairman, reach 12-26-27-28 was included in the approved machine cleansing programme for the year.

During the additional machine cleansing works along reach 12-26-27-28 last year, it was noted the culvert upstream of Point 27 was restricting water flows during pumping operations. With the Chairman's approval the culvert pipe was cleaned out whilst the contractor's machine was on site carrying out the machine cleansing. As can be seen in the adjacent picture, a significant amount of silt deposit was removed from the culvert pipe during the pull through operation.



A recent joint inspection of the Board's district drains has been undertaken with the District Officer. The inspection revealed that the majority of district drains are being retained in a satisfactory condition and maintained to a good standard. However, the inspection highlighted stands of reed and emergent aquatic vegetation throughout the Board's drains, predominantly within the Highland spur drains, reaches 10-57-58-59-60-61-62-63 and 39-50-51-52-53-54-55-56. It is recommended that an application of Roundup herbicide is applied to the affected reaches to prevent any further infestation. Provision has been made within the estimated costs to allow for such herbicide applications to be undertaken.

Stands of reed and emergent aquatic vegetation are also evident throughout the Bury spur drains, reaches 60-67-68-69-70-71 and 68-72, and the Ramsey Hollow spur drains, reaches 3-29, 5-30 and 8-38. It is recommended that these drains are treated with an application of Roundup and followed up by light machine cleansing post-harvest this year.

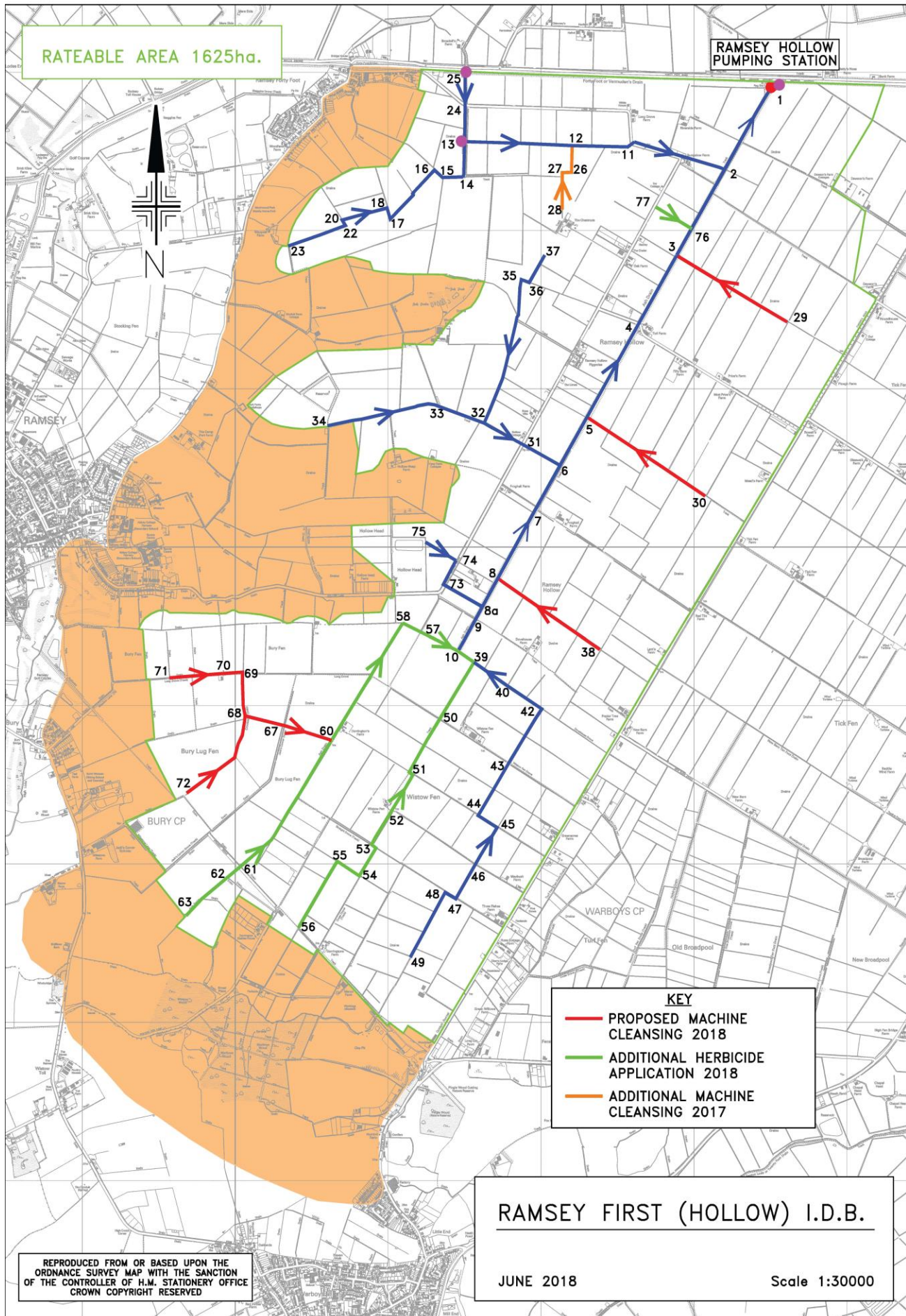
Messrs Ashman have indicated that they are available to undertake the Board's flail mowing requirements again this year. Flail mowing in advance of the machine cleansing works will be required to afford the machine operator optimum visibility to undertake the cleansing work. Following the Board's previous approval it is recommended that the Meggs Drove drain, reaches 24-25 and 2-11, continue to be mown on an annual basis, to promote the colonisation of grass species and reduce the presence of broadleaved weeds, encouraging a tight grass sward to establish. A sum for flail mowing both the aforementioned reaches has been included within the Board's estimated costs.

A provisional sum has been included within the estimated costs for any emergency machine cleansing, cott removal or culvert clearance works that may be required later in the year.

The estimated cost of this year's recommended Weed Control and Drain Maintenance works follows. Please refer to the following plan for locations.

1	Allow sum for Roundup herbicide application where required throughout the district	Item	Sum	850.00
2	Machine cleanse the following Highland Spur Drains			
	i) Reach 60-67-68-69-70-71	1350 m @	1.00	1350.00
	ii) Reach 68-72	700 m @	1.00	700.00
3	Machine cleanse Ramsey Hollow spur drains			
	i) Reach 3-29	840 m @	1.00	840.00
	ii) Reach 5-30	930 m @	1.00	930.00
	iii) Reach 8-38	800 m @	1.00	800.00
4	Allow for flail mowing in advance of machine cleansing	Item	Sum	2500.00
5	<u>Provisional Item</u> Allow for bank levelling and gate and fence installation along reach 24-25	Item	Sum	1600.00
6	<u>Provisional Item</u> Allow for emergency machine cleansing, cott removal or culvert clearance works	Item	Sum	2000.00
7	Fees for inspection, preparation and submission of report to the Board, arrangement of herbicide treatments and machine cleansing works	Item	Sum	900.00
TOTAL				£12,470.00

Orders for the application of herbicides by the Middle Level Commissioners are accepted on condition that they are weather dependent, and they will not be held responsible for the efficacy or failure of any treatment.



Ramsey Hollow Pumping Station

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

Diesel Pump

Some problems with the diesel pump automatic level controller have been experienced these now appear to be resolved.

The telemetry system is currently not operating correctly and may require a site visit from the manufacturer, Oriel Systems.

Pumping Hours

Ramsey Hollow Pumping Station	Total hours run Jun 15 - Jun16	Total hours run Jun 16 - Jun17	Total hours run Jun 17 - Jun18	
No 1 Electric	15840-15951 = 101	15951-16040 = 89	362	
No 2 Electric	9760-9927 = 167	9927-10084 = 157	270	
No 3 Diesel	339-351 = 12	351-354 = 3	Approximately 10	
Total Hours Run	280	249	642	

	Total hours run Jun 11 - Jun 12	Total hours run Jun 12- Jun13	Total hours run Jun 13 - Jun14	Total hours run Jun 14 - Jun15
No 1 Electric	14431-14449 = 18	14449-15413 = 964	15413 -15413 = 0	15413-15840 = 427
No 2 Electric	8795 – 8818 = 23	8818 – 8967 = 149	8967 – 9692 = 725	9692-9760 = 68
No 3 Diesel	40 – 58 = 18	58 – 261 = 203	261 – 329 = 68	329-339 = 10
Total Hours Run	59	1316	793	505

Insurance

The Board's new insurer AXA/HSB does include Engineering Insurance cover for sudden and unforeseen breakdown of pumping plant; however 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 was contacted but would not offer cover without similar requirements. Therefore, no insurance is currently in place.

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

None of the planning applications listed below have an informative advising the applicants of their separate legal obligation to comply with the requirements of the Board’s Byelaws and the Land Drainage Act (LDA).

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 13 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>
163	Enquiry	Client of BE Design	Biomass Facility	Puddock Hill, Warboys*
164	H/70236/SCRE	Caulmert Ltd	Biomass Facility	Puddock Hill, Warboys*
165	H/17/01493/HHFUL	Mr S Searle	Residence (Extension)	Hollow Lane, Ramsey
166	H/17/02260/FUL	Mr & Mrs Walker	Residential (2 dwellings)	Hollow Road, Ramsey Forty Foot
167	H/17/02316/FUL	Mr & Mrs T Caxton	Residence	The Hollow, Ramsey
168	H/17/02251/FUL	Mr D Yates	Residence (Extension)	Hollow Lane, Ramsey
169	H/17/01927/FUL	Ramsey Golf Club	Store / Shop	Meadow Lane, Bury
170	H/17/02313/PMBPA	Mr R Meadow	Residential (2 dwellings)	Hollow Road, Ramsey Forty Foot
171	Enquiry	Client of RPS Group	Residential (40 dwellings)	Meadow Lane, Bury
172	H/5002/18/CW	Sycamore Planning Ltd	Biomass Facility	Puddock Hill, Warboys*
173	18/00262/FUL	Mr C Boon	Commercial/ Agricultural	Hollow Road, Ramsey Forty Foot
174	H/18/00405/AGDET	Mr Johnson	Agricultural	Puddock Road, Warboys
175	H/18/070070/SCOP	Caulmert Ltd	Biomass Facility	Puddock Hill, Warboys*

Planning applications ending 'SCRE' relate to Screening Opinions
Planning applications ending 'PMBPA' relate to Prior Approval - Agricultural to Dwellings
Planning applications ending 'CW' relate to County Waste
Planning applications ending 'AGDET' relate to Agricultural Determination
Planning application ending 'SCOP' relate to Scoping Opinions

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.

No further correspondence has been received from the applicant or the applicant's agent concerning the following development and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

- *Replacement building to provide accommodation for seasonal farm employees; removal of redundant farm structures at Three Fishes Farm, Puddock Road, Warboys – Three Fishes Farm Ltd (MLC Ref No 130)*

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.

Residential development for 9 houses following demolition of industrial building at Altanet Technology Ltd, Hollow Road, Ramsey Forty Foot - Mr H Dawson (MLC Ref Nos 141 & 146) & Shire Homes & Building Services (MLC Ref Nos 159 & 160)

Further to the last Board report, it is confirmed that surface water from the development is to be discharged into the neighbouring lake (as the former industrial building did), with treated effluent discharging into the Forty Foot River. Work has commenced on site.

Construction of a heat and power plant comprising biomass energy from waste facility and treatment of waste water by evaporation treatment plant & associated infrastructure at Warboys Landfill Site, Puddock Hill, Warboys – Client of BE Design (MLC Ref No 163), Caulmert Limited (MLC Ref No 163 & 175) and Sycamore Planning Ltd (MLC Ref No 172)

A meeting was held at the Middle Level Commissioners' offices with representatives of the Board, engineers from MLC and planners from Sycamore Planning Ltd (who are proposing to install a Biomass combined heat and power plant and waste water treatment plant at Warboys landfill site) present. The purpose of the meeting was for the planners to explain how the plant will operate and how it will impact on the Board. Of relevance is that safety measures are to be installed to prevent waste water from entering the Board's drainage system and it is proposed that surface water from the site will be discharged into the Board's drainage system, for which a discharge consent will be required.

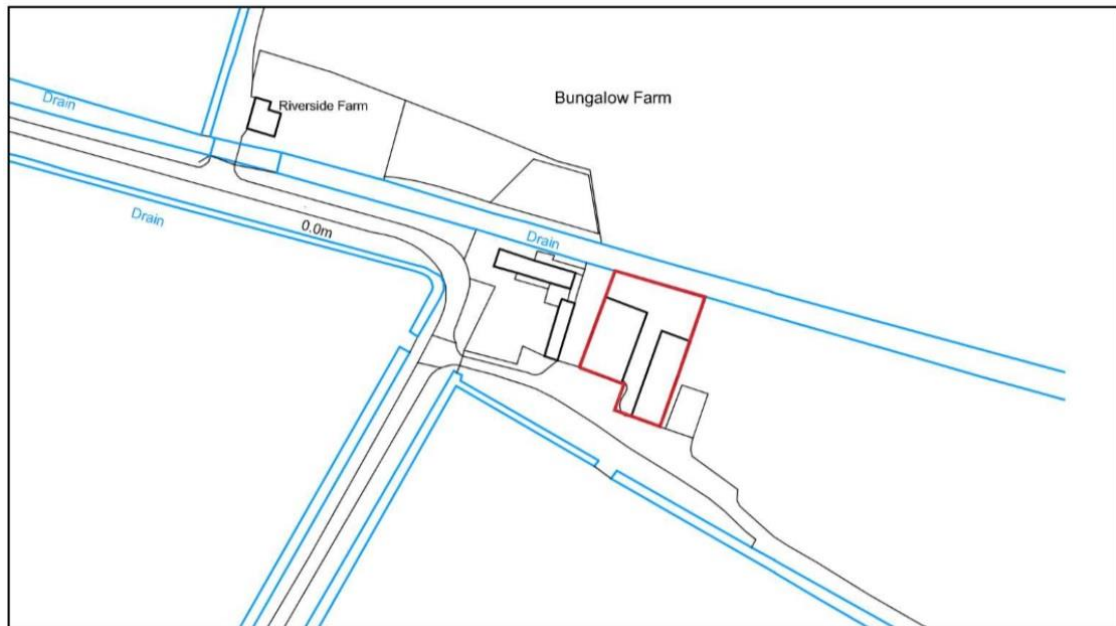
Proposed change of use to form two residential dwellings at Bungalow Farm, Hollow Road, Ramsey Forty Foot – Mr R Meadow (MLC Ref No 172)

A Prior Approval - Agricultural to Dwellings Planning application was submitted to the District Council in December for the conversion of agricultural buildings on the southern side of the Board's Drain between Points 2–11.

According to the District Council's Public Access web page for planning applications, a decision by the District Council remains "In progress".

This may be the result of the objection received from the Environment Agency which stated:

"The FRA submitted with this application does not comply with the requirements set out in paragraph 102 and 103 of the Planning Policy Guidance of the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that for areas at risk of flooding a site specific FRA must be undertaken which demonstrates that the development will be safe for its lifetime."



Extract from Richard Baker Surveyors Location Plan showing the site's proximity to the Board's system

Proposed development site for 40 residential units at Meadow Lane, Bury – Client of RPS Group (MLC Ref No 172)

Enquiries have been received from the RPS Group in respect of a parcel of land just within the Board's highland catchment to the north east of The Glebe, off Meadow Lane, Bury.

The enquirer was advised of the Board's pre-application processes but to date no instruction to undertake any of these processes has been received.

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 30 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”. In addition to the existing gauge at Chatteris WRC (EA gauge) and the Middle Level Commissioners’ gauges at Benwick, Pondersbridge, Holme and Abbots Ripton, the LLFA suggested additional gauges at Ramsey and Somersham, presumably on the WRCs. In respect of both the Board’s and Commissioners’ interests it was suggested that a rain gauge should be installed at Old Hurst and either Sawtry or Wood Walton WRCs.

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.

General Advice

Assistance has been given, on the Board's behalf, in respect of the following:

- (a) A fire extinguisher and cabinet has been installed by Fenland Fire Appliance LLP on the exterior wall of the GRP control building inside the compound. The site now complies with the requirements under BS5306-8:2012.

Consulting Engineer

11 June 2018

Ramsey First (Hollow) (324)\Reports\June 2018

With regards to the proposed residential dwellings at Bungalow Farm, Hollow Road, Ramsey Forty Foot (MLC Ref No 172), Mr Convine advised Members of the close proximity to the Boards drain and of the Board's right of access.

Miss Ablett 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 advised that the Board may wish to consider setting up a separate fund, within the Accounts, to allow for any sudden and unforeseen damage to the pumps.

Miss Ablett referred to the Planning Engineer's enquiry as to whether the Board wished for the Middle Level Commissioners to make a formal response to the local councils in relation to lack of informatives attached to decision notices advising applicants of their legal obligation to comply with the requirements of the Board's Byelaws and the Land Drainage Act.

RESOLVED

i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.

ii) Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

That the maintenance works contained in the Report be undertaken.

iii) Proposed residential dwellings at Bungalow Farm, Hollow Road, Ramsey Forty Foot (MLC Ref No 172)

That the Clerk write to the Land Registry Office advising of the Board's interest in the land and of the need to retain access to its' pumping station.

iv) That the Planning Engineer be requested to write to the Local Councils regarding informatives on decision notices.

(NB) – The District Officer declared an interest in the planning application (MLC Ref No 130) for Three Fishes Farm Ltd.

B.815 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.816 District Officer's Report

The District Officer reported on the maintenance works carried out during the year, most of which had been covered in the Consulting Engineers report, and advised that it had been a quiet year and all planned works had been completed.

He enquired whether the Board would consider pulling through the culverts where maintenance work was carried out in order to clean out the pipes.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved and that the Officer be thanked for his services over the preceding year.
- ii) That, during the course of maintenance works, the pulling through of culverts be approved.

B.817 Environmental Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Miss Ablett referred to the Environmental Officer's Newsletter, previously circulated to the Board.

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

Miss Ablett 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. 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 £25 contribution towards a gift for Cliff Carson's retirement.

B.818 District Labour

District Officer's Fee and Pumping Station Attendant's Wages

- a) The Board gave consideration to the District Officer's fee for 2018/2019.
- b) The Board gave consideration to the Pumping Station Attendant's wages for 2018/2019.
- c) NEST Pension Update

Further to minute B.730(iii), Miss Ablett reported that the employer's Nest pension contribution rate had increased to 3% from the 1st April 2018 and would be increasing from the 1st April 2019 to 4%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Board agree that the sum of £3,117 be allowed for the services of the District Officer for 2018/2019.
- ii) That the wages of the Pumping Station attendant be increased by 2.58% from 1st October 2018 as indicated on the Supplementary Schedule.

(NB) – Mr C Armstrong declared a financial interest when this item was discussed.

B.819 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.820 Environment Agency – Precepts

Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2018/2019 in the sum of £5,968 (the precept for 2017/2018 being £5,880).

B.821 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

(a) Miss Ablett reported that the sum of £199.25 (£8,556.98 less £8,357.73 paid on account) (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency based on the Board's actual expenditure on maintenance work for the financial year 2016/2017 together with the sum of £8,498.02 in respect of 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2017/2018.

(b) Further to minute B.780(b), Miss Ablett referred to the discussions with the Environment Agency over the monies available to fund highland water claims.

RESOLVED

That the position be kept under review.

B.822 Association of Drainage Authorities

Miss Ablett 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 Ablett 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 £536 to £542.

RESOLVED

That the increased ADA subscription be paid for 2018.

d) Liability of Board Members

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

Miss Ablett 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 Ablett 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.823 Capital Programme Strengthening and Delivery

Miss Ablett 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.824 Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

Miss Ablett 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.825 Member training and the appointment of a Health and Safety Officer

Miss Ablett 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.

Mr D Roberts advised that, although the Board acknowledged the importance of health and safety, he considered that the position of a Health & Safety Officer was a specialised field and would be too onerous and time consuming for any member of the Board. The Chairman agreed with his comments, especially as the members gave their time on a voluntary basis, but thought the Board had a duty of care to its pump attendant, District Officer and to the maintenance of the pumping station and the Board's District.

The Vice Chairman stated that the position of a Health & Safety Officer was a huge responsibility for any member of the Board and considered that this was an area that should be looked at by the Middle Level Commissioners as a whole and the various Boards make a contribution. Mr D Roberts agreed and stated that this position should be seen as no different to that of the Environmental Officer, to which the Boards contribute.

Members agreed that an individual at the Middle Level Commissioners or a professional external contractor should be appointed, to whom the Board would contribute. Miss Ablett advised that the Board would ultimately still be held responsible should a health and safety problem arise, even if the Middle Level Commissioners or a consultant were appointed, although she did confirm that any such appointment may reduce the risk of non-compliance.

RESOLVED

- i) That no Health & Safety Officer be appointed at this time.
- ii) That the matter be included as an agenda item for a Special Meeting to be held by the Middle Level Commissioners, to include all Chairmen, Vice Chairmen and District Officers, as soon as possible.
- iii) That the Board participate in any training organised through the Middle Level Commissioners.

B.826 Defra IDB1 Returns

Miss Ablett 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 Ablett 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.827 Requirements for a Biosecurity Policy

Miss Ablett 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.828 The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Miss Ablett 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.829 Charging for Environmental Permits

Miss Ablett 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.830 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.831 Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England

Miss Ablett 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.832 Budgeting

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

B.833 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.834 Risk Management Assessment

- a) The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with their current Risk Management system.
- 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.835 Appointment of External Auditor

Further to minute B.746, Miss Ablett 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.836 Exercise of Public Rights

Miss Ablett 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.837 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.838 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £61,813.13 which had been made during the financial year 2017/2018.

(NB) – The District Officer declared an interest in the payment made to him.

B.839 Anglia Farmers

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

Miss Ablett 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 Ablett 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 Ablett 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.840 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

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

B.841 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 Ablett 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 93.39% and 6.61%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That the surplus raised in 2018/2019 be transferred to a Future Works Fund.
- iii) That a total sum of £67,331 be raised by drainage rates and special levy.
- iv) 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 £62,877 and £4,454 respectively.
- v) That a rate of 26.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- vi) That a Special levy of £4,454 be made and issued to Huntingdonshire District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vii) That the seal of the Board be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levy referred to in resolution (v).
- viii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levy by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.842 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.843 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Thursday the 27th June 2019 (prior to which the District Inspection will be held).