

EUXIMOOR INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Euximoor Internal Drainage Board
held at the Middle Level Offices, March on Wednesday the 6th June 2018

PRESENT

N R Russell Esq (Chairman)	J E Heading Esq
P M Tegerdine Esq (Vice Chairman)	P Russell Esq
C W Albutt Esq	W Sutton Esq

Miss Samantha Ablett (representing the Clerk to the Board) was in attendance.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from J T Clarke Esq and F H Yeulett Esq.

B.941 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.942 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 7th June 2017 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.943 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED

That N R Russell Esq be appointed Chairman of the Board.

B.944 Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED

That P M Tegerdine Esq be appointed Vice Chairman of the Board.

B.945 Election of Board Members

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

ALBUTT Charles William
CLARKE James Templeman
HEADING John Edwin
RUSSELL Nigel Raymond

RUSSELL Paul
SUTTON William
TEGERDINE Peter Michael
YEULETT Frederick Hartley

B.946 Vacancies in Membership

Further to minute B.909, consideration was given to the filling of the two vacancies on the Board

RESOLVED

That no action be taken to fill the vacancies at the present time.

B.947 Water Transfer Licences

Further to minute B.911, 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.948 Flail mowing in the District 2018/2019

- a) Consideration was given to flail mowing operations in the District for 2018/2019.

RESOLVED

That the District Officer be engaged to undertake flail mowing operations on the District drains in 2018.

- b) Members considered flail mowing charges for 2018.

RESOLVED

That the current charge remain at £31 per hour.

(NB) – The Chairman and Mr P Russell declared interests when this item was discussed.

B.949 Possible Amalgamation with March East IDB

Further to minute B.913, the Chairman referred to the summary of information concerning the possible amalgamation of Euximoor and March East IDBs. He advised that there would only be savings in the region of £1,000, which Mr Heading thought was on the low side as he would have expected there to be greater savings.

Councillor Sutton felt that, in view of the numbers and ages of Board members, together with the reduction of farmers within the district, amalgamation was the way forward for the Board, to which Mr P Russell agreed.

Mr Heading advised that the Board had a responsibility to its ratepayers to operate efficiently and economically.

RESOLVED

That Mr Albutt advise March East IDB, at their next meeting, that Euximoor IDB were in favour of amalgamating.

B.950 Consulting Engineers' Report

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

Euximoor I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – May 2018

Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

At the Chairman's request an allowance has been made for any machine cleansing works, reed spraying and flail mowing deemed necessary within the district this year.

Pumping Stations

Other than matters previously reported or detailed below only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant at each of the stations appears to be mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition.

Iron Bridge

As instructed by the Chairman an investigation was carried out to see if the ultrasonic head could be raised and re-programmed to operate at the higher levels required by the catchment. It was found that the existing head cannot be raised as its cable is too short and is trapped in the duct. However, as the current ultrasonic head has a damaged cable, that in time will inevitably cause it to fail, the following is proposed.

1. Cut cable close to existing head.
2. From previously salvaged parts mount second hand ultrasonic head at higher position.
3. Join existing cable to second hand head.
4. Re-programme controller to new position of head.

Reed Fen

Plant Condition

A recent inspection shows that the pumpsets continue to operate reasonably well and give little indication of any major mechanical or electrical problems. The Board may therefore wish to again postpone any inspection/overhaul.

During April an intermittent fault occurred with the p#low level protect which inhibited the operation of both pumps. The unit was replaced and the problem has not reoccurred.

Weedscreen cleaner

Some further reshaping of the distorted front grab tines is required following the previously reported contact with an obstruction at the screen invert.

At its last meeting the Board put on hold the installation of a telemetry system and asked if a weedscreen cleaner failed warning light could be fitted to the machine. The Board is advised that

such a flashing red beacon is already fitted. However, it faces to the east and cannot be seen by Mr Ablutt. It could be relocated to a higher level in order to make it more visible, but this could not be seen from a distance during daylight hours.

The pumps are also fitted with external pump running indication lamps.

However, none of the above will operate in the event of a power failure, the Board may therefore wish to reconsider provision of a less expensive stand-alone telemetry system reporting faults via text messages to designated persons on a power failure etc.

Pumping hours

Reed Fen

Hours Run	<u>May 14- May 15</u>	<u>May 15- May 16</u>	<u>May 16- May 17</u>	<u>May 17- May 18</u>
No 1	803	382	149	722
No 2	678	27	98	216
Total	1481	409	247	938

Iron Bridge

Hours Run	<u>May 14- May 15</u>	<u>May 15- May 16</u>	<u>May 16- May 17</u>	<u>May 17- May 18</u>
Total	458	142	105	207

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 is being sought. In the interim there is no cover 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

Despite positive steps being taken, a review of the decisions that have recently been made in other Boards for whom the Commissioners provide a planning consultancy service, has identified that very few informatives are being added to Decision Notices advising the applicants of their separate legal obligation to comply with the requirements of the Board’s Byelaws and the Land Drainage Act.

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 new application has been received since the last meeting:

<i>MLC Ref.</i>	<i>Council Ref.</i>	<i>Applicant</i>	<i>Type of Development</i>	<i>Location</i>
27	F/YR17/0489/F	Mr R Ambrose	Residence (Extension)	Euximoor Drove, Christchurch

From the information provided it is understood that the development proposes to discharge surface water to soakaways, or similar infiltration systems.

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.

Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership (CFRMP)

The Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer has represented both the Middle Level Commissioners and their associated Boards since the 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. 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 uses 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 32 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 the 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 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.

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; 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.

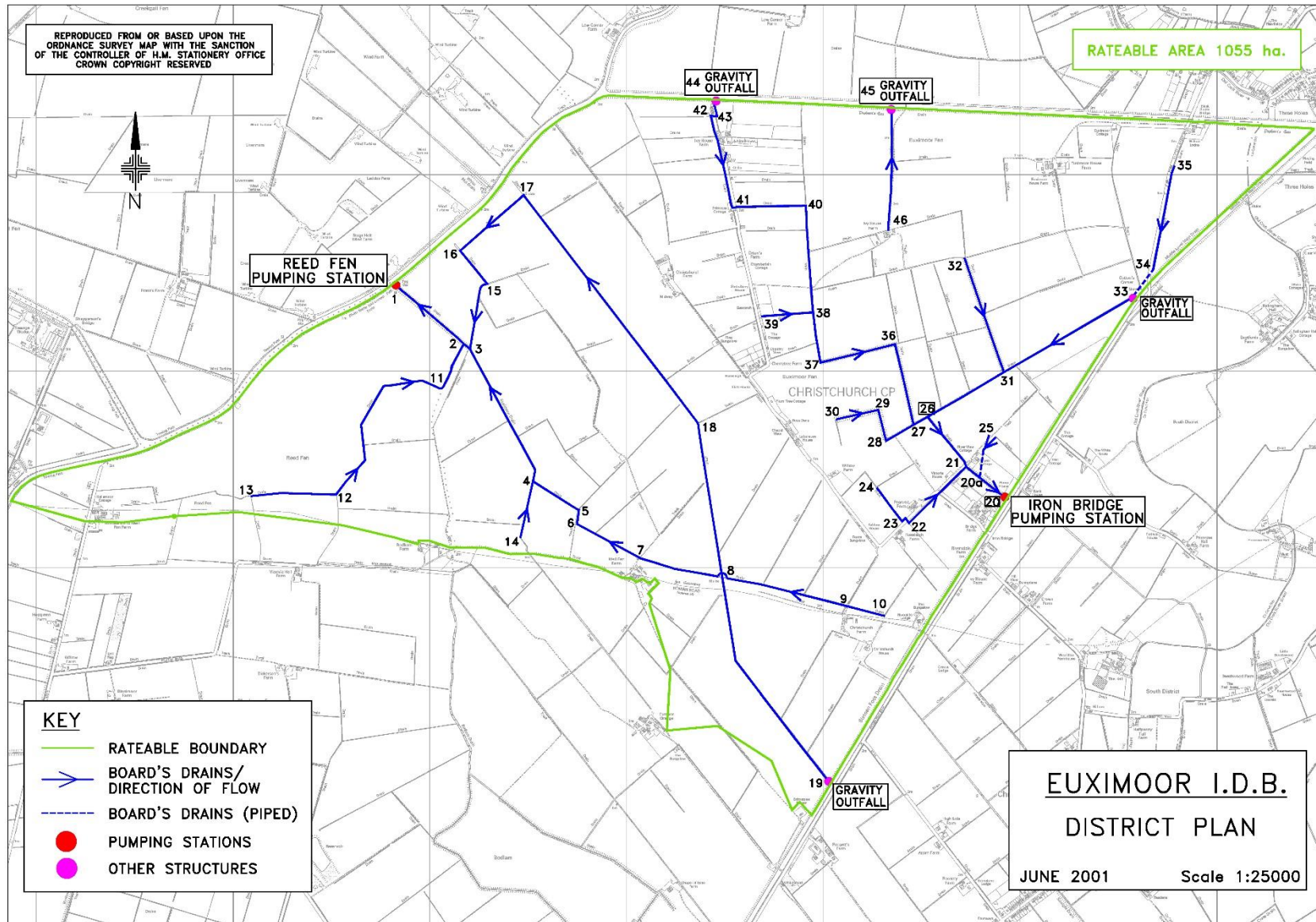
March Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2030

The March Neighbourhood Plan was formally adopted by the District Council on 2 November 2017 following a successful examination, subject to some modifications, and referendum.

Consulting Engineer

16 May 2018

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Miss Ablett confirmed that, as instructed by the Chairman, the repairs to the ultrasonic head at Iron Bridge pumping station had been carried out.

She reported that, following the last meeting, the damaged weedscreen cleaner grab had been inspected and it had been identified that further reshaping of the distorted front grab tines was required. Miss Ablett asked the Board for their instruction concerning this matter. Members requested that a quotation, together with details of the work involved for the repairs, be sent to the Chairman and that he be authorised to take any action required.

Miss Ablett reminded Members of their request, at the last meeting, for a quotation for the supply of an alternative warning system to alert the Pump Attendant in the event of the failure of the weedscreen cleaner. She referred to the Consulting Engineer's comments in their report and advised that the provision of a less expensive stand-alone telemetry system, which reported faults via text messages to designated persons, would cost in the region of £4,000. Mr Albutt reported that further problems had been experienced with the weedscreen cleaner and suggested that quotes be obtained. Members agreed that 3 quotes should be obtained for consideration at the next meeting.

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 regarding the 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. Councillor Sutton advised that he will raise this matter with the Council.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) That the Consulting Engineer provide the Chairman with a quotation for the re-shaping of the distorted front grab tines, together with details of the work involved for the repairs to the damaged weedscreen cleaner, and that he be authorised to take any action required.
- iii) That three quotations be obtained for a less expensive stand-alone telemetry system at Reed Fen Pumping Station for consideration at the next meeting.
- iv) That Councillor Sutton raises the Board's concerns with Fenland District Council in relation to lack of informatives attached to decision notices, advising applicants of their legal obligation to comply with the requirements of the Boards Byelaws and the Land Drainage Act.

(NB) - Councillor Sutton declared an interest in all planning matters as a member of Fenland District Council.

B.951 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.952 District Officer's Report

The District Officer reported that not as much slubbing work had been carried out this year mainly due to the type of crops being grown. He stated that there were lots of small fields where access was limited.

He confirmed that he had spoken with Fen Group and Russell Fowler, who has the long reach machine, in order to arrange the works for the coming year and advised that the 2018/2019 programme would be concentrated at the bottom of the District around the Iron Bridge area.

The District Officer asked that Members contact him if any further work was identified that needed attending to.

RESOLVED

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

B.953 Environmental Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Miss Ablett 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.

Mr Heading advised that Cliff Carson was due to retire at the end of June. Miss Ablett reported that Cliff Carson had recently filmed a piece on otters which was due to be shown on the BBC Spring Watch programme on Monday the 11th June.

RESOLVED

That the Board make a £25 contribution towards a gift for Cliff Carson's retirement.

B.954 Retirement of pump attendant at Reed Fen Pumping Station

The Chairman referred to a letter received from Alvar Smart dated the 15th April 2018 tendering his resignation.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Board's appreciation of the services rendered to the District by Mr Smart be recorded in the minutes and conveyed to him together their best wishes and a gift of £100.
- ii) That Mr Albutt be appointed pump attendant and he contact the Consulting Engineer for instructions.

B.955 District Officer's Fee and Pumping Station duties

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

RESOLVED

- i) That the Board agree that the sum of £1,250 be allowed for the services of the District Officer for 2018/2019.
- ii) That the Board agree that the sum of £720 be allowed for the provision of pumping station duties for 2018/2019.
- iii) That, in future years, an increase in accordance with the Middle Level Commissioners' award be made to the District Officer and Pump Attendant.

(NB) – The Chairman and Mr Albutt declared financial interests when this item was discussed.

B.956 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.957 Environment Agency – Precept

Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2018/2019 in the sum of £3,578 (the precept for 2017/2018 being £3,526).

B.958 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 for 2018 be paid.

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 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 2018 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.959 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.960 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.

Mr Albutt reported that he had attended to represent the Chairman together with two other Board members.

B.961 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.

RESOLVED

- i) That Mr P Russell be appointed Health and Safety Officer for one year only with assistance from Jonathan Fenn, the Middle Level Commissioners' Operations Engineer, and the position be reviewed at the next meeting of the Board.
- ii) That the Board participate in any training organised through the Middle Level Commissioners.

B.962 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.963 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.964 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.965 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.966 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.967 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.968 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.969 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.970 Risk Management Assessment

- a) The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with their current Risk Management Policy.
- b) The Board reviewed and approved the insured value of their buildings.

RESOLVED

That a copy of the Pumping Station Valuations be sent to all Board members.

B.971 Appointment of External Auditor

Further to minute B.897, Miss Ablett referred to the decision by the Board 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 Board for a five year period commencing with the financial year 2017/2018.

B.972 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.973 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.974 Payments 2017/2018

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £26,498.40 which had been made during the financial year 2017/2018.

(NB) – The Chairman and Mr P Russell declared interests in the payments made to Russell and Sons (Farmers) Ltd.

(NB) – Messrs Heading and Sutton declared interests (as Members of the Middle Level Board) in the payments made to the Middle Level Commissioners.

B.975 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 Commissioners 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.

(NB) - The Chairman, Messrs Albutt and Heading declared interests as members of Anglia Farmers

B.976 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 Return, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2018.

B.977 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 92.60% and 7.40%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.

- ii) That a total sum of £36,728 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 £34,009 and £2,719 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 21.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v) That a Special levy of £2,719 be made and issued to Fenland 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 levy referred to in resolution (v).
- vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levy by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.978 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.979 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Wednesday the 5th June 2019.