

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF TIME

6 June 2019

Mr Chairman, Lady and Gentlemen

Meeting of Commissioners
18th June 2019

I enclose the Agenda for the Meeting of the Commissioners to be held at the Middle Level Offices, March at **10.00 am** on Tuesday the 18th June 2019.

Please telephone or e-mail to confirm your attendance as soon as possible.

Yours truly

D C THOMAS

Clerk to the Commissioners

To the March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare any interests relating to the agenda.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of the Commissioners held on the 19th June 2018.

(Copy pages 12-24)

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

5. Appointment of Chairman

To appoint the Chairman of the Commissioners.
(Present Chairman – D G West Esq)

6. Appointment of Vice Chairman

To appoint the Vice Chairman of the Commissioners.
(Present Vice Chairman – Miss E Alerton)

7. Land Drainage Act 1991
Fenland District Council

The Clerk will report that Fenland District Council have re-appointed Councillor M Cornwell to be a Commissioner under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

The Clerk will also report that Councillor S Court was not reappointed.

8. Contingency Plans in the Event of Pump Failure

Further to minute C.898, the Clerk to report.

9. Potential Amalgamation with March Fifth DDC

Further to minute C.900, the Vice Chairman to report.

10. Updating IDB Byelaws

Further to minute C.908(e), to consider the Commissioners' updated Byelaws.

(Copy pages 25-36)

11. Policy Statement

Further to minute C.908(f), to review the Commissioners' updated Policy Statement on Water Level and Flood Risk Management.

(Copy pages 37-46)

12. Requirements for a Biosecurity Policy

Further to minute C.913, to consider the Commissioners' Biosecurity Policy.

(Copy pages 47-51)

13. Waste Recycling Centre

Further to minute C.931, the Clerk to report.

14. Norwood Pumping Station

Further to minute C.932, the Chairman to report.

15. Clerk's Report

The Clerk advises:-

i) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That a second Chair's meeting was held on the 17th October 2018 and that discussions centred around meeting Health and Safety legislative requirements and the possible options for increased efficiency in delivery of IDB/DDC services. Outline detailed proposals on the latter are to be brought before the next Chair's meeting for consideration.

That a third Chair's Meeting was held on the 11th March 2019 and that discussions at this centred around :-

- 1) The provision of increased support to IDBs on Health and Safety management and control.
- 2) The Future investment planning for the Lower River Great Ouse catchment.
- 3) Future planning for IDBs and DDCs administered by the Middle Level Commissioners.
- 4) Member training.

One option for future Board arrangements discussed at the second and third meetings was the subject of a briefing paper.

(Copy pages 52-54)

ii) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the 81st Annual Conference of the Association had been held at the ICE building in Westminster on Wednesday 14th November 2018 and had been well attended with the main speakers being Sue Hayman MP, Shadow Secretary for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, Robert Hössen crisis management expert from the Netherlands, John Curtin, Executive Director of Flood and Coastal Risk Management at the Environment Agency and David Cooper Deputy, Director for Flood and Coastal Erosion Management at Defra.

Sue Hayman – Shadow Secretary of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs spoke about her first-hand experience of flooding in Cumbria, the impact of flooding on mental health, building on flood plains and river management without environmental change and funding.

Robert Hössen, an expert for a government organisation in Holland gave a presentation on how incident management is organised and dealt with in the Netherlands.

John Curtin from the EA gave a presentation on the effects of Climate change and referred to the government's discussions regarding the likelihood, impact and severity of climate change.

David Cooper from Defra referred to the 25 year environment plan and to various Government publications made in 2018, which can be reviewed online.

That the Officers had been re-elected, subscriptions would be increasing by 2% for the following year and the Conference marked the launch of the Good Governance Guide for Internal Drainage Board Members.

That the Conference also marked the first presentation of the Chairman's award which were presented to Ian Russell from the Environment Agency for his work on Public Sector Co-operation Agreements and to Cliff Carson, former Environmental Officer of the Middle Level Commissioners and the Boards, for his work which was instrumental in changing views concerning conservation.

b) Annual Conference

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities will be held in London on Wednesday the 13th November 2019.

c) Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse Branch

That the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association was held on Tuesday the 12th March 2019. The meeting format was changed this year and included a morning workshop session led by the EA. Topics covered were water resources, PSCAs and future planning of FRM. Robert Caudwell spoke for ADA in the afternoon followed by talks from Brian Stewart, the FRCC Chair, Paul Burrows, the FRM Area Manager and Claire Jouvray, the Operations Delivery Manager.

That the date of the next meeting is Tuesday the 3rd March 2020.

d) Good Governance Guide for Internal Drainage Board Members

That, at the Annual Conference last November, ADA launched the publication of the Good Governance Guide for IDB Board Members. It provides Members with a comprehensive guide to their role as water managers servicing the local communities. The document has been produced with the financial support of Defra and will provide Members with knowledge to help expand their grasp of the role, and how best to execute their responsibilities on the Board.

That a copy of the Guide for each member has been included with this agenda and can be downloaded from the ADA website.

That ADAs workshops were well attended and are helping to deal with the questions being raised by Defra following the Audit Commission Report which criticized aspects of IDB governance. At least one member of this Board attended one of the two local workshops in the area and hence the Board will be able to record in the IDB1 Defra return that training has been provided on Governance. In addition to governance Defra appear to expect over time that training will be given for the following; Finance, Environment, Health, safety and welfare and Communications and engagement. The Board may wish to consider an order of priority for future training and a timetable for delivery.

e) Workstreams

That ADA annually review their workstreams and an update on these is included.

(Copy pages 55-57)

iii) External Bodies Conservation Initiatives

That there are two projects which may have an impact on the Board:-

a) The New Life on the Old West project being led by Cambs ACRE which aims to improve public understanding of the unique nature of biodiversity in the Fens and to deliver improvements on community green spaces and the ditch network. At the time of report the project has received a £100k grant to develop the project to the point at which a further £3/4 million grant bid will be made to support delivery.

b) The Cambridgeshire Fens Biosphere, Heritage Lottery have provided £10,000 of funding to research what would be necessary to bring Biosphere Reserve status to the Fens. This project is being led by the Wildlife Trust with support from Cambs ACRE.

If successful, this would lead to a new UNESCO designation. This would be a non-statutory designation which records the unique nature of the area. Most recently, the project received £1m for field scale alternative farming trial works in the Great Fen area and to assist with the Biosphere bid.

iv) Catchment Strategy

That the EA, LLFA, IDBs and other partners are co-operating in a piece of work which is looking at the pressures on the catchment from a development and climate change perspective. The aim will be to develop proposals which will guide and inform discussion makers.

v) Water Resources East Group Meeting

That the Middle Level Commissioners are setting up a Committee to discuss how they can work more closely with Anglian Water and other partners to ensure that the management of water and the quantity taken from the River Nene can be maximized in stressed years.

vi) Anglia Farmers

Further to minute C.926, the Clerk advises that the running of the remainder of the Anglia Farmers electricity contract has been monitored and is pleased to report that the service provided has improved.

In view of the significant increase in prices observed a utility specialist was approached and like for like prices at the time of tender, for a sample of meters, were requested in order that a comparison could be made with the prices obtained by Anglia Farmers. Although some savings may have been made, overall the prices obtained from Anglia Farmers were found to be generally competitive.

A verbal report was presented to the Middle Level Commissioners at their last Board meeting and, based on the results of the pricing comparison exercise and in view of the service provided by Anglia Farmers having improved, the Middle Level Commissioners resolved to remain with Anglia Farmers for a further contract period post 30th September 2019.

The Clerk had recommended that the Board also remain with Anglia Farmers. However, should the Board wish to choose to end their current contract, notice was required to be given by late January/early February 2019 following which they would then be responsible for negotiating their own separate electricity contract thereafter.

The Clerk will report that the Chairman had subsequently agreed for the Board to remain with Anglia Farmers.

vii) The New Rivers Authorities & Land Drainage Bill

That this Bill has completed its Committee stage in the House of Commons and passed through its Third Reading. It has now started its progression through the House of Lords.

The Bill, which has been prepared by Defra, aims to put the Somerset Rivers Authority onto a statutory footing as a precepting body, but it would also enable the reform of IDB ratings annual value lists. It does this by recognising the need to ensure that the methodology through which IDBs calculate and collect drainage rates and special levy sits on a sound legal basis that

can be periodically updated to contemporary values better reflecting current land and property valuation.

With the above in mind ADA has been working with Defra and a number of IDBs to test a new methodology using contemporary valuation and Council Tax lists that could be applied via this legislative change.

viii) Environment Agency consultation on changes to the Anglia (Central) RFCC

A consultation is taking place on the constitution of three RFCCs following a formal proposal for two new unitary authorities to be formed in Northamptonshire (West Northamptonshire and North Northamptonshire) has been submitted to the Government for consideration. If approved these authorities would come into existence on the 1 April 2020.

In Buckinghamshire the decision to create a single unitary authority replacing the existing five councils has been made by the Government, subject to Parliamentary approval. It would come into existence on the 1 April 2020.

Each new authority will be a unitary authority, delivering all local government services in their respective areas, including their functions as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFAs).

The membership of Thames RFCC, Anglian (Central) RFCC, and Anglian (Northern) RFCC currently includes representation from one or both of the existing county councils. To reflect the changes proposed the membership of all three RFCC will need to be varied before 1 December 2019.

At the same time to better reflect a catchment-based approach it is proposed to change the name of Anglian (Central) RFCC to Anglian (Great Ouse) RFCC. ADA has stated that it supports the naming revision.

16. Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

To consider the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

(Copy pages 58-84)

17. Capital Improvement Programme

To review and approve the Commissioners' future capital improvement programme.

(Copy page 85)

18. Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

The Clerk to refer to the Conservation Officer's newsletter, previously circulated to the Commissioners, and to consider the most recent BAP Report.

(Copy pages 86-97)

19. Pumping Station duties

- a) To give consideration to the payments in respect of pumping station duties for 2019/2020.
- b) To give consideration to the fuel allowance payable to Mr Alterton.

20. State-aided Schemes

To consider whether to undertake further State-aided Schemes and whether any future proposals should be included in the forward capital forecasts provided to the Environment Agency.

Update on the EA grant-in-aid position

The Clerk will report that the EA undertook a ‘refresh’ of its grant allocation schedule and optimised it to increase the likelihood of meeting the government outcome measure targets. As part of this some schemes were deferred in favour of those which could be delivered within the next two years with certainty and the programme has, as a consequence, become financially oversubscribed. This effectively means that there will be little or no chance of receiving grant for any new schemes between now and 2021 (at the earliest). This date marks the end of the six-year funding commitment and whilst it is understood that the EA are pressing hard to have another six-year settlement and, if agreed to by treasury, for this to be larger than the previous one to help address the increasing investment required to tackle climate change driven impacts. At this point in time we do not know what will happen and changes could be made in any event to the funding model, what outcome targets are or the process of securing grant. What is clear is that the further ahead that IDBs collectively plan their investment needs the more likely whatever grant is available will be accessible by them.

Some members will recall that in 2009 asset surveys were carried out on all IDB pumping stations. As ten years has now passed it might be timely to revisit and update these to reflect any changes that might have occurred and for this updated information to be used to plan for future investment needs. Similarly, as it is five years since these assets were valued for insurance reasons, it is also considered worthwhile revising the rebuilding estimates to reflect construction cost inflation.

The Boards instruction on this matter is requested.

21. Environment Agency – Precept

The Clerk will report that the precept for the financial year 2019/2020 has been fixed at £1,102.88 representing a rate (including special levies) of 1.70p.

The precept for 2018/2019 was £1,050.

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

- a) The Clerk will report that following his submission of claims for contributions the gross sum of £1,124.87 (inclusive of supervision) has been received from the Environment Agency (£1,311.26 representing 80% of the Commissioners’ estimated expenditure for the financial year 2018/2019 less £186.39 overpaid in respect of the financial year 2017/2018).

b) Further to minute C.871 (b), the Clerk will refer to the discussions with the Environment Agency over the monies available to fund highland water claims.

23. Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Subscriptions

The Clerk will report that it is proposed by ADA to increase subscriptions by approximately 2% for 2019, viz:- from £542 to £553.

b) Future Communications

The Clerk will refer to a letter received from ADA dated 18th October 2018 (copy page 98) and to the form included with this agenda. Alternatively the form can be completed and returned electronically via the link at www.ada.org.uk/communications.

Please note that ADA requires a completed form from each member in order to continue to receive communications from ADA in 2019.

24. Health and Safety

(a) Further to minute C.911, the Chairman to report.

(b) The Clerk will report that at the autumn Middle Level and Associated Drainage Board's Chairs meeting, a request was made to seek to either take on an additional employee or employ a contractor to specifically support the Drainage Boards to help them meet their legal Health and Safety requirements and also deliver the specified requirements of the Board's insurers who are calling for evidence that appropriate measures are in place to manage Health and Safety. Quotes were sought and a letter sent to the Chairman for his consideration.

25. Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Commissioners – 2017/2018

a) To consider the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2018.

(Copy pages 99-104)

b) To consider the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2018.

(Copy pages 105-109)

26. Defra IDB1 Returns

The Clerk to refer to the completed IDB1 form for 2017/2018.

(Copy pages 110-117)

27. Budgeting

The Clerk to refer to the budget update reviewed by the Chairman, with comparison to year end out-turn added, and any actions taken.

(Copy page 118)

28. Review of Internal Controls

To consider the system of Internal Control.

29. Risk Management Assessment

a) To give consideration to the Commissioners' Risk Management Policy.

b) To review the insured value of the Commissioners' buildings and to give consideration to having a revaluation of the Commissioners' real estate assets, as required for audit purposes.

(Copy page 119)

30. Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

The Clerk will report that, as resolved at its' last meeting, the Commissioners will continue with a limited assurance review and not take advantage of the audit exemption available for smaller public bodies with income and expenditure less than £25,000.

31. Exercise of Public Rights

The Clerk to refer 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.

32. Annual Governance Statement – 2018/2019

To review and complete the Annual Governance Statement.

(Copy page 120)

33. Payments 2018/2019

The Clerk to report on payments made during the financial year 2018/2019.

(Schedule pages 121-122)

34. Annual Accounts of the Commissioners - 2018/2019

To consider the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2019 and the completion of Section 2 of the Annual Return as required in the Audit Regulations.

(Copy pages 123-126)

35. Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2019/2020

To consider estimates of revenue expenditure and levy and rate requirements in respect of the financial year 2019/2020.

(Copy pages 127-128)

36. Date of next Meeting

37. Any other business

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

At a Meeting of the March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners
held at the Middle Level Offices, March on Tuesday the 19th June 2018

PRESENT

D G West Esq (Chairman)	M Cornwell Esq
T E Alerton Esq	S R Court Esq
M Arnold Esq	M J Mottram Esq

Mr Robert Hill (representing the Clerk to the Commissioners) and Mr Morgan Lakey (representing the Consulting Engineers) were in attendance.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Miss E Alerton and J C Martin Esq.

C.892 Declarations of Interest

Mr Hill reminded the Commissioners of the importance of declaring an interest in any matter included in today's agenda that involved or was likely to affect any of them.

Mr Alerton declared an interest in any matters involving pumping station duties.

C.893 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Commissioners held on the 20st June 2017 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

C.894 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED

That D G West Esq be appointed Chairman of the Commissioners.

C.895 Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED

That Miss E Alerton be appointed Vice Chairman of the Commissioners.

C.896 Land Drainage Act 1991
Fenland District Council

Mr Hill reported that Fenland District Council had re-appointed Councillors M Cornwell and S R Court to be Commissioners under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

C.897 Water Transfer Licences

Further to minute C.862, Mr Hill 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. He 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 Commissioners.

C.898 Contingency Plans in the Event of Pump Failure

Further to minute C.863(ii), Mr Hill reported that, following a change of insurers last year, engineering insurance cover had been included in the policy for approximately £95. However, two claims recently submitted by local IDBs had been rejected as the insurers considered that the pumps should have been removed for service on a five year frequency. This was contested by the Middle Level Commissioners and the frequency extended to ten years but, as this was considered unacceptable in most instances, alternative insurers were sought. 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.

Councillor Cornwell referred to other Boards who had considered 'self-insurance' by raising funds annually to cover future service/breakdown costs. Mr Alerton advised that the Consulting Engineers had confirmed that the pump was last overhauled in 2006/2007 and reported that when the water levels had been lowered the pump and bolts were checked and no problems found. He also considered that the pump was operating smoothly and did not appear to have any problems. Mr Mottram raised concerns over only having one pumping unit and referred to another local IDB who had had a 6" electric pump installed to cover when the pump was out of operation. However, as such a pump was unable to successfully keep pace with moderate rainfall, he considered it would be very difficult, in the event of a pump failure, to find a replacement. Mr Alerton referred to the water control structures within the District which could, in an emergency, be set to allow water to run to the gravity outfall.

RESOLVED

- i) That the pump attendant arrange for the Consulting Engineers to visually inspect the pump annually when water levels have been lowered for drain maintenance works.
- ii) That the matter be reviewed annually at the meeting of the Commissioners.

C.899 Association of Drainage Authorities
Further Research on Eels

Further to minute C.872(d), the Commissioners considered making a further contribution towards the research on eels.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners contribute an additional £50 towards further research on eels for 2018/2019.

C.900 Potential Amalgamation with March Third and March Fifth DDCs

Further to minute B.873, Mr Hill reported that, at their annual meeting, the March Fifth DDC had authorised their Chairman and Vice Chairman to meet with the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of March Third and March Sixth DDCs to discuss the possibility of an amalgamation and to report back to the next meeting. He also reported that, at their annual meeting, March Third DDC had discussed the matter and did not see any benefit in pursuing an amalgamation at this point and resolved to take no further part in any discussions.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to discuss a possible amalgamation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of March Fifth DDC, and report back to the next meeting of the Commissioners.

C.901 Consulting Engineers' Report

The Commissioners considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

In response to Councillor Cornwell, Mr Lakey reported that, having been sprayed annually by the Middle Level Commissioners, the Japanese knotweed was now under control, with only isolated plants, which will continue to be sprayed until eradicated.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

That the recommendations contained in the Report be approved.

iii) That both the Middle Level Commissioners and Council representatives make formal responses to Fenland District Council concerning informatives being added to decision notices advising of their separate legal obligation to comply with the requirements of the Commissioners' byelaws and the Land Drainage Act.

- iv) Planning Application (MLC Ref No. 126)

That the Consulting Engineers be requested to arrange a further meeting with Network Rail, to be attended by the Planning Engineer and Mr Alerton, together with the Chairman and Vice Chairman, if available, to discuss the issues concerning the site.

- v) Planning Application (MLC Ref Nos. 128,134 & 133)

That the Planning Engineer be authorised to take any action as he considers necessary to resolve all outstanding issues concerning the development.

C.902 Capital Improvement Programme

The Commissioners considered their future capital improvement programme.

The Commissioners considered the possible installation of automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment at the pumping station. Mr Alerton felt that with the pump drain being cleaned out on a regular basis weed at the pumping station was not an issue and, whilst he was able to attend to any weed manually, it was not necessary for the Commissioners to install automatic equipment.

RESOLVED

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

C.903 Environmental Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Mr Hill referred to the Environmental Officer's Newsletter, previously circulated to the Commissioners.

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

Mr Hill 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. He reported that Cliff was due to retire at the end of June and that his replacement had been appointed.

C.904 Pumping Station duties

- a) The Commissioners gave consideration to the payments in respect of pumping station duties for 2018/2019.
- b) The Commissioners gave consideration to the fuel allowance payable to Mr Alerton.

RESOLVED

- i) That T Alerton Esq continue as Pump Attendant to the Commissioners during the ensuing year.
- ii) That the Commissioners agree that the sum of £615 be allowed for the provision of pumping station duties for 2018/2019.
- iii) That the Commissioners agree that a £50 fuel allowance be allowed to Mr Alerton.

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

C.905 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.

C.906 Environment Agency – Precept

Mr Hill reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2018/2019 in the sum of £1,050 (the precept for 2017/2018 being £1,035).

C.907 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

(a) Mr Hill reported that the sum of £999.64 (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency (£1,482.15 representing 80% of the Commissioners' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2017/2018 less £482.51 overpaid in respect of the financial year 2016/2017).

(b) Further to minute C.871(b), Mr Hill referred to the discussions with the Environment Agency over the monies available to fund highland water claims.

RESOLVED

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

C.908 Association of Drainage Authorities

Mr Hill reported:-

a) Annual Conference

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

RESOLVED

That the Clerk be authorised to obtain a ticket for the Annual Conference of the Association for any Commissioner 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.

Mr Hill 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). He 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

Mr Hill referred to, and the Commissioners 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.

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

e) Updating IDB Byelaws

Mr Hill referred to a letter received from ADA dated the 20th October 2017.

Mr Hill 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

Mr Hill 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.

C.909 Capital Programme Strengthening and Delivery

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

C.910 Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

Mr Hill 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.

C.911 Member training and the appointment of a Health and Safety Officer

Mr Hill 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 Commissioners 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.

Councillor Cornwell and Mr Mottram considered that this should be a full time post to enable all matters to be dealt with and that the Middle Level Commissioners should look further into this, with possible costs being shared by the administered Boards.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Chairman and Vice Chairman meet with the Clerk to discuss and review the matter further.
- ii) That the Commissioners participate in any training organised through the Middle Level Commissioners.

C.912 Defra IDB1 Returns

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

He 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.

Mr Hill 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.

C.913 Requirements for a Biosecurity Policy

Mr Hill 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 Commissioners 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 Commissioners at their next meeting.

C.914 The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Mr Hill 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 Commissioners' Data Protection Officer.

C.915 Charging for Environmental Permits

Mr Hill 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.

C.916 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Commissioners – 2016/2017

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

C.917 Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England

Mr Hill 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.

C.918 Budgeting

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

C.919 Review of Internal Controls

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

C.920 Risk Management Assessment

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

C.921 Appointment of External Auditor

Further to minute C.847, Mr Hill 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. He 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.

C.922 Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

Mr Hill reported that from 2017/2018 smaller public bodies (Boards with income or expenditure less than £25,000) would not be required to undertake a formal audit but would need to have greater publication requirements in place. He advised that it would also be necessary to question the effect of "one off" payments such as development contributions taking the Board above the £25,000 limit, in a particular year.

RESOLVED

To continue with a limited assurance review as has been carried out in previous years.

C.923 Exercise of Public Rights

Mr Hill 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.

C.924 Annual Governance Statement – 2017/2018

The Commissioners 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 Commissioners, for the financial year ending 31st March 2018.

C.925 Payments

The Commissioners considered and approved payments amounting to £11,309.56 which had been made during the financial year 2017/2018.

C.926 Anglia Farmers

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

Mr Hill 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.

Mr Hill further advised that, although the Clerk was able to recommend to the Commissioners 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 Commissioners' decision and should they wish to be removed from the buying group then it would be the Commissioners' responsibility to negotiate its own separate electricity contract with a supplier.

Mr Hill 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.

C.927 Annual Accounts of the Commissioners – 2017/2018

The Commissioners 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 Commissioners, for the financial year ending 31st March 2018.

C.928 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2018/2019

The Commissioners considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2018/2019 and were informed by Mr Hill 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 58.01% and 41.99%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £9,714 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 £5,635 and £4,079 respectively.

- iv) That a rate of 15.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v) That a Special levy of £4,079 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vi) That the seal of the Commissioners 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.

C.929 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.

C.930 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Commissioners be held on Tuesday the 18th June 2019 at **10.00am**.

C.931 Waste Recycling Centre

Mr Alerton reported that he had met with the Manager at the Waste Recycling centre who had an arrangement to pump water from the site into the District. However, there had been issues and the pump had not been operated, leading to increased water levels and as the site operator was looking to lower levels, a suggestion had been made that Mr Alerton operate the pump at the site, on behalf of the site operator.

RESOLVED

That, after the site operator has confirmed how they wish the pump at their site to be operated, and if they request the Commissioners to operate the pump, Mr Alerton should contact the Middle Level Commissioners and he, together with the Clerk, be authorised to make arrangements with the site operator to do so.

C.932 Norwood Pumping Station

The Chairman referred to a recent meeting with Sustrans concerning the area around Norwood pumping station at which the Sustrans' representative had confirmed that they owned the pit to the south of the pumping station and they, may, as a result of future requirements concerning access to the site, consider selling it to the Commissioners. Mr Alerton considered that the site could provide an environmental site for the Commissioners as well as being utilised as a water storage facility to better control flows from the developed area.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners approve 'in principle' to give consideration to the purchase of the pit and that the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Mr Alterton be authorised to discuss the matter further should a formal proposal be received from Sustrans.

**MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE
COMMISSIONERS**

BYELAWS 2019

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS BYELAWS

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MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS BYELAWS

The March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners (“the Board”) under and by virtue of the powers and authority vested in them by section 66 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, do hereby make the following Byelaws which are considered necessary for the following purposes:-

- a) securing the efficient working of the drainage system in their District,
- b) regulating the effects on the environment in the Board’s district of a drainage system, or
- c) securing the effectiveness of flood risk management work within the meaning of section 14A of the Act,

together, “the Purposes”;-

1. **Commencement of Byelaws**

These Byelaws shall come into operation at the expiration of one month beginning with the day on which they are confirmed by the Secretary of State.

2. **Application of Byelaws**

- (a) These Byelaws shall have effect within the District;
- (b) the watercourses referred to in these Byelaws are watercourses which are for the time being vested in or under the control of the Board.

3. **Control of Introduction of Water and Increase in Flow or Volume of Water**

No person shall as a result of development (within the meaning of section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended (“the 1990 Act”)) (whether or not such development is authorised by the 1990 Act or any regulation or order whatsoever or none of them) for any purpose by means of any channel, siphon, pipeline or sluice or by any other means whatsoever introduce any water into any watercourse in the District so as to directly or indirectly increase the flow or volume of water in any watercourse in the District without the previous consent of the Board.

4. **Control of Sluices etc**

Any person having control of any sluice, water control structure or appliance for introducing water into any watercourse in the District or for controlling or regulating or affecting the flow of water in, into or out of any watercourse shall use and maintain such sluice, water control structure or appliance in accordance with such reasonable directions as may from time to time be given by the Board with a view to securing or furthering one or more of the Purposes.

5. **Fishing Nets and Angling**

No person shall angle or set any nets or engines for the catching or keeping of fish in any watercourse in such a manner as to cause damage to or endanger the stability of the bank of the watercourse or to affect or impede the flow of water.

In this Byelaw “nets” includes –

- (a) a stake net, bag net or keep net;

- (b) any net secured by anchors and any net, or other implement for taking fish, fixed to the soil or made stationary in any other way;
- (c) any net placed or suspended in any inland or tidal waters unattended by the owner or a person duly authorised by the owner to use it for fish, and any engine, device, machine or contrivance, whether floating or otherwise, for placing or suspending such a net or maintaining it in working order or making it stationary.

6. **Diversion or Stopping up of Watercourses**

No person shall, without the previous consent of the Board, take any action, or knowingly permit or aid or abet any person to take any action to stop up any watercourse or divert or impede or alter the level of or direction of the flow of water in, into or out of any watercourse.

7. **Detrimental Substances not to be Put into Watercourses**

No person shall, so as directly or indirectly to obstruct, impede or interfere with the flow of water in, into or out of any watercourse or so as to damage the bank -

- (a) discharge or put or cause or permit to be discharged or put or negligently or wilfully cause or permit to fall into any watercourse any object or matter of any kind whatsoever whether solid or liquid;
- (b) allow any such object or matter as is referred to in sub-paragraph (a) of this Byelaw to remain in proximity to any watercourse in such manner as to render the same liable to drift or fall or be carried into any watercourse.

Provided that nothing in this Byelaw shall be deemed to render unlawful the growing or harvesting of crops in accordance with normal agricultural practice.

8. **Lighting of Fires**

No person shall light or cause or permit to be lighted or commit any action liable to cause to be lighted any fire on any land adjoining the watercourse where such action is liable to set on fire the peat land forming the banks of the watercourse or any vegetation including trees, growing on land forming the banks of the watercourse.

9. **Notice to Cut Vegetation**

Any person having control of any watercourse shall, upon the receipt of a notice served on him by the Board requiring him so to do, cut down and keep cut down all vegetation, including trees, growing in or on the bank of a watercourse, within such reasonable time as may be specified in the notice, and shall remove such vegetation including trees, from the watercourse immediately after the cutting thereof.

Provided that, where a hedge is growing on the bank of a watercourse, nothing in this Byelaw shall require more than the pruning of the hedge so as to prevent it from growing over or into the watercourse, and the removal of the resultant cuttings.

10. **No Obstructions within 9 Metres of the Edge of the Watercourse**

No person without the previous consent of the Board shall erect any building or structure, whether temporary or permanent, or plant any tree, shrub, willow or other similar growth within 9 metres of the landward toe of the bank where there is an embankment or wall or

within 9 metres of the top of the batter where there is no embankment or wall, or where the watercourse is enclosed within 9 metres of the enclosing structure.

11. **Repairs to Buildings**

The owner of any building or structure in or over a watercourse or on the banks thereof shall, upon receipt of a notice from the Board that because of its state of disrepair -

- (a) the building or structure is causing or is in imminent danger of causing an obstruction to the flow of the watercourse, or
- (b) the building or structure is causing or is in imminent danger of causing damage to the bank of the watercourse,

carry out such reasonable and practicable works as are specified in the notice for the purpose of remedying or preventing the obstruction or damage as the case may be within such reasonable time as is specified in the notice.

12. **Control of Vermin**

The occupier of any bank of a watercourse or any part thereof shall, upon being required by the Board by notice, within such reasonable time as may therein be specified, take such steps as are specified in the notice, being such steps as the Board consider necessary and practicable for preventing the bank from becoming infested by rabbits, rats, coypu, foxes and moles or any other wild mammal not being an animal listed in Schedule 5 or Schedule 6 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, but excluding the water vole from such control.

13. **Damage by Animals to Banks**

All persons using or causing or permitting to be used any bank of any watercourse for the purpose of grazing or keeping any animal thereon shall take such steps including fencing as are necessary and reasonably practicable and shall comply with such reasonable directions as may from time to time be given by the Board to prevent the bank or the channel of the watercourse from being damaged by such use.

Provided that nothing in this Byelaw shall be deemed to affect or prevent the use of, for the purpose of enabling animals to drink at it, any place made or to be made or constructed as approved by the Board.

14. **Vehicles not to be Driven on Banks**

No person shall use or drive or permit or cause to be used or driven any cart, vehicle or implement of any kind whatsoever on, over or along any bank of a watercourse in such manner as to cause damage to such bank.

15. **Banks not to be Used for Storage**

No person shall use or cause or permit to be used any bank of any watercourse for the purpose of depositing or stacking or storing or keeping any rubbish or goods or any material or things thereon in such a manner as by reason of the weight, volume or nature of such rubbish, goods, material or things causes or is likely to cause damage to or endanger the stability of the bank or channel of the watercourse or interfere with the operations or access of the Board or the right of the Board to deposit spoil on the bank of the watercourse.

16. **Not to Dredge or Raise Gravel, Sand etc**

No person shall without the previous consent of the Board dredge or raise or take or cause or permit to be dredged or raised or taken any gravel, sand, ballast, clay or other material from the bed or bank of any watercourse.

17. **Fences, Excavations, Pipes etc**

No person shall without the previous consent of the Board -

- (a) place or affix or cause or permit to be placed or affixed any gas or water main or any pipe or appliance whatsoever or any electrical main or cable or wire in, under or over any watercourse or in, over or through any bank of any watercourse;
- (b) cut, pare, damage or remove or cause or permit to be cut, pared, damaged or removed any turf forming part of any bank of any watercourse, or dig for or remove or cause or permit to be dug for or removed any stone, gravel, clay, earth, timber or other material whatsoever forming part of any bank of any watercourse or do or cause or permit to be done anything in, to or upon such bank or any land adjoining such bank of such a nature as to cause damage to or endanger the stability of the bank;
- (c) make or cut or cause or permit to be made or cut any excavation or any tunnel or any drain, culvert or other passage for water in, into or out of any watercourse or in or through any bank of any watercourse;
- (d) erect or construct or cause or permit to be erected or constructed any fence, post, pylon, wall, wharf, jetty, pier, quay, bridge, loading stage, piling, groyne, revetment or any other building or structure whatsoever in, over or across any watercourse or in or on any bank thereof;
- (e) place or fix or cause or permit to be placed or fixed any engine or mechanical contrivance whatsoever in, under or over any watercourse or in, over or on any bank of any watercourse in such a manner or for such length of time as to cause damage to the watercourse or banks thereof or obstruct the flow of water in, into or out of such watercourse.

Provided that this Byelaw shall not apply to any temporary work executed in an emergency but a person executing any work so excepted shall, as soon as practicable, inform the Board in writing of the execution and of the circumstances in which it was executed and comply with any reasonable directions the Board may give with regard thereto.

18. **Tidal Outfalls**

No person shall place or cause to be placed or abandon or cause to be abandoned upon the foreshore any trees, roots of trees, branches, timber, tins, bottles, boxes, tyres, bricks, stones, soil, wire, rubbish or other object or matter whatsoever which (whether immediately or as a result of subsequent tidal action) may impede or be likely to impede the flow of water through the sluices or outfall pipes through the tidal banks or through the watercourses on such foreshore or impede or be likely to impede the operation of such sluices or outfall pipes or may cause or be likely to cause damage thereto.

19. **Interference with Sluices**

No person shall without lawful authority interfere with any sluice, or other water control structure or appliance for controlling or regulating the flow of water in, into or out of a watercourse.

20. **Mooring of Vessels**

No person shall moor or place any vessel in any watercourse or to or upon the bank of any watercourse in such manner or by such method as to cause or be likely to cause injury to such bank or in such manner as materially to obstruct or impede the free flow of water in, into or out of any watercourse.

21. **Unattended Vessels**

No person shall leave any vessel unattended without taking due care to prevent such vessel from materially obstructing or impeding the free flow of water in, into or out of any watercourse or any sluice in any bank.

22. **Removal of Sunken Vessels**

No person who is the owner of a vessel sunk, stranded, damaged or adrift in a watercourse or, in the case of a sunken vessel which is abandoned, who was the owner immediately before the abandonment shall, after ten days from the day on which the Board serves on him notice in writing that the vessel is causing obstruction, permit the vessel to remain in the watercourse in such a manner as to impede or harmfully divert the flow of water in, into or out of the watercourse.

23. **Navigation of Vessels**

No person shall navigate any vessels in such a manner or at such a speed as to injure the bank of any watercourse and where the Board have by notice erected at any place limited the speed of vessels passing such place no person shall navigate a vessel at a speed over the bed of the watercourse greater than the speed so limited.

Provided that the Board shall not exercise their powers under this Byelaw so as to limit the speed of -

- (a) vessels in any tidal waters except after consultation with the Department for Transport, or
- (b) vessels navigating waterways of the Canal and River Trust for which speed limits are prescribed by the Byelaws of such Trust.

24. **Damage to Property of the Board**

No person shall interfere with or damage any bank, bridge, building, structure, appliance or other property of or under the control of the Board.

25. **Defacement of Notice Boards**

No person shall deface or remove any notice board, notice or placard put up by the Board.

26. **Obstruction of the Board and Officers**

No person shall obstruct or interfere with any member, officer, agent or servant of the Board exercising any of his functions under the Act or these Byelaws.

27. **Savings for Other Bodies**

Nothing in these Byelaws shall -

- (a) conflict with or interfere with the operation of any Byelaw made by the Environment Agency, the Middle Level Commissioners, or of any navigation, harbour, conservancy or local authority but no person shall be liable to more than one penalty or in the case of a continuing offence more than one daily penalty in respect of the same offence;
- (b) restrict, prevent, interfere with or prejudice the exercise of any statutory rights or powers which are now or hereafter may be vested in or exercised by -
 - (i) any public utility undertaking carried on by a local authority under any Act or under any Order having the force of an Act;
 - (ii) the undertakings of the Environment Agency and of any water undertaker or sewerage undertaker;
 - (iii) any public gas transporter within the meaning of part I of the Gas Act 1986;
 - (iv) any navigation, harbour or conservancy authority;
 - (v) any person who acts as the operator of a relevant railway asset, with respect to the construction, use or maintenance and repair of any such asset, or the free, uninterrupted and safe use of any such asset and the traffic (including passengers) thereof;
 - (vi) any local authority;
 - (vii) any highway authority for the purposes of the Highways Act 1980 (as amended by any subsequent enactment) in relation to any highway whether or not maintainable at public expense;
 - (viii) any undertaking engaged in the operation of a telecommunications system;
 - (ix) a relevant airport operator within the meaning of Part V of the Airports Act 1986;
 - (x) the Civil Aviation Authority and any subsidiary thereof;
 - (xi) the Canal and River Trust ;
 - (xii) the Coal Authority;
 - (xiii) the Middle Level Commissioners
- (c) restrict, prevent, interfere with or prejudice any right of a highway authority to introduce into any watercourse surface water from a highway, for which it is the highway authority;

- (d) restrict, prevent, interfere with or prejudice any right of a licence holder within the meaning of Part I of the Electricity Act 1989 to do anything authorised by that licence or anything reasonably necessary for that purpose;
- (e) affect any liability arising otherwise than under or by reason of these Byelaws.

28. **Saving for Crown Lands**

Nothing in these Byelaws shall operate to prevent the removal of any substance on, in or under (or the erection of any structure, building or machinery or any cable, wire or pipe on, over or under) lands belonging to Her Majesty in right of the Crown by any person thereunto authorised by the Crown Estate Commissioners.

29. **Arbitration**

- (a) Where by or under any of these Byelaws any person is required by a notice in writing given by the Board to do any work to the satisfaction of the Board or to comply with any directions of the Board, he may within 21 days after the service of such notice on him give to the Board a counter-notice in writing objecting to either the reasonableness of or the necessity for such requirement or directions, and in default of agreement between such person and the Board the dispute shall, when the person upon whom such notice was served is a drainage or local authority be referred to the Secretary of State whose decision shall be final, and in any other case shall be referred to the arbitration of a single arbitrator to be appointed in default of agreement by the President of the Institution of Civil Engineers on the application of either party. Where such a counter-notice has been given to the Board the operation of the notice shall be suspended until either agreement has been reached or the dispute has been determined by arbitration in accordance with the provisions of this Byelaw;
- (b) where by or under these Byelaws any person is required by a notice in writing given by the Board to do any work to the satisfaction of the Board or to comply with any directions of the Board and any dispute subsequently arises as to whether such work has been executed or such directions have been complied with, such dispute if it arises between a drainage authority or local authority and the Board shall be referred to the Secretary of State whose decision shall be final, and in any other case shall be referred to the arbitration of a single arbitrator to be appointed in default of agreement by the President of the Institution of Civil Engineers on the application of either party;
- (c) where by or under Byelaws 3, 6, 10, 16 or 17 any person is required to refrain from doing any act without the consent of the Board such consent shall not be unreasonably withheld and may be either unconditional or subject to such reasonable conditions as the Board may consider appropriate and where any dispute arises as to whether in such a case the consent of the Board is being unreasonably withheld, or as to whether any conditions subject to which consent is granted are unreasonable, such dispute shall if it arises between a drainage authority or local authority and the Board be referred to the Secretary of State whose decision shall be final, and in any other case such dispute shall be referred to the arbitration of a single arbitrator to be appointed in default of agreement by the President of the Institution of Civil Engineers on the application of either party.

30. **Notices**

Notices and any other documents required or authorised to be served or given under or by virtue of these Byelaws shall be served or given in the manner prescribed by section 71 of the Act.

31. **Limitation**

- (a) Nothing in these Byelaws shall authorise the Board to require any person to do any act, the doing of which is not necessary for securing or furthering one or more of the Purposes or to refrain from doing any act, the doing of which does not affect the environment or adversely affect either the efficient working of the drainage system of the District or the effectiveness of flood risk management within the District.
- (b) If any conflict arises between these Byelaws and
- (i) sections 61A to E of the Land Drainage Act 1991 (which relates to the Board's duties with respect to the environment), or
 - (ii) the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010⁴
- the said Act and the said Regulations shall prevail.

32. **Revocation**

The Byelaws made by the Board on the 7th day of April 1987 are hereby revoked.

33. **Interpretation**

In these Byelaws, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions shall have the meaning hereby respectively assigned to them, that is to say:-

"the Act" means the Land Drainage Act 1991;

"Animal" includes any horse, cattle, sheep, deer, goat, swine, goose or poultry;

"Bank" includes any bank, cross bank, wall or embankment adjoining or confining or constructed for the purpose of or in connection with any watercourse and includes all land between the bank and the low water mark or level of the water in the watercourse as the case may be and where there is no such bank, cross bank, wall or embankment includes the top edge of the batter enclosing the watercourse;

"Board" means the March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners;

"Consent of the Board" means the consent of the Board in writing signed by the Clerk for the time being of the Board or other duly authorised officer;

"District" means the area under the jurisdiction of the Board;

"Occupier" means in the case of land not occupied by any tenant or other person the person entitled to the occupation thereof;

"Owner" includes the person defined as such in the Public Health Act 1936;

"Relevant Railway Asset" means

(a) a network, operated by an "approved operator" within the meaning of section 25 of the Planning Act 2008,

(b) a station which is operated in connection with the provision of railway services on such a network,

or

(c) a light maintenance depot

Expressions used in this definition and in the Railways Act 1993 have the same meaning in this definition as they have in that Act, ("railway" not having its wider meaning) and a network such as is described in (a) above shall not cease to be such a network where it is modified by virtue of having any network added to it or removed from it.

"The Secretary of State" means the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs;

"Vegetation" means trees, willows, shrubs, weeds, grasses, reeds, rushes or other vegetable growths;

"Vessel" includes any ship, hovercraft (as defined by the Hovercraft Act 1968), lighter, keel, barge, tug, launch, houseboat, pleasure or other boat, aircraft, randan, wherry, skiff, dinghy, shallop, punt, yacht, canoe, raft, float of timber or any other craft whatsoever, and howsoever worked, navigated or propelled;

"Water control structures" means a structure or appliance for introducing water into any watercourse and for controlling or regulating or affecting flow, and includes any sluice, slacker, floodgate, lock, weir, pump or pumping machinery;

and other expressions shall have the same meanings as in the Act.

**THE COMMON SEAL OF THE MARCH SIXTH
DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS was hereunto affixed on the
in the presence of:**

Chairman

Clerk

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, in pursuance of the powers conferred by section 66 of, and paragraph 2 of Schedule 5 to, the Land Drainage Act 1991, HEREBY CONFIRMS these Byelaws.

Date:

PENALTY NOTE

By section 66(6) of the Land Drainage Act 1991 every person who acts in contravention of or fails to comply with any of the foregoing Byelaws is liable on summary conviction in respect of each offence to a fine not exceeding the amount prescribed from time to time for level 5 on the standard scale referred to in section 37 of the Criminal Justice Act 1982 and a further fine not exceeding Forty pounds for every day on which the contravention or failure is continued after conviction. By section 66(7) of the Act if any person acts in contravention of or fails to comply with any of these Byelaws the Board may without prejudice to any proceedings under section 66(6) of the Act take such action as may be necessary to remedy the effect of the contravention or failure and may recover the expenses reasonably incurred by it in doing so from the person in default.

**MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE
COMMISSIONERS**

**POLICY STATEMENT ON WATER LEVEL AND FLOOD RISK
MANAGEMENT**

JUNE 2019

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

POLICY STATEMENT ON WATER LEVEL AND FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

1. Introduction

Purpose

- 1.1 This policy statement has been prepared by the March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners (the Board) to provide a public statement of the Board's approach to its management of water levels and flood risk within the March Sixth District Drainage District (the District). The Board is constituted by order of Parliament operating under the terms of the Land Drainage Act 1991 and is designated as a flood risk and coastal erosion 'Risk Management Authority' (RMA) under the Flood & Water Management Act 2010.
- 1.2 The Board serves the local community by managing water levels in ordinary watercourses and other water infrastructures within the District to mitigate against the risks from flooding and drought. In delivering its functions the Board will meet its environmental obligations and commitments and seek opportunities to enhance the environment. The Board recognises its responsibility for good governance, local accountability and financial security, achieving value for money from all its activities. As an independent public body the Board is committed to the pursuit of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 1.3 It should be noted that although this document refers to 'flood and coastal erosion risk management' (FCERM) the District is not affected by coastal erosion or tidal flooding.

Background

- 1.4 The Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has policy responsibility for flood and coastal erosion risk management in England. The Environment Agency is responsible for taking a strategic overview of the management of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion. Lead Local Flood Authorities (unitary authorities or county councils) are responsible for developing, maintaining and applying a strategy for local flood risk management in their areas. Delivery is the responsibility of a number of flood risk and coastal erosion "Risk Management Authorities" (RMA), which includes the March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners.

1.5 This Policy Statement sets out the Board's approach to meeting the national policy aims and objectives in this area, as stated in the *National flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy for England 2011* (the National Strategy); the statement will be revised to reflect future revisions of the National Strategy. It summaries what plans the Board has in place to manage water levels and reduce flood risk, whilst protecting and enhancing the environment, and ensuring good governance and local accountability. Copies of this Policy Statement are available from the Board's office at Middle Level Offices, March Cambridgeshire, PE15 0AH. Digital copies can be downloaded from the Board's website.

2. Governance and local accountability

2.1 The Board will ensure that its policies and procedures enable effective representation of and accountability to drainage rate payers and the occupiers of non-agricultural land within the District, including triennial elections in line with the requirements of the Land Drainage Act 1991, and timely engagement with charging authorities to fill vacancies in seats allocated to appointed members.

2.2 Board members must take decisions objectively in their best interests and uphold the ethical standards expected of public officeholders. Board members must adhere to the Board's Code of Conduct, including the seven principles of public life (Nolan Principles). The Board will make sure that there is suitable training in place for board members and staff, including on financial and environmental matters as appropriate.

2.3 Board members must declare financial and other interests relevant to their function with the Board. Board members will recuse themselves as appropriate where conflicts of interest may occur in relation to procurement, contract management and decision making.

3. Delivery the National Strategy's policy aim and objectives

Aim

3.1 The overall aim of the National Strategy is to ensure the risk of flooding and coastal erosion is properly managed by using the full range of options in a co-ordinated way. The Strategy states that communities, individuals, voluntary groups and private and public sector organisations will work together to manage the risk to people and their property; facilitate decision-making and action at the appropriate level; and achieve environmental, social and economic benefits, consistent with the principles of sustainable development.

Objectives

3.2 The Strategy sets out five objectives in pursuance of the overall aim as follows:

- understand the risks of flooding and coastal erosion, working together to put in place long term sustainable plans to manage these risks and making sure that other plans take account of them;
- avoid inappropriate development in areas of flood and coastal erosion risk and being careful to manage land elsewhere to avoid increasing risks;
- build, maintain and improve flood and coastal erosion management infrastructure and systems to reduce the likelihood of harm to people and damage to the economy, environment and society as well as achieving wider environmental benefits;
- increase public awareness of the risk that remains and engaging with people at risk to encourage them to take action to manage the risks that they face and to make their property more resilient; and
- improving the detection, forecasting and issue of warnings of flooding, co-ordinating a rapid response to flood emergencies and promoting faster recovery from flooding.

3.3 The Board supports the national aim and objectives for the management of flood risk and water levels and the Board's policy and approach will be consistent with them.

4. **Flood risk and water level management in the Board's District**

4.1 The District has been determined to derive benefit, or avoid danger, as a result of drainage operations. As such the whole of the District is at some risk from flooding, but that risk is managed wherever it is practically, environmentally and financially viable¹.

¹ It should be noted that the Land Drainage Act 1991 provides the Board with statutory powers to carry out works of maintenance and improvement for land drainage and flood defence purposes, rather than imposing a duty on the Board to carry out such works.

4.2 The Board makes decisions regarding flood risk within the District taking into account the following:

- assets in place considering design standard and life;
- Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authority flood risk strategies, plans and maps; and
- other information such as the history of flooding and land use impacts.

4.3 The following outlines the key details of the District:

- Total area of the drainage district: 329 ha
- Catchment area draining to and including the District: 476 ha
- Area of Agricultural Land: 283 ha
- Area of other (non-agricultural) land: 46 ha

[List above can include summary of other land: e.g. residential and commercial property, amenity land, major road and rail infrastructure, other highways, area of designated environmental sites etc]

4.4 Assets for which the Board have operational responsibility:

- Water Level Control Structures: 2 No
- Watercourses (maintained): 4 km
- Raised embankments: 0 km
- Reservoirs 0 ha
- Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) 0 No
- Pumping Stations: 1 No

4.5 Assets within or adjacent to the District that are maintained by the Environment Agency:

- Main Rivers: 0 km
- Raised embankments/flood walls 0 km
- Pumping Stations: 0 No

5. **Building, maintaining and improving flood and coastal erosion risk management systems**

- 5.1 Through the operation, maintenance and improvement of watercourses and other water control assets within the District, the Board seeks to achieve a general standard of water level management that enables the drainage and irrigation of agricultural land, reduces flood risk to developed areas, and sustains environmental features throughout the District.
- 5.2 The Board monitors and review the condition of its watercourses and other assets, particularly those designated as critical, over-spilling from which could affect people and property. Consistent with the resultant needs established, a routine maintenance programme is in place to ensure that the condition of the assets is commensurate with the standards required. The programme is reviewed periodically by the Board to ensure it is delivering the appropriate condition.
- 5.3 Where standards are not at the desired level, improvement works will be sought where they are considered to be practical and financially viable by the Board. Where improvement works meet the criteria set by Defra, financial support will be sought from the Government's Flood and Coastal Resilience Partnership Funding. Where appropriate works will be undertaken in partnership with other Risk Management Authorities and take opportunities to work with natural processes.
- 5.4 Work for and by the Board will be carried out in accordance with best practice and to deliver best value for money taking due regard of local flood risk management requirements and strategies, opportunities for partnership working, environmental obligations and guidance available from Defra, the Environment Agency and other organisations.
- 5.5 The Board's powers to carry out water level and flood risk management works are permissive (i.e. the Board are not obliged to carry out works) and their resources are limited. The Board's policy is therefore to designate what they consider to be the most important watercourses in the District as "District Drains" and prioritise their resources to the appropriate maintenance and, where necessary, improvement of such channels and associated structures. The watercourses and structures so designated will change over time as necessary but the current designated watercourses and structures are shown on the plan attached to this Statement.

- 5.6 Other watercourses usually are the responsibility of other bodies or the adjoining owners. The Board will only take action in respect of these latter watercourses where resources are available and where it is in all the circumstances appropriate for the Board to become involved, bearing in mind the powers available to other persons or bodies.
- 5.7 The Board has a supervisory duty, under section 1(2)(d) of the Land Drainage Act 1991 over all matters relating to the drainage of land in their District and will, under this duty where appropriate advise others regarding the undertaking of works when it is not appropriate for the Board to exercise its own powers.
- 5.8 The Board will also seek to ensure, where possible, that assets managed by other risk Management Authorities, which also reduce flood risk to the District, are maintained at a satisfactory standard and may enter into a Public Sector Co-operation Agreement with another Risk Management Authority to achieve better value for money when carrying out work to reduce flood risk.

6. Regulation of activities – Avoiding inappropriate development and land management

- 6.1 The Board will take appropriate steps to help riparian owners understand their responsibilities for maintenance, byelaw compliance and environmental regulations.
- 6.2 The Board will regulate as necessary, using available legislative powers and byelaws, the activity of others to ensure their actions within, alongside, and otherwise impacting its drainage system do not increase flood risk, prevent the efficient working of drainage systems, or adversely impact the environment.
- 6.3 The potential impact on flood risk from future development both within the District and the wider catchment draining into the District, is fully recognised by the Board. The Board will take an active role in the assessment of local plans, major development and, individual (planning) applications, to prevent inappropriate development and land use to ensure that flood risk is not increased. This will include, where appropriate, providing pre-application advice and checking of flood risk assessments.
- 6.4 Where appropriate the Board will seek contributions from developers to cover the cost of both immediate and longer term works necessary to mitigate against any resultant increase

in flood risk. Such contributions will be recorded in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and associated technical guidance.

6.5 The Board will where appropriate designate structures or features affecting flood risk using section 30 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

7 Communication and transparency

7.1 The Board will publicise the local risks from flooding, the reasons for managing water levels within the District and articulate the efforts being undertaken by the Board to manage water levels and flood risk as well as the steps the local community and land managers can take to assist in its management.

7.2 The Board will be open and transparent in its actions and decisions. The Board will comply with the requirements set out in the relevant Local Government transparency code.

7.3 The Board will provide an overview of the objectives and costs of its water level management operations by publishing on its website:-

- A record of the watercourses it periodically maintains;
- A statement of the types of general maintenance activities it routinely undertakes and why;
- Its Annual Report to Defra (IDB1 Form); and
- Approved Board minutes and papers.

7.4 The Board will seek views and respond to enquiries from the local general public in this regard and work with local partners to build a culture within which watercourses are seen as vital to managing flood risk, and enhancing habitat and amenity. Every effort will be made to dissuade abuse of watercourses.

7.5 The Board invites any comments regarding the condition of its system, which could assist with the management of water levels.

8. Working together

- 8.1 The Board will co-operate and share information with other relevant authorities in the exercise of their flood and coastal erosion flood risk management functions. The Board will contribute to strategies, plans and consultations relevant to its catchment and functions.
- 8.2 The Board will assist the Environment Agency wherever possible in its provision of adequate and cost effective flood warning systems, and assist Risk Management Authorities where necessary during flood emergencies. The Board will participate as necessary in exercises to develop and test emergency response procedures.
- 8.3 The Board has provided the Environment Agency and other local Risk Management Authorities with information on the major flood defence assets for which the Board is responsible. The information is available from the Environment Agency.
- 8.4 The Board will seek to work with all relevant local organisations, in carrying out its flood and coastal erosion risk management functions and environmental obligations.

9. Environmental Measures

- 9.1 The Board has nature conservation duties under the Land Drainage Act 1991, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2003, the Eels (England and Wales) Regulations 2009, the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975, and as a competent authority under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. The Board will fulfil these in a positive way.
- 9.2 Much of the Board's watercourse maintenance work constitutes vegetation control and de-silting and is often a vital and routine requirement. Whilst inevitably some short or long term impacts may arise, this management is often essential to maintain the distinct assemblage of aquatic habitat and species present in the District. Such work will be carried out in a way that manages the potential risks to the environment. The Board has access to environmental expertise from their Conservation Officer and have a Biodiversity Action

Plan, developed according to ADA and Natural England guidelines, which indicates the way in which their functions can be carried out in a way appropriate to the environment and how the environment can be enhanced. The Board maintain only a small proportion of the total watercourse length in the District, the significant majority being the responsibility of the adjoining land owners or of other bodies.

9.3 When carrying out work, be it maintenance or improvement, and consistent with the need to maintain satisfactory flood protection standards, the Board will aim to:-

- Avoid any unnecessary or long term damage to agricultural interests and to natural habitats and species;
- Carry out the monitoring of any gains and losses of biodiversity and report annually to the Environment Agency; and
- Take appropriate opportunities to achieve multiple environmental outcomes and work with natural processes, wherever possible, including the enhancement of habitats and water bodies within the District.

9.4 The District encompasses no recorded sites of national and international biological or geological interest.

9.5 The Board has no Water Level Management Plan.

9.6 The Board will play its full role in sustaining the Water Level Management Plans prepared for SSSIs to maintain, or bring sites into, favourable condition, in conjunction with Natural England and other interested parties and review the plans in accordance with guidance.

10. Approval and Review of this Policy Statement

10.1 This protocol was adopted by the March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners.

10.2 The March Sixth DDC will review and update this Policy Statement as and when changes to policies are made and notwithstanding within a period not extending beyond five years.

**MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE
COMMISSIONERS**

BIOSECURITY POLICY/PROCEDURES

JUNE 2019

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

BIOSECURITY POLICY

PURPOSE

This document sets out the Biosecurity Policy of the March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners (the "Board"). It covers activities undertaken by the IDB on a daily basis to reduce the spread and damage from invasive non-native species.

It is intended that the Board's staff and contractors will follow procedures commensurate with this Policy.

POLICY STATEMENT

Invasive non-native species are widespread nationally and if left uncontrolled present a threat to our aquatic and riparian systems. It is imperative that our field operations to manage flood risk and water levels do not exacerbate the risks to the environment and economy that are posed by these species. Failure to minimise the spread of invasive non-native species, when visiting a site where an invasive non-native species is known to be present, can risk prosecution under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.

Vigilance is required if we are to stop the spread of invasive non-native species, and it is imperative that we integrate basic biosecurity in our operations to prevent this spread. Much to do with biosecurity involves awareness, common sense and agreed procedures.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board is responsible for reviewing and approving the content and implementation of this Policy.

The Board will ensure any new contracts let will include reference to the Policy where a risk is considered to exist arising from the works involved.

All Board Members, staff and contractors are required to comply with the Policy's requirements and share responsibility for performance in implementing the Policy in regard to the health, safety and welfare of the environment.

IMPLEMENTATION

This Policy is implemented through supporting guidance documentation covering biosecurity procedures.

Where biosecurity risks have been identified operational Staff will be provided with training and information on identification of invasive non-native species likely to be found within the Drainage District.

All operational machinery, tools and personal protection equipment (PPE) identified as at risk of cross-contamination will be subject to 'check, clean, dry' decontamination procedures before moving between operations on watercourses and sites.

All Operational Staff will report sightings of invasive non-native species to Jonathon Fenn the Middle Level Commissioners Operations Engineer, or the GB Non-Native Species Secretariat directly.

BIOSECURITY PROCEDURES

PURPOSE

These procedures aim to help Board members, staff, and operators working for the IDB to identify key biosecurity risks pertinent to the internal drainage district and the Board's activities, and identify measures to address these risks.

Accidentally spread invasive non-native species may be harmful to the environment and potentially damaging the reputation of the Board, compromising its ability to operate, or work with partners. Operators visiting a site where an invasive non-native species is known to be present, should take measures to ensure they do not spread it. Failure to do so can risk prosecution under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.

OBJECTIVES

- Increase awareness around invasive non-native species via training.
- Identify, and keep a record of, known areas where invasive non-native species are an issue.
- Ensure effective cleaning of equipment, machinery, and clothes.
- Ensure operators take care to avoid transporting water and material between water bodies where a risk has been identified.
- Ensure ongoing monitoring of invasive non-native species when undertaking operations.
- Remain vigilant when undertaking operations to identify any further areas where invasive non-native species exist.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Awareness

Jonathon Fenn, Operations Engineer for the Middle Level Commissioners will have an oversight role for biosecurity for the Boards administered by them, and the Middle Level Commissioners will disseminate information and report on these matters.

The Board's staff will be encouraged by the Board to seek information on invasive non-native species and biosecurity practices. The Environment Agency and Non-native Species Secretariat have relevant useful information.

If a risk is identified then the operator concerned or contractor should be made aware of the priority invasive non-native species, with specific attention to aquatic and riparian species of concern and those known to be present in the surrounding area. Training for staff and operatives shall be provided as appropriate, and information will be disseminated through toolbox talks, workshops, leaflets, emails etc. Contractors should be asked to confirm that they have similar arrangements in place.

Signage, species, alerts/information sheets, or guidance should be in place, making operators aware of the risks, and providing advice on how to prevent spread.

Monitoring

Operators should be vigilant in the field for invasive non-native species and have an appropriate mechanism for recording and reporting sightings of suspected species, location, and relevant details.

New sightings should be reported to Jonathon Fenn, Operations Engineer for the Middle Level Commissioners and other authorities and/or land managers as appropriate. The PlantTracker app (www.planttracker.org.uk/), available free for Apple and Android devices, shows you how to identify invasive non-native plant species and enables you to easily submit geo-located photos whenever you find one.

Planning works

Biosecurity should be taken into consideration alongside other factors, such as health and safety, when planning operations and standard working procedures.

The risk of spreading invasive non-native species can be reduced by reducing the contact time in which equipment is exposed to the water. This is particularly important for items such as trailers, which have cavities that may retain water and be hard to inspect.

Propagules are small bits of plant that become detached and give rise to a new plant. Working practices that either reduce, or contain and remove, propagules should be encouraged where practicable, especially in regards to mechanical vegetation control.

Cleaning

Remember: Check, Clean, Dry – www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry/

Decontamination is an essential process to be carried out prior to leaving a site where invasive species are present. This ensures that any foreign matter remains on the land/watercourse of origin, rather than taking it to another location.

Where it is not possible to conduct the decontamination prior to leaving the land/watercourse where the work was conducted (e.g. steam cleaning larger equipment), the operation should be carried out immediately afterwards at the depot or another secure site before the next operation.

Where a cross contamination risk has been identified any field team moving from a contaminated site should carry a 'disinfection box'. This should contain an appropriate commercial disinfectant, a spray bottle, cloths or sponges, a scrubbing brush and protective gloves.

On completion of a field operation, for situations where cross contamination is identified as a risk, the following principles apply:

1. Visually inspect all tools, equipment and machinery that has come into contact with the water for evidence of attached plant or animal material, or adherent mud or debris.
2. Remove any attached or adherent material before leaving the site of operation.
3. Washing/hosing with water will be sufficient to remove debris from most tools, equipment and machinery. Use hot water where possible.

4. Ensure that all water is drained from any water retaining compartments, outboard motors, tanks and other equipment before transportation elsewhere.
5. A high pressure washer or steam cleaner may be essential for more difficult stains or soil, paying particular attention to the tyres, tracks and undercarriage of vehicles and buckets, hulls, outboard motors and submerged parts of machinery. High-pressure steam cleaning, with water >40°C, is recommended for larger equipment, excavators, boats, trailers, and outboard motors that are being moved from one watercourse to another.
6. Clothing and PPE should be visually inspected and any attached vegetation or debris removed. Soiled clothing and PPE should be removed for laundering and boots scrubbed clean; hands and other body parts may also need cleaning.
7. Finally, decontamination by spraying on a commercial disinfectant at the recommended strength to the cleaned boots, tools, equipment or machinery will ensure that any remaining disease agents or pests are destroyed.

Every effort should be made to ensure that the decontamination process is a public exercise and where appropriate tactfully brought to the attention of the land owner or manager at the appropriate time. It is not just a question of doing the right thing but also being seen to be doing it. In this way, public confidence will be maintained in flood and water level management operations.

APPROVAL

This Policy/Procedures were approved by the March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners and will be reviewed, at a minimum, every five years.

IDB/DDC/Middle Level Commissioners Amalgamated Boards Option Paper

At the November 2018 MLC and Associated Boards meeting it was requested that a briefing paper be prepared which would outline a model where amalgamations could take place without the risk of losing local knowledge, input and control at a system management level.

The Board's chairmen felt that there was a considerable amount of duplication and mirroring in regard to policy, byelaws, administration and audit. It was generally agreed that this duplication was not a good use of staff and member's time, but at the same time there was significant concern that with amalgamations there was a risk that costs of delivery could potentially increase whilst the level of service diminished. This could arise from the potential loss of the significant value gained by Boards which stems from the zero or low-cost input linked with, monitoring, delivering and managing maintenance and capital works. A model that removes the duplication whilst retaining these valuable elements would therefore be seen as ideal.

The option under consideration within this paper is one in which all Boards are amalgamated into a single Board but local control at an operational level is retained.

How the new Board could be structured;

A new Middle Level Internal Drainage Board could be created. This Board would employ all staff, including district officers. The Board would deal with all policy, finance, administration and legal matters. In addition, Operations Committees would be set up, one for each current Board area. These committees would plan and review maintenance and capital investment for each sub-catchment. They would, with the assistance of the Works Department, prepare annual estimates for maintenance and define refurbishment and replacement of assets. These costs would be used to calculate the annual area rate, each area having its own individual differential rate, reflecting the costs for delivery in that area with admin overheads added.

Any new model will have challenges to be overcome to deliver it and the list below is an early attempt to define some of the most obvious ones. The text in italics gives possible solutions to address the particular challenge;

1. How many members would there be on the new Board? *It would seem logical to have a member for each Board area, so around 30 members may seem appropriate. Some members would have to be council appointed members of course and the Board could be larger or smaller if wished for.*
2. How would the Operational Committees be formed, by volunteer, election or appointment? *It may not be possible to have an elected committee due to the practical challenges of setting up and maintaining such an arrangement. The committee could easily be made up of appointed members drawn from those who have expressed an interest and who have the best skills on offer. A protocol could be set up to define what criteria might be used and how often the committee makeup should be reviewed. For example, members could be given a three-year tenure and at the end of this*

replacements invited to apply, should the existing member wish to continue and remains the most suitable candidate he/she could then be appointed for a further three years. If there was a fear that rotation of representation was of value and might fail to occur there could be a long stop of say a maximum of three terms.

3. How would an arm's length relationship between the Board and the Committees be set up and maintained? *This would be most effective if clear roles for the committees are defined and as appropriate powers delegated. This might include delegating the defining of the annual maintenance plan, planning replacement and refurbishment and defining any area related special needs, ie plant. There may also be encouragement to feedback to the board on any areas where service provision was considered to be below expectation. The Board would be required to respond to such concerns.*
4. What would happen if the Board and a Committee failed to agree? *A dispute procedure could be produced to assist in occasions where the committee and Board do not agree. This could include a number of stages which would include facility for independent assistance via mediation if necessary.*
5. What would happen if a Committee entered into an internal dispute? *If a committee could not reach agreement then a vote could ensue, with the chair having the casting vote.*
6. What if two Committees wished to amalgamate? *a bespoke protocol could be the answer for the amalgamation of committees. This would set out the steps that would need to be taken and how all issues relating to the matters of the two (or more) sub-districts would be met.*
7. What would happen to the MLC, who have a navigation interest as well as well as ones relating to land drainage and water resources, if it could not realistically become an IDB? *If it was found that the MLC could not be part of the newly created Board then it would be logical that a consortium be set up of the new Board and MLC. A lead Board would need to be defined and that Board would employ all staff and own the plant and assets, contracting to the other entity.*
8. How would the finances be controlled and the differential rates finally settled? *Some Boards already operate differential rating. It might be assumed that the differential rating would be designed in the first instance such that each ratepayer pays what they do currently and that the rate in the pound is adjusted area by area to meet this criterion. As time passes these rates could be adjusted as they are now to reflect the maintenance, admin and investment needs of each area.*
9. How would admin costs be shared across the new district. *The starting point could be as it is now, but equally a review could be undertaken to see if the existing area (Board District) charges would still be appropriate.*

10. How would plant be dealt with? *All plant could be owned by the new Board and then charged out based upon usage, the aim would then be to create a self-sustaining plant account, allowing for repair, routine maintenance and replacement of plant.*
11. How would buildings owned by boards be dealt with? *In a similar way to plant the building assets could be owned by the new Board and any investment in them be charged to an area. There could as well be an agreement in place to cater for a scenario where ratepayers in an area wished to leave the Board and recreate their previous Board. In this instance the building might automatically be transferred back to the new entity.*
12. How long would the process take? *If there was a consensus the next step might be to set up a sub-committee to further develop the proposal, this may require external assistance, including legal advice on questions that may arise through the process. It could take a year to reach conclusion and a further two years to implement.*
13. How would admin and engineering costs be shared? *It would be for the new Board to determine if it would be best to define a single annual figure or area by area recharging. It would certainly reduce administrative burden if a single annual fee was chosen. The negative aspect of this would be that in any one year, one area may require more engineering input that is the norm, eg when a pumping station requires refurbishment or replacement.*
14. If some Boards did not wish to join the new arrangements, what options would be available to them? *The most obvious options would be to become entirely independent or to retain the Board's existing structure and buy in services, much as they already do, from the newly formed Board or other third party.*
15. What would the timing of meetings be? Both for the new board and the committees? *The new Board may wish to meet three or four times a year. The area committees, perhaps once or at the most twice per year. Logic would suggest that committee's meet before the rate setting Board meeting to allow them to feed the needs of the area into the Board to allow them to determine an appropriate rate.*

It may be seen from the above that whilst challenges would exist they can be overcome. Members may of course have other questions they would wish addresses and may want other matters and options considered before taking any further steps. This paper is designed simply to inform on one of a number of possible options and to stimulate discussion on how members see the Boards evolving in the coming decades.

David Thomas
Chief Executive
MLC



Each year ADA focuses on five or six key topics that have been identified as important to the flood and water level management work of our members.

These projects are delivered with the support of ADA's two committees who meet throughout the year to discuss subjects affecting our members. In 2019 the delivery of these projects will be coordinated by ADA's Senior Technical Officer, David Sisson (david.sisson@ada.org.uk).

The following work stream topics have been chosen for delivery throughout 2019.

Educational Resources

Primary objective: To raise awareness in schools of the work to manage water levels within lowland England. The project aims to incorporate relevant flood and land drainage topics into the Key Stage 2 (KS2) curriculum; ultimately to attract interest in future careers in the industry.

This project was introduced in 2018 as part of a collaboration with the ADA Lincolnshire Branch's Events Committee. ADA has commissioned LEAF Education to help develop the school resources and activities, to be published on LEAF Education's Countryside Classroom website (www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk).

LEAF Education is part of Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF), which is a charity registered in England and Wales that is working to enable more sustainable farming. LEAF Education has many years' experience of supporting businesses to tell their story in a way that is appropriate for a school audience.

To assist this work a small sub-group has been formed including ADA staff and Lincolnshire Branch Event Committee members who together will assist, advise and oversee the development of the resources and activities.

Delivering biodiversity

Primary objective: To rewrite and update the existing Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) guidance that is used by IDBs for their own BAPs.

IDBs are required as risk management authorities to carry out their functions within a policy framework that sets goals for biodiversity and environmental performance. IDB BAPs focus in detail on those habitats and species that are relevant to each IDB's area of operation and identify specific actions that the IDB intends to implement.

In 2018 the Government published its 25 Year Environment Plan, entitled "A Green Future to Improve the Environment". The focus of the new Government Plan is to deliver improved environment through targeted policies, some of which including "Thriving Plants

and Wildlife” and “Enhancing Biosecurity” have much relevance for IDB operational delivery. The concept of biodiversity “Net Gain” is also introduced via the new plan.

All of an IDB’s network of drainage channels has the potential to be valuable for biodiversity. It is therefore proposed that the updated BAP guidance will be focussed on incorporating contributions that IDBs could make towards these new objectives.

A second strand, and a significant requirement, of the work will be to identify a method for recording IDB successes or targets achieved in delivering biodiversity gains. This follows the demise of the BARS recording system previously used to collect biodiversity data. This requirement will potentially involve the design and delivery of a new recording, data storage and analysis system for IDBs and other risk management authorities.

Byelaw and supervisory role enforcement

Primary objective: To produce reliable and consistent guidance for IDBs when considering how to carry out a legally correct byelaw or consenting enforcement procedure.

The project team will collate existing industry advice and assess their value to the national guidance, prior to drafting new guidance, or amending any of the existing available resources. ADA will seek legal support in order to scrutinise and sign-off the guidance prior to its launch.

ADA is seeking existing advice examples from the industry including: Pre-planning Advice Notes, Consenting Process Statements, Guidance Notes, and Enforcement Procedures, such as the Lincolnshire LDA Enforcement and Consent (Concordat).

Data and evidence

Primary objective: To establish a methodology to collect, collate and interpret data from IDBs that can be used to better explain their value and purpose to decision makers and the wider public.

A workgroup formed in 2018 started to formulate a set of metrics that IDBs will be encouraged to complete and update periodically. This work will be continued in 2019 and a questionnaire to gather the data distributed to IDBs.

Emergency Response and Recovery

Primary objective: To investigate utilising Public Sector Cooperation Agreements to facilitate IDBs assisting the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authorities during, and in recovery from, emergency circumstances.

There are already local arrangements in place where IDBs provide support to other risk management authorities during and following flood events. It is hoped that this guidance when published will help other regions to set up similar mutual support arrangements at the local level.

Developer contributions

Primary objective: Develop guidance on appropriate legal use of contributions from developers towards the management and maintenance of water level management control structures and systems and charging by risk management authorities for advice.

When an IDB considers how a development might impact on the efficient flow of water through their systems, and mitigate any increased flows, the Developer should be required to contribute financially to necessary works. This principle was established some time ago, but needs a consistent approach by authorities.

The project aims to:

- Provide IDBs with a consistent approach for development control policies.
- Provide a standard template for establishing if a surface water development contribution is appropriate for a development.
- Provide a standard set of surface water development contribution rates, which can be modified to allow for local drainage district conditions, such as extra pumping or urban maintenance costs.
- Assist in the calculation of long-term maintenance and asset replacement costs if the IDB wishes to enter into a legal agreement with the developer for the adoption of flood risk assets.
- Provide a mechanism to allow for IDBs to carry out works that resulted in water environment biodiversity gains required of developers, a process known as “offsetting”, and enable developers to contribute to net-gain.
- Comply with the new environmental requirements being introduced.

In addition to the planned guidance, it is proposed that a series of best practice exemplars will be developed to cover Pre-planning advice, calculation of commuted sums and charging developers for Biodiversity Off-setting services where appropriate.

A legal opinion will be sought prior to launch.

March Sixth D.D.C.

Consulting Engineers Report – June 2019

Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

The maintenance works carried out last year generally accorded with the recommendations approved by the Commissioners' at their last annual meeting.

Roundup herbicide applications were applied to the Commissioners' drains included within last year's machine cleansing programme, and to other District drains where it was required to control dense stands of reed and emergent aquatic vegetation.



Handrail improvements at Norwood pumping Station

In order to comply with current Health & Safety policies, the District Officer has installed a removeable steel chain at the Commissioners' Pumping Station weedscreen deck. This is to prevent any slips or falls under the existing handrail. It was also noted that the access path around the pump control building and the steps down to the weedscreen are beginning to subside and deteriorate. The Chairman has requested that a quote for improvement works at the Pumping Station be provided and this will be presented to the Commissioners at their annual meeting.

A recent joint inspection of the Commissioners' District drains has been undertaken with the District Officer. The inspection revealed that the majority of drains are in a generally satisfactory condition and being maintained to a good standard. The inspection indicates that many of the District drains that fall within this year's machine cleansing programme will only require light machine cleansing to retain them in good status.

Drains to the West of the Prison

The Commissioners' District drains to the west of the prison are generally in good condition. The inspection did highlight sporadic growths of aquatic vegetation throughout many of the drains in the western area. It is recommended that the affected reaches are treated with an application of Roundup herbicide during the summer months, which should prevent any further infestations later on in the season.



EEDA Drain, reach 19-20

Drains to the East of the Prison

The District drains to the east of the prison remain in a generally satisfactory condition, however the inspection did reveal sporadic stands of reed and emergent aquatic vegetation in the Norwood Farm drains. As this area falls within this year's maintenance programme, the affected reaches will be treated with an application of Roundup herbicide, followed by light machine cleansing, to retain the currently good status.

As the Commissioners have previously agreed, in recent years, it is recommended that the main Norwood Pumping Drain, reach 1-2-10, is included within this year's phased machine cleansing programme. Historically this has proven to be an effective method of reducing the weed mass at the manually cleansed weedscreen during winter pumping periods.

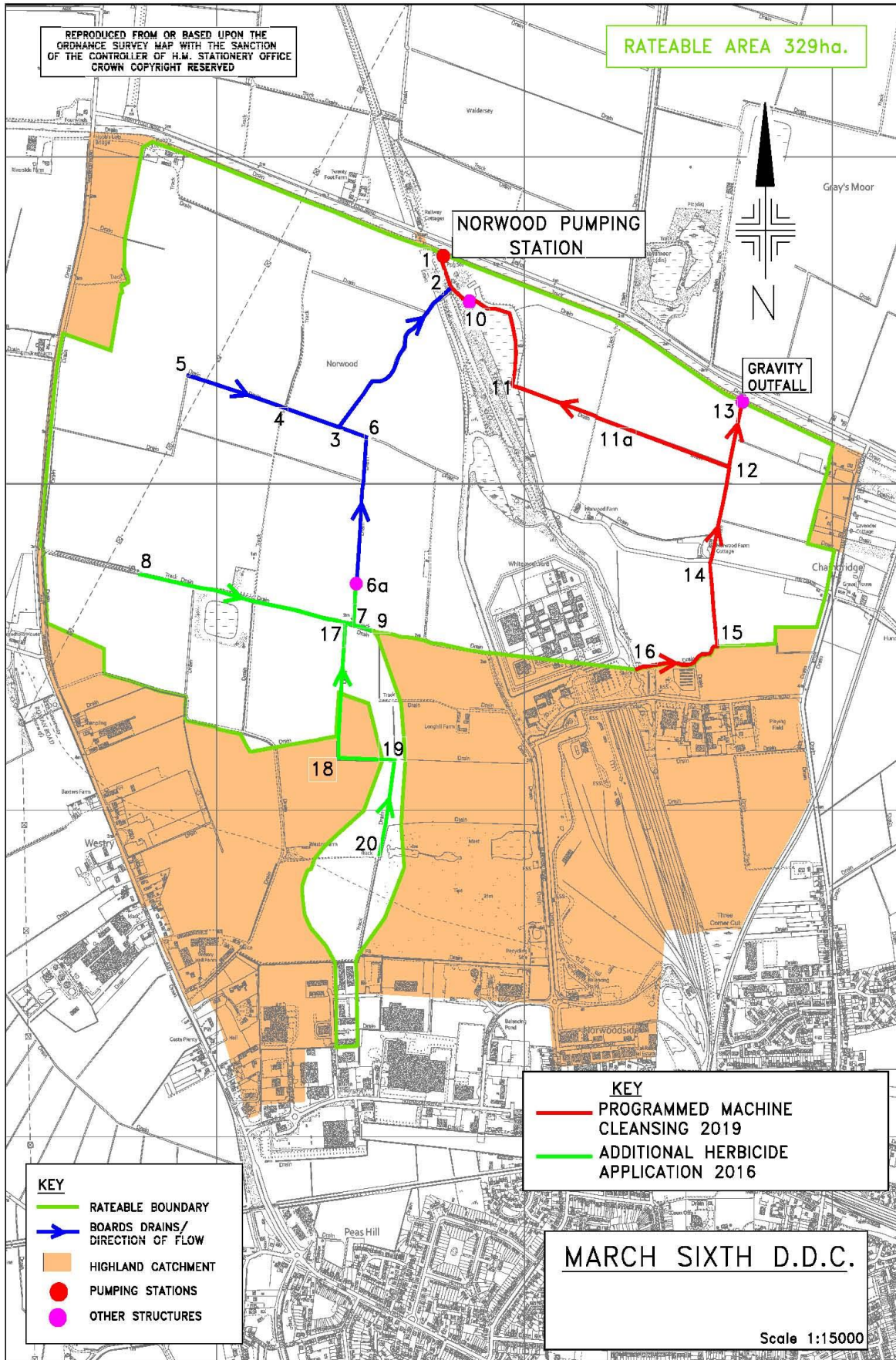
A sum has been allocated within the Commissioners' estimate to allow for Roundup applications to be made to drains, as required, and for flail mowing of the District drains to be undertaken this year.

A provisional sum has also been included within the estimate for any other emergency machine cleansing, culvert clearance or cott removal works that may be deemed necessary later in the year.

The estimated costs of this year's recommended Weed Control and Drain Maintenance works are shown below, please refer to the following plan for locations.

REPRODUCED FROM OR BASED UPON THE
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RATEABLE AREA 329ha.



NORWOOD PUMPING
STATION

GRAVITY
OUTFALL

KEY

- RATEABLE BOUNDARY
- BOARDS DRAINS/
DIRECTION OF FLOW
- HIGHLAND CATCHMENT
- PUMPING STATIONS
- OTHER STRUCTURES

KEY

- PROGRAMMED MACHINE
CLEANSING 2019
- ADDITIONAL HERBICIDE
APPLICATION 2016

MARCH SIXTH D.D.C.

Scale 1:15000

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

Phased Machine Cleansing Programme

1. Drains to East of the Prison				
(i) Reach 11-11a-12	750	m @	1.10	825.00
(ii) Reach 13-12-14-15-16	1100	m @	1.10	1210.00
2. Machine cleanse Norwood Pump Drain	150	m @	1.10	165.00
3. Allow sum for Roundup application to control Japanese Knotweed at Norwood Pumping Station, if required, self-sown saplings and emergent aquatic weed within the Commissioners' drains	Item	Sum		750.00
4. Allow sum for flail mowing	Item	Sum		950.00
5. <u>Provisional Item</u> Allow sum for emergency machine cleansing or cott removal work	Item	Sum		700.00
6. Fees for inspection, preparation and submission of report to the Commissioners, arrangement and supervision of herbicide applications and maintenance works	Item	Sum		550.00
				£ 5,150.00
				£ 5,150.00

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

Pumping Station

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

The bearing lubrication pump recently became faulty and has been replaced.

At the last meeting it was requested that the pump body and wet bolts be inspected annually, when the water levels are lowered for machine cleansing. Whilst this can be carried out it is unlikely that the pump bolts have deteriorated as they were replaced in stainless steel when the pump was last overhauled in 2007.

The weedscreen is becoming corroded and is likely to soon require repairs or replacement.

Pumping Hours

Total Hours Run/ Pumping Station	May 12 - May 13	May 13 - May 14	May 14 - May 15	May 15 - May 16	May 16 - May 17	May 17 - May 18	May 18 - May 19
Norwood	(6058) - (6549) 491	(6549) - (6789) 240	(6789) - (7177) 388	(7177) - (7364) 187	(7364) - (7546) 182	(7546)- (7760) 214	(7760) (7909) 149

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 5 new applications have been received and dealt with since the last meeting:

MLC Ref.	Council Ref.	Applicant	Type of Development	Location
154	F/YR18/0453/F	Mr A Love	Agricultural	Elm Road, March
155	F/YR18/0761/F	Batchelor Developments Ltd & Litchfield Roofing Ltd	Business/Industrial/ Storage & Distribution (11 units)	Thorby Avenue, March*
156	F/YR18/0922/PNC04	Mr & Mrs C Baker	Residential (3 plots)	Wisbech Road, March
157	Enquiry	Mr A Dean	Residence	Church Gardens, Westry
158	F/YR19/0052/F	Mr A Dean	Residence (Extension)	Church Gardens, Westry

Planning applications ending 'PNC0' relate to prior notification change of use issues

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

For his agricultural building at Elm Road, March (MLC Ref No 154), Mr A Love chose to use the infiltration device self-certification process and, in doing so, agreed that if the device was to fail in the future he would be liable for discharge consent.

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

- *Erection of industrial buildings hardstanding on land West of 30 Thorby Avenue, March – Elliott Charles Group (MLC Ref No 079 & 108) and RFGM Ltd (MLC Ref No 150)*
- *Residential Development on land north of Woodville, Wisbech Road, March – Prudential Property Investment Managers Ltd (MLC Ref No 065 & 078) and Grosvenor Partnership 3 LLP (MLC Ref No 142)*
- *Re-development of the former Brimur Packaging Ltd and Agrihold facilities at 1-3 Hostmoor Avenue and 1 Martin Avenue, March – Client of MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd (MLC Ref No 139) & Harrier Developments Ltd (MLC Ref No 143)*

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

Residential development at Phoenix House, Wisbech Road, March – Mrs C Dean (MLC Ref Nos 117, 119, 124, 147 & 153), Shire Home Building Service Ltd (MLC Ref No 141) & Mr A Dean (MLC Ref Nos 157 & 158)

An enquiry was received from Mr A Dean concerning an additional dwelling in the Church Gardens development and the associated discharge consent required for it. As at the time of writing this report a response to the enquiry has been sent but a discharge consent application has not been received.

Extension to existing switches and crossings building and erection of lean-to to enclose house jet wash equipment at Whitemoor Yard, Hundred Road, March – Network Rail (MLC Ref No 126)

The requested meeting with Network Rail to discuss the issues concerning the site has yet to be arranged.

Erection of 13no business units for B1, B2 and B8 plus non-food retail warehouse with associated parking and erection of 1.8 (min) metre high security fence at land east of 33 Thorby Avenue, March – Mr & Mrs Fink (MLC Ref Nos 128 & 134) & Client of MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd (MLC Ref No 133)

Further to item (v) of minute C.901 Consulting Engineers' Report, following extensive discussions with the applicants and their engineering consultant, MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd, and also involving the Commissioners' solicitor it is understood that the applicant has confirmed that it will pay the associated contribution fee "... in six instalments over a period of six months."

An application for consent has been received and currently awaits processing.

Erection of up to 8 x dwellings on land south east of 433 Wisbech Road, Westry, March - Mr & Mrs J C & M A Martin (MLC Ref No 152)

Further to the last meeting it is understood that an appeal was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and that this appeal was dismissed in March.

Erection of 11 x business units (B1, B2 and B8) and 1.8m high palisade fencing and gates at land north of 57 Thorby Avenue, March – Batchelor Developments Ltd & Litchfield Roofing Contractors Ltd (MLC Ref No 155)

This planning application was submitted to the District Council in July for consideration.

A detailed assessment has not been undertaken but it is noted that the Flood Risk Assessment & Sustainable Drainage Strategy Ref. 2183 – DS dated July 2018 and submitted to FDC states that:

“Infiltration testing has taken place at the site, with a copy of the trial logs provided in Appendix 2. The trial holes were dug to 1.55m below ground level and filled with water to a depth of 300mm, however Trial Hole 1 failed drain more than 33% over a 19 hour period, whilst Trial Hole 2 drained just 40% over the 19 hour period. As such it is not considered that infiltration systems provide a feasible means of surface water discharge from the proposed development in this instance.”

However, it goes on to explain that “... the second option for discharge in line with the Drainage Hierarchy is for discharge to a surface water feature. Surface water discharge will therefore be to the IDB drain along the northern boundary of the site” and concludes that:

“Surface water will therefore be to the adjacent IDB drain along the northern boundary of the site, with post development discharge rates restricted using a 67mm diameter hydrobrake flow control to 2.0l/s with relevant contribution paid to the IDB.”

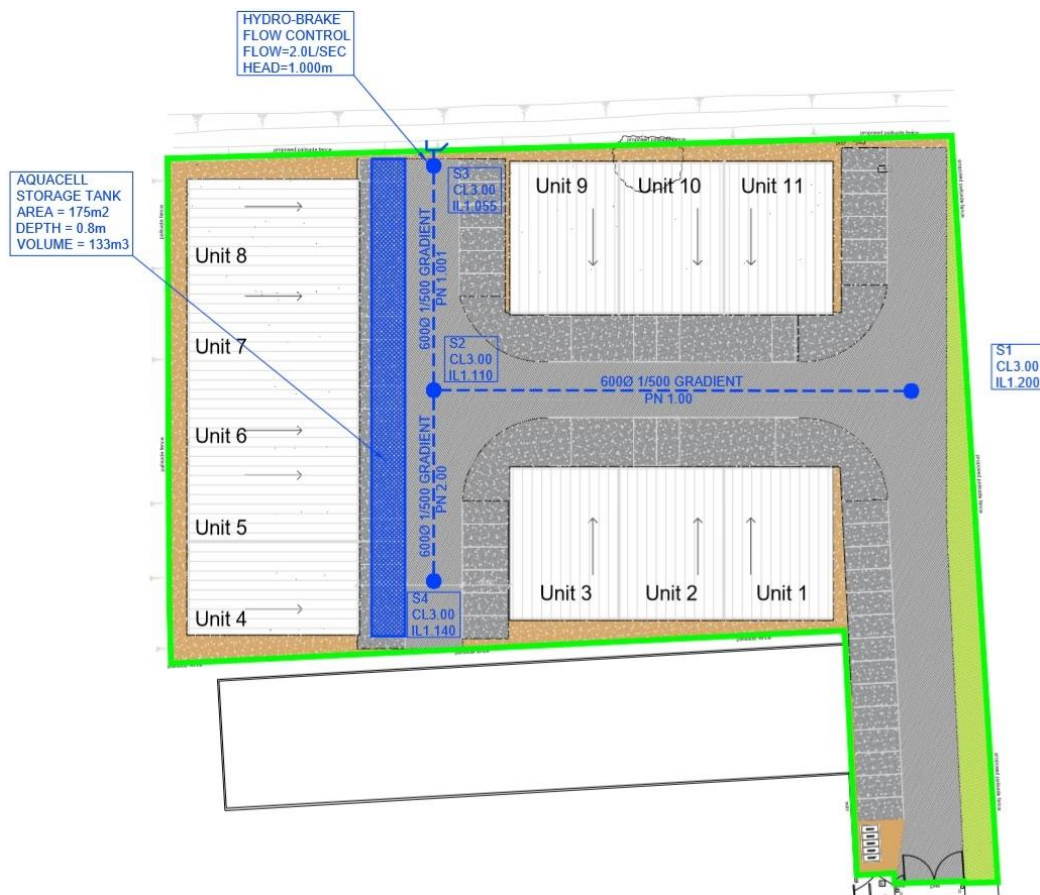
and

“Micro Drainage calculations demonstrate that by using 600mm diameter pipes, along with the incorporation of permeable paving and cellular storage systems located beneath the drainage system is able to provide sufficient capacity during all events up to and including a 1 in 100 year plus 40% climate change rainfall event whilst restricting discharge to 2.0l/s.”

The County Council, in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), advised the District Council that it had no objection in principle to the development subject to the imposition of relevant conditions.

Planning permission was granted by the District Council in November.

To date, the applicant; its agent, Swann Edwards Architecture Ltd; and its engineering consultant, MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd, have not contacted the Commissioners to enquire whether this approach is acceptable or would be approved should the proposal proceed. An application for discharge consent, has not been received.



Extract from MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd Drawing No 2251-03 Rev – showing the Indicative Surface Water Drainage Plan

Therefore, in order to resolve this matter and guide further discussions it would be beneficial to receive the Commissioners’ opinion, further instruction and approval to initially write to the parties concerned in order to resolve this potential issue.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA)

The final report of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER), prepared by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Commission (CPIEC) was published in September.

Jointly funded by the CPCA and Cambridge Ahead the report sets out how the CPIEC considers the area can sustain its own economy and support the UK economy whilst providing a better and more fulfilling way of life for the people who live and work in this area and details how this should be achieved, with fourteen key recommendations, and another thirteen subsidiary recommendations. Some of the suggested actions will be difficult to implement requiring close collaboration between leading institutions in the area, this is likely to include the relevant RMAs including the Commissioners and associated Boards, who will be needed to deliver them effectively.

Issues considered relevant to our interests include the following:

General

- a) The success of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is a project of national importance.
- b) The Government should recognise the benefits further devolution to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough would bring

Flood Risk and Water Level Management

- a) The area has not been subject to dramatic flooding events in recent years, which can mean the issue is paid little attention.
- b) Flood risk infrastructure should be considered enabling infrastructure, in that it allows a great deal of economic activity to happen in the first place (land being the most fundamental of all the economic factors of production).
- c) In the fens, water has an especially significant effect on the local economy with much of the area classified by the EA as being in flood zone 3 and this presents challenges to local economic development. Finding solutions to this problem is likely to have to happen little by little, with the finer points of detail being worked through with the EA, Anglian Water, and others. Wisbech should be seen as a UK testbed for new flood-resistant approaches to development, and levels of investment in flood defence infrastructure should be substantially increased.
- d) It is estimated that during a serious drought scenario, England could face £1.3billion of lost economic activity every day.
- e) A requirement of 110l per person per day should be enforced in water stressed areas, and that in future councils should have the power to enforce 80l per person per day requirements for new developments where appropriate.

The Environment

NB. 'Natural capital' refers to the stock of living ('biodiversity') and non-living (eg minerals, water) resources that interact and provide a flow of services ('ecosystem services') upon which society depends. Some of these services are delivered locally, others may have national or international value. All other capitals (human, social, intellectual, manufactured, financial) are ultimately underpinned by natural capital.

- a) Climate change is already having a damaging effect on biodiversity and could put a strain on the water supply.

- b) Within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, most districts were put into the middle band for levels of natural capital, although fenland (perhaps unsurprisingly) scores highly on this measure.
- c) The fens must also be considered as one of the UK's greatest natural assets with a rich wetland ecosystem which affords great leisure opportunities. The value of this natural capital must not be overlooked.

Economic Growth

- a) The Commission reached the conclusion that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area is not one, but three economies, the Greater Cambridge area, which includes Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire, and parts of Huntingdonshire and East Cambridgeshire; the Greater Peterborough area, the area around Peterborough; and the fens but should function significantly more as a single area than it does at present. This ought to be feasible whilst being compatible with each part of the Combined Authority area retaining its distinctive sense of place.
- b) A distinguishing feature of the whole area is how strongly it continues to grow outpacing both the East of England and UK over the last decade. This has been driven primarily, but not entirely, by rapid business creation and growth in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, where knowledge-intensive sectors are strongly clustered, densifying and highly dependent on their location.
- c) Evidence from the review identifies that both employment and turnover growth have been picking up right across the area. Employment growth has seen strong growth numbers in all districts but has been highest in East Cambridgeshire. Looking at growth rates in the global turnover of companies based in the area between 2010/11-2016/17 all six districts have seen turnover growth of over 2% per annum. In South Cambridgeshire this rises to over 10% per annum, which shows impressive company growth.
- d) Many very large firms, such as McCain and Del Monte, have plants in the north-east of the county and export from here around the world. Figures show that primary sectors constitute 24% of East Cambridgeshire's turnover, and 17% of Fenland's with Wholesale and Retail Distribution making up 33% of Fenland's turnover, and 28% of South Cambridgeshire's.

- e) The Netherlands, which has similar prevailing conditions to the fens but produces much higher-value agricultural goods, should be seen as an exemplar.
- f) Laws governing planning permission may impede business growth.
- g) It is very important to support the growth of market towns.
- h) There is a need for companies to invest in their employees.
- i) There is potential for greater commercial office development, particularly in Peterborough.

Housing

- a) To account for the fact that actual delivery of housing has been less than previously predicted and if employment growth continues to be significantly above what is forecast it might be necessary to build in the range of 6,000 – 8,000 houses per year over the next 20 years.
- b) In some areas, particularly in the north of Cambridgeshire, house prices are too low to make sufficient profit from development, rendering them unviable.
- c) There is positive evidence that ecological considerations are being taken seriously in new developments, with the new Eddington District in Cambridge being a notable example. Eddington reuses surface level water, reducing wastage and minimising flood risk.

Infrastructure

- a) Utilities underpin all economic activity, and there are areas of concern, particularly regarding electricity capacity. The government has committed to banning new diesel and petrol vehicles from 2040, but if it is envisioned that these will be replaced by electric vehicles, substantial levels of investment into upgrading the grid will be needed.
- b) The importance that flood defence infrastructure and the equally clear stresses upon water in one of the UK's driest counties are recognised.
- c) The level of the infrastructure of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has been inadequate for too long. The growth seen in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire

seems very unlikely to be sustained in the future without further and significant investment in infrastructure.

- d) A package of transport and other infrastructure projects to alleviate the growing pains of Greater Cambridge should be considered the single most important infrastructure priority facing the Combined Authority in the short to medium term. These should include the use of better digital technology to enable more efficient use of current transport resources.

Projects that seem likely to further this aim are the full dualling of the A47, better connecting the Peterborough economy to the Fenland economy; the A10, better connecting the Cambridge economy to the Fenland economy; and improvements to rail between Peterborough and Cambridge, particularly the Ely North junction thus better connecting all three economies.

- e) There should be greater awareness of potential supply chains and scope for collaboration within the region.
- f) It was suggested that several elements were needed to underpin the approach to financing infrastructure:
- An Investment Fund should be created to execute priorities which leverages third party resources, meaning a sustainable momentum can be achieved by the prudent use of public resources (from both local and central government)
 - An Investment Pipeline should be established showing what is feasible to be delivered over a three, five, and ten-year period
 - A Mayoral Development Platform (such as a development corporation) is needed to facilitate and support development in collaboration with the private sector (investors and developers) and wherever practicable the community in which development takes place.
 - Relevant RMAs possibly including the Commissioners and associated Boards may be asked to contribute to these.

Fenland District Council (FDC)

FDC Liaison Meeting

A follow up meeting was held on 28 March.

Planning Committee Decision at Estover Road, March

Members may be aware of the District Council's decision in relation to the outline planning application for a residential development at Estover Road, March. However, members may be interested in the principles established at the Committee Meeting in respect of the Board's interests.

The March Fifth District Drainage Commissioners requested that the Planning Engineers represented them at the Planning Committee's September meeting.

It was interesting to note that the Commissioners' presence was acknowledged with one Councillor stating that as the Commissioners have made the effort to attend the Committee should listen to them. Another comment made was that the Committee is concerned that Statutory Consultees do not attend the Planning Committee Meetings.

There was considerable support for the Drainage Boards particularly from Cllrs Bligh, Laws and Newell, but you will note the comments which were quite rightly made by Cllr Sutton and Nick Harding.

In view of this it appears that, within Fenland at least, the comments of the LLFA, as a Statutory Consultee, override that of the Commissioners, even though they have to receive and transfer any flows and deal with any resultant problems at their ratepayers' expense.

Relevant extracts from the minutes from the Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday 12 September are copied below:

"F/YR15/0668/O

LAND NORTH OF 75-127, ESTOVER ROAD, MARCH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

OUTLINE WITH ONE MATTER COMMITTED DETAILED AS ACCESS IN RELATION TO 95 NO DWELLINGS (MAX) WITH ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING, DRAINAGE AND OPEN SPACES

Middle Level Commissioners strongly object to the application.

Members received a presentation in accordance with the public participation from Mr Graham Moore (Middle Level commissioners), who was speaking on behalf of Middle Level Commissioners and March Fifth Internal Drainage Board [sic] and Mrs Liz Whitehouse, who were both speaking in objection to the Application.

It is the IDB not the Environment Agency, FDC, CCC or Anglian Water, which has to receive and transfer flows that emit from the site.

The site is located in flood zone 1 and the applicant has provided information to evidence that surface water from the development can be managed and there have been no objections from the Lead Local Flood Authority and Environment Agency who are statutory consultees. The Middle Level Commissioners are not statutory consultees; however the queries that have been raised by them have been looked at by the applicant but as this is an outline planning application and it would not be reasonable to supply the information requested currently and the details relating to the design of the scheme and details regarding the drainage scheme details are unknown. The condition that the LLFA have requested will put an appropriate safeguard in place to ensure a suitable strategy is established prior to the commencement of construction.

Members asked questions, made comments and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Mrs Laws stated that it is a windfall site but the drainage issue is an area of concern. With regard to viability, the site does not deliver what it should and although the Section 106 Officer has looked into this. The development is therefore less sustainable than it should be.*
- Councillor Sutton stated that he believes the development is sustainable. It is in flood zone 1 and the Lead Local Flood Authority who is a Statutory Consultee has no objection to the proposal. The issues concerning the discharge raised by Middle Level Commissioners and the IDB can be reviewed at a later stage and do not need to be considered today. Planning Committee Members have to make decisions on material planning reasons. The proposal does not go against the Neighbourhood Plan; if it did then Officers would not be recommending it for approval.*
- Councillor Sutton stated he can see no material planning reason to refuse the application.*
- Nick Harding stated that in terms of the surface water issues which have been raised. The IDB have recognised that the LLFA is the authority that we should be going to in consideration of these matters and if the NPPF is referred to it does state that major development should incorporate sustainable drainage systems and should take account of the advice of the LLFA. The advice from the LLFA is that this development proposal with conditions is acceptable.*
- Nick Harding stated that he is very supportive of the IDB's they have a separate legal process which has to be complied with by persons who wish to discharge their surface water and just because planning permission is granted for a development it does not mean they are automatically going to get consent from the IDB's. The Developer still has to apply to the IDB and the detail for the scheme has to be agreed.*
- Nick Harding stated that with regard to Anglian Water, they have raised no objection to this application. They have indicated that they will make*

necessary improvements to their network to ensure they can deal with the water and therefore as we do not have an objection from Anglian Water, and members should consider on what basis would we be able to defend a reason for refusal based on foul water capacity.

Following the meeting the Planning Engineer advised the Clerk to the Commissioners that:

“Whilst I was concerned when we originally stood back and stopped making bespoke responses to the LPA in preference to writing to the applicant and/or agent, which does cause some problems, the planning decision confirmed that this choice was the correct one, as the Commissioners and associated Boards are not wasting their limited resources by issuing letters that will be ignored by the LPA. However, this procedure is, under the current circumstances, potentially wasteful as the developer, LPA and LLFA could put considerable effort into an application which may be granted planning permission but which a Board refuses to consent.”

Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)

Public Consultation on the Draft Cambridgeshire Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) document

No further correspondence has been received in respect of this document.

Consultation on the proposed 2019 revision of the Local Validation Guidance List & Local Validation Check List for planning applications for the County Council’s own development & for waste development

A Public Consultation on the proposed 2019 revision of the Local Validation Guidance List and Local Validation Check List for planning applications for the County Council’s own development and for waste development was held from 28 February until 11 April.

The consultation responses received have been taken into consideration by the County Council and some additional revisions made to the proposed Validation List and Guidance Notes will be presented to the Planning Committee meeting on Thursday 16 May 2019 to seek approval for them.

A response was submitted to the County Council on behalf of both the Commissioners and our associated Boards, for whom we provide a planning consultancy service. It was pleasing to note the inclusion of the Middle Level Biodiversity Manual (2016) and the reference and a link to our “Planning Advice and Consent Documents” within the Guidance Notes.

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 Board meeting. The main matters that may be of interest to the Board are as follows:

Quarterly Meetings

The most recent meeting was a joint meeting held with the Peterborough Flood & Water Management Partnership (PFLoW) of which the MLC are also a partner. The number of meetings held each year may reduce from four to three.

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

The Environment Agency's (EA) new Environmental Permitting Charging Scheme can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-permitting-charging-scheme>. Early engagement with the EA is recommended as a slight redesign of the proposal may reduce the fees required.

Riparian Responsibilities

There has been discussion about issues concerning land owner's responsibilities on riparian "private" watercourses and the amount of time and resources that are taken up by various RMAs, including the Board, in dealing with riparian issues.

It was suggested that a recommendation be made to the RFCC. The options being considered are to do nothing; seek Government Support; or undertake an awareness campaign in the Public Domain with The Law Society, Local Government members etc. It is accepted by the partner members that some initial investment in time and resources may be required to progress these items further.

Discussions included the "Owning a watercourse" webpage, which replaced the Living on the Edge booklet, this is considered to be a backward step as the information that can be presented on the .gov.uk website is very limited.

The webpage can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/owning-a-watercourse>.

Hedge and Ditch Rule

Following a problem in the area covered by the Ely Group of IDBs this "common law" ruling that is mainly used to determine boundaries disputes and the requirements of the Land Drainage Act, notably Section 25, is currently being discussed with various parties including the former Commissioners' and Boards' Clerk, Iain Smith.

The latest ruling which dates to 2015 can be downloaded from the Mills and Reeve website, which can be found at <https://www.mills-reeve.com/boundaries-and-the-hedge-and-ditch-rule-12-07-2015/>

Bank Instability - Environment Agency (EA)/IDB approach

The EA and IDBs advised on their respective position in respect of reinstating channels that have failed. These are largely the same but due to cost constraints the EA now only stabilises channels where there are raised embankments.

For Award Drains the wording of the Award needs to be considered. Some refer to the landowner and not the Authority concerned.

IDB & LLFA Planning Process

An update was given on the LLFA's discussions with North Level and District IDB, the Ely Group and the Middle Level Commissioners in order to attain a collective approach where possible.

However, it was explained that all three authorities have different approaches to some items and that any discussions with the planning authorities and agents may be iterative.

The LLFA/AWSL/MLC Liaison meeting was briefly discussed. The EA expressed an interest in joining this group.

Emergency Planning & Response

A draft flooding newspaper article and a flood call questions template, for completion by reception staff when receiving a flooding related call, is currently being prepared by a member of the Flood & Water team.

Skills & Apprenticeships

The Government is promoting the use of Apprenticeships and it is noted that many authorities are using these in preference to other forms of training.

It is understood that the EA, together with other partners, is developing a new Apprenticeship Standard for Water Environment Workers in England. This aims to support the training and development of workers who carry out operational activities in organisations where there is a responsibility to manage the impact of water environments, natural or manmade, on the land and surrounding businesses and homes. The water environment includes rivers, coasts (the sea), lakes, wetlands, canals and reservoirs.

County Council Public Sector Services

In addition to undertaking its role the group was advised that the Flood & Water Team may be extending its service to another County Council. The Commissioners' Planning Engineer has raised concerns with the County Council's Flood Risk and Biodiversity Business Manager about the potential deterioration of service within Cambridgeshire as a result.

RMA support & the Delivery of projects

Following concerns raised by IDBs and other RMAs the EA Local Levy is funding two LLFA and IDB Flood Risk Advisors who have been recruited to assist in the delivery of projects. Based at Ely they are the Commissioners'/Boards' point of contact in respect of FDGiA funding.

Initial meetings with the relevant advisor and the MLC staff have occurred.

RMA's Medium Term Programmes (MTP)

The RFCC has expressed a keen interest in knowing more about the different projects that partners in Cambridgeshire have put forward to the MTP for FDGiA. This is in part because the RFCC wants us to all understand each other's projects better. They would particularly like it if the RFCC Member Councillors for each County were familiar with all of the projects in their area and were able to champion them, not just the ones from their own organisation.

Therefore, the various relevant RMAs will be making presentations at Partnership meetings. As a result, as the largest promoter of such projects within Cambridgeshire, a presentation on the MTP prepared by the Middle Level Commissioners and its associated Boards has been made to the Partnership.

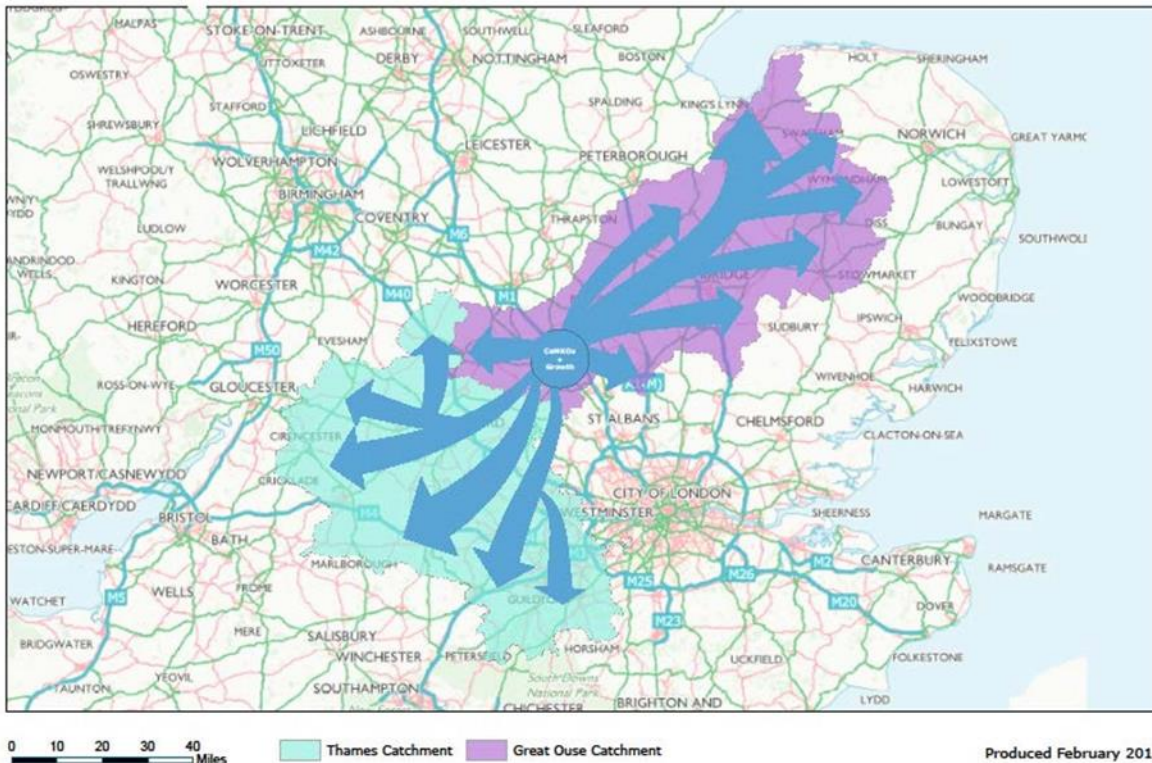
Rain Gauges

The Rain Gauge Network Project is progressing with the installation of gauges being undertaken in the next financial year.

Update on RFCC's Growth Work

In order to accommodate the projected "growth", 500,000 new homes within the Cambridge – Milton Keynes - Oxford (CaMKOx) arc, within the Great Ouse Catchment five Local Choices papers are currently being prepared on The Upstream Great Ouse Catchment, these will investigate the following:

- (i) Potential storage;
- (ii) Conveyance Study of the Main rivers to Denver Sluice, (this will investigate pinch points, silt deposition etc);
- (iii) A Modelling Workshop, (to use existing models as work needs to be completed now);
- (iv) An Economic Assessment, (this will include an assessment of Cost/Benefits and what it does to prevent flooding); and
- (v) The Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Link, (which will investigate potential benefits, water transfer/resources of the proposed new waterway between Kempston and the Grand Union Canal).



The EA is looking for RMA involvement in the production of these papers.

Flood Risk Management Trainees

As part of closer partnership working, training has been given to junior members of Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council staff and an undergraduate studying for a FRM degree under the EA foundation scheme. The main purpose of the training was to give the candidates a better and broader understanding of water level and flood risk management and also how the Middle Level Commissioners and associated Boards/Commissioners operate.

Feedback from both the candidates and internally has been positive and it is hoped that this opportunity can be offered again when the occasion arises.

One of the trainees wrote an article which was published in the Winter 2018 edition of the ADA Gazette. The article can be found at

<http://flickread.com/edition/html/index.php?pdf=5c101ead23d6e#13>

IDB Good Governance Guide/East Ridings of Yorkshire Council Guide

Matters raised by the East Ridings of Yorkshire Council, who had governance concerns over IDBs within its area of jurisdiction, were briefly discussed.

It is understood that correspondence was copied to all LLFAs and that Cllr Steve Count (Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council) provided a response which advised that the County Council had good partnerships with IDBs in the County.

ADA has subsequently launched its Good Governance for IDB Members guide at the ADA Conference which is primarily aimed at new Board members. Five workshops were held during March and April.

Further details on the guide and the workshops can be found at the following link

<https://www.ada.org.uk/2018/11/ada-publishes-guide-to-good-governance-for-internal-drainage-board-members/>

The EA's 2018 Flood Action Campaign

Research undertaken by the EA in conjunction with the Red Cross reveals that most 18-34 year olds do not know what to do in a flood. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/young-people-most-at-risk-in-a-flood-warns-environment-agency-british-red-cross>

Highways England (HE) Environmental Designated Funds (Legacy funding)

This is one of five funds provided by HE associated with the Strategic Road Network – A1, A14, A47 etc., the others being Cycling, safety and integration, Air Quality, Innovation and Growth and Housing.

The potential environmental funding is available for the following areas noise, water, carbon, landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage and, therefore, could include flooding, pollution, water framework directive and biodiversity projects associated with the Strategic Road Network – A1, A14, A47 etc. Further information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/highways-england-designated-funds>

This method of funding is being utilised by the following RMAs on the projects below:

(a) Environment Agency

Beck Brook at Girton - Legacy Fund and Local Levy match funding is being used to assist a flood alleviation scheme that was unable to achieve GiA.

Borrow Pits at Fenstanton – A potential flood alleviation scheme may be able to use Legacy funding.

(b) Cambridgeshire County Council

Bar Hill – Legacy funding for a potential £64k scheme.

Histon/Impington culvert replacement – The Legacy funding contribution is possible due to the site's close location to the A14.

Fenland Flooding Issues Sub-group

Meetings were held in November and April. There are currently no known issues within the Commissioners' catchment.

An Update to the original 2014 March Flood Investigation Report, following the floods of August 2014, has recently been issued and can be found at the following link <https://ccc-live.storage.googleapis.com/upload/www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/March%20flood%20investigation%202019.pdf?inline=true>.

The March Community Flood Group is being re-promoted as the EA's funding and resources permit. It is hoped that a workshop will be held during the year.

Re-Opening of The March – Wisbech Railway

Members will be aware that the re-opening of the railway forms a key part of the Wisbech Garden Town proposal but as this primarily affect areas to the west of the River Nene, the Hundred of Wisbech IDB has not been directly involved in recent discussions. However, in respect of a water level and flood risk management scheme within the above-mentioned Board a representative from Network Rail has confirmed that "there is a programme to liven up the Wisbech Goods branch line in the future."

The Commissioners may not be aware that if the rail line re-opens many of the numerous crossings along its length will be closed. Conscious of this, guidance has been sought from the County Council who employed Mott MacDonald to undertake its GRIP 2 report. The Council's Executive Director, Place and Economy advised that:

"In terms of the first of your questions, it is difficult to be precise on an opening date which would depend on the viability of the scheme and the availability of funding, both of which still require a significant amount of work. My view therefore, is that if the scheme were to go ahead, it would be unlikely to be before mid-2020s. Others may have different views, but railways, even re-openings are complex and take a long time.

In terms of the crossing, the standard Network Rail approach is to remove them in improvement or re-opening schemes so I think it would be fair to assume that this will not remain. That said, one of the areas of debate on the costs is the impact of all the crossing closures and so I think there will be pressure on NR to retain some and thus reduce costs. As a worst case though, I suggest you assume it will be closed".

A copy of the GRIP 2 Report can be viewed at the following link:

https://ccc-live.storage.googleapis.com/upload/www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/March_to_Wisbech_GRIP_2_Study_Report_B.pdf?inline=true

Flood Risk Management (FRM) for the Fens Technical Group [previously reported as the Future Fenland Project]

The EA has recently commenced the FRM for the Fens Project to determine the best way of managing future flood risk. As a result a technical group has been formed, including representation from the Middle Level Commissioners.

The project was discussed at the EAs Large Projects Review Group (LPRG) meeting in November. The LPRG stated that all partners who seek future Flood Risk Management Grant-in-Aid (GiA) funding but do not share its data for the Baseline Report are likely to be denied, or capped to 45%, as they will not be able to demonstrate a strategic approach.

The project is currently at the data collection stage and details of the Board's system and any hydraulic models are being collated to inform the successful consultant, who will be appointed to progress Phase 1 of the project.

A letter from the EA has been issued to the Chairman and a copy follows for your information. This included a copy of the "elevator pitch", used by the EA to provide some background to the project. Please note that the extent of the geographical area shown has recently been amended.

Consulting Engineer

6 June 2019

March Sixth (315)\Reports\June 2019

Letter to Chairman
Internal Drainage Boards
Middle Level Offices
85 Whittlesey Road
March
Cambs
PE15 0AH

Our ref: ENV0000678C
Your ref
Date: 15 January 2019

Dear Chairman

Flood Risk Management for the Fens

Between Local Internal Drainage Boards and the Environment Agency, we are modern day custodians of arguably the richest legacies of flood risk and drainage management in the country. I am sure you and your Board are really proud, like I am, to have a responsibility for critical infrastructure within a landscape that is hugely important for the economy, communities, food, farming and the natural environment.

The future of the Great Ouse Fens is something I am passionate about and with IDB clerks and engineers we are starting a partnership and collaborative approach to their future flood management. This letter summarises where we are and some of the important steps ahead. We really need your ideas, enthusiasm, advocacy, support and knowledge about this fantastic part of the country.

In recent years flood and drainage management in the Fens has been undertaken in somewhat of a piecemeal approach and reactive manner. With climate change projections and many of our assets coming to the end of their design life, we now collectively need to take a more strategic and long term approach. This will enable us all to maximise financial leverage and present a stronger more considered investment case to funding bodies.

Flood risk management for the Fens is a project set up to consider what the future flood risk management choices for the Great Ouse Fens could look like. This will help us develop a strategic approach together that will underpin and frame all flood and coastal risk management investment in the Fens moving forward. This is a key requirement of Defra's partnership funding policy (see attached note).

The attached document provides further details about the project, including the details of those flood risk management organisations involved in the Technical Group. David will hopefully have already briefed you on this work and will be your primary engagement link as the project moves forward.

Supported by the Anglian (Central) Regional Flood & Coastal Committee and with the help of the Technical Group, we have recently secured a funding package and obtained financial approval for Phase 1 of the project. The main products of this phase includes:

- A baseline report to gain a shared understanding of all land drainage and flood risk management assets, the economics, government grant eligibility level and partnership funding challenge for all sources of flooding. *This will be presented in a similar way to the Great Ouse Tidal River Baseline Report (we can provide a copy if you don't already have one) Anticipated delivery date Feb 2020.*
- Visualisation tools to showcase the findings of the baseline report in a way that informs and excites a wide variety of audiences. *Anticipated delivery date late 2020 after the baseline report to share key messages from the report.*

For Phase 1 we have not sought financial contributions from individual IDBs within the Great Ouse Fens, however the success of the work and effective use of the funding we have secured is hugely dependent upon the timely provision of asset and financial data from all Risk Management Authorities. Since July 2018, we have been working as part of the Technical Group on the specification and provision of this data.

We are aiming to appoint consultants for Phase 1 by early February 2019 and we are keen to have this data before then. Therefore it is vital that we have your support in helping your clerks and engineers to provide this information in a timely manner and by the 21 January 2019.

This will enable the project to move forward efficiently avoiding abortive costs, and help us to continue to support your IDB in seeking FCRM Grant in Aid (GiA) for individual investments. If we have gaps or deficiencies in the data then we will not be developing a strategic approach and are unlikely to be successful in maximising FCRM GiA funding for future projects.

Alongside Phase 1 we also collectively need to start to plan for Phase 2 of this work. Phase 2 is likely to start in approximately 5 years' time and most likely be a strategic options appraisal, to identify the choices for medium and long term flood risk management in the Fens.

Amongst the many benefits of this work, it will help us all better inform, influence and justify the source, nature and levels of funding required to

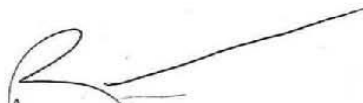
evolve and manage flood and drainage infrastructure over the medium and long term. The scope and governance arrangements for Phase 2 will all need to be developed and agreed collaboratively and there is no presumption that the Environment Agency will lead.

Initial estimates from similar projects are that Phase 2 may cost in the region of £10 million to £15 million, and significant levels of partnership funding will be needed to be sourced to unlock and complement FCRM GiA. Therefore an investment strategy will be developed in parallel to Phase 1. Your Board may want to consider sooner rather than later how they choose to plan for this.

In the short term, whilst the strategic work is progressing, we all still need to continue to invest in the flood and drainage infrastructure within the Fens, without prejudicing any medium and long term choices. To frame this and support investment decision making in being as effective and efficient as possible, through the Technical Group we are also developing tactical plans for the Fens. These are looking at how we apportion benefits across respective infrastructure and apply these to upcoming investments. Once these are ready it may be useful to present to your Board.

It is a really interesting and exciting time with all this work. I hope you and your Board are supportive of the approach. If you have any questions or would like further information then please contact David, myself or our Project Executive, Claire Bell (Claire.Bell@Environment-Agency.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely



Flood & Coastal Risk Manager for East Anglia Area (Great Ouse catchment inc North West Norfolk coast)

Mobile: 07824 431597
paul.burrows@environment-agency.gov.uk

The Strategic Approach for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Projects

Supplementary Local Guidance Version 1

In both Defra Policy Statements (Appraisal of Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management June 2009 and Partnership Funding May 2011) demonstrating and evidencing a strategic approach to flood or coastal erosion risk is a requirement for every project, to ensure value for money for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant in Aid (FCERM GiA).

Catchment Flood Management Plans (CFMPs) and Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs) form the large scale holistic view of risk management requirements at the catchment or coastal process scale, beneath which more detailed strategies, and the local scale risk management activities should be developed.

Primarily, all schemes seeking FCERM GiA allocation should be in line with or compliment any overarching strategic plan such, for example, the Great Ouse CFMP.

“SMPs or CFMPs will have collected information on the economic, environmental and social assets at risk, the defences or coast protection works that are in place and identified preferred policies. The SMP or CFMP will also have engaged with stakeholders and you may be able to draw some information from the results. Early links need to be made with SMPs or CFMPs and strategies (where applicable) as they may have already identified key issues and broad solutions (in CFMPs these are called generic responses). It is essential to link the problem back to the policy as defined in the SMP or CFMP (and for schemes, to the description of the strategy, where available) to ensure continuity is not lost. Any conflicts between the description of the problem for your project and the recommendation of the SMP or CFMP (or strategy) will need to be highlighted and reconciled before you can progress further.” - Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Appraisal Guidance, 2010.

The meaning of a ‘strategic approach’ is described throughout the FCERM Appraisal Guidance, March 2010, mainly in Chapter 3. It needs to include consideration of wider factors such as the economic, environmental, recreational and social factors that may affect or be affected by the proposed investment opportunity. These wider factors will then subsequently influence the selection of investment options to manage or mitigate the flood or coastal erosion risks. At the early stages of appraisal a wide range and broad portfolio of options should be identified, such as a change in pumping regimes, storage options and combining flood cells and assets for example. These options should be appropriate to the scale and type of project being undertaken.

Any strategic evaluation should be done as early as possible when planning a FCERM project. Findings should be evidenced within the business case, however, as this is produced much later than the initial project submission is submitted to the Environment Agency (through PAFS) it may be required that evidence of a strategic approach be made available to the Environment Agency on request in advance of the programme refresh. Failure to submit such evidence on request, will result in the maximum grant rate for the scheme being reduced to 45%.

“Where there is not a clear strategic approach setting out how benefits are apportioned to individual investments within a system of assets, the maximum grant rate allowable will be reduced to 45%. This means that all risk management authorities, including internal drainage boards, could receive up to 100% grant levels. The reduced grant rate, relevant for all risk management authorities, helps preserve value for money in cases where investments may only score well because benefits are being double-counted.” - Partnership Funding Policy 2011

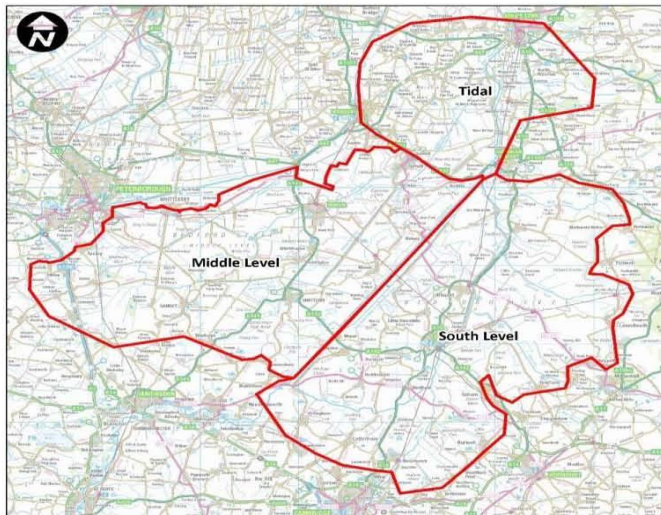
It is understood that there is a significant variation in the types of schemes which may be eligible for FCERM GiA funding. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that the attention given to investigating a strategic approach should be proportional to the size of the scheme. Therefore, for smaller schemes (affecting a lower number of outcome measures and/or seeking a smaller sum of funding) a discussion of how a scheme aligns with a strategic approach may suffice. This could be evidenced, for example in notes accompanying a PAFS submission or captured within meeting minutes held in the early planning stages. Similarly, a larger scheme will require a more substantial demonstration. Any such scheme should be able to include, or reference any strategic analysis prior to PAFS submission or annual programme refresh.

This guidance reinforces the Defra Policy Statements ([Appraisal of Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management June 2009](#) and [Partnership Funding May 2011](#)), if these National policies change in the future, this guidance will be amended accordingly.

Flood risk management for the Fens – planning together for a sustainable flood risk future

‘Flood risk management for the Fens’ is a project that has been set up to plan the best way of managing future flood risk in the Great Ouse Fen Area. We are currently in the **first phase** of this project which is developing a shared understanding of the situation and challenges for managing flood risk (from all sources) in the Fens.

A Technical Group (TG) has been formed of organisations (see below) who have **flood risk assets**, or represent those with assets, in the geographical area that has been defined as the Great Ouse Fens.



We are **working together** to set out all the data about flood risk in the area outlined – defining who is managing flood risk, asset maintenance costs and potential available Flood Risk Management Grant in Aid (Government funding). This will identify any difference in **investment needs versus available funding**.

The most important outcome for the first phase of work is for the TG to have a **shared understanding** of the issues and challenges for managing flood risk in the Fens, and to have a **shared ownership** for taking action to overcome these issues.

Pressures on the Fens will come from many sources including, for example, climate change causing sea level rise affecting the Tidal River and the systems discharging into it, and catchment pressures from housing and infrastructure growth.

Following this initial data gathering phase, which we hope to complete in the next 18-24 months, we will produce a **joint project plan** for the next phase of work. The outcome of Phase 2 will be to produce a jointly owned strategic plan reviewing all options that could manage flood risk in the Fens, taking in to account climate change and sea level rise and recommending actions that will be the best/ most appropriate way of managing flood risk in the Fens over the next 50-100 years.

The TG will work closely with the Environment Agency’s Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire Partnerships and Strategic Overview Team who are progressing a similar project for the Lincolnshire Fens, but at different timescales.

The TG understands that there are **many different areas of interest** within the Fens, and a lot of groups and individuals will be interested in the work of the project.

At this stage in the project, there is a very **strong focus on the flood risk management challenges** – specifically focusing on current flood risk management assets. We will keep interested stakeholders updated with the progress of this stage of the project and **our work will be overseen by the Anglian Central Regional Flood and Coastal Committee**.

The TG is aware of the importance of linking Phase 1 outputs to other projects shaping the future of the Fens landscape.



March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners

Capital Improvement Programme (2019/2020)

		PREVIOUS YEARS	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	FUTURE YEARS	ALL YEARS
		Pre Yr 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Post Year 10	Total Expenditure
Norwood p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.0	40.0
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0
Drainage Channels														
		0	0	0	0	0	0	90	10	0	0	0	40	140

March Sixth IDB

Biodiversity Action Plan Report 2018-19

Note on 2018-19 report

This report continues those compiled by Cliff Carson from 2010 – 2018 to help record, promote and preserve the biodiversity interest of March Sixth IDB.

As Cliff noted in his update of January 2016 (included here as Appendix 1.) Internal Drainage Boards of the Middle Level have demonstrated great commitment to biodiversity through their work and general interest, successfully achieving many of the objectives put forward in their Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs). There is an opportunity now to update Internal Drainage Board BAPs with future direction aiming to consolidate the good foundations established during the period to date, broaden our species work and reflect new trends or methodology.

Understanding and discussing what these new opportunities may be will be looked at in 2019, with the potential to have some new suggestions in place for 2020. As such, this report for 2018-19 will continue to provide updates and guidance based on the existing BAP. Included too are some potential species initiatives for Internal Drainage Boards to consider (see 'Opportunities').

The Conservation Officer is happy to meet with the Board at any time and a representative from the Board to attend the next IDB BAP meeting on *4th December 2019* would be very welcome.

Report Summary

An updated Biodiversity Action Plan Map of the District is attached here. It indicates areas of environmental interest and management recommendations where appropriate. The Conservation Officer must be given advance notice of any ditch re-profiling work, culvert installation plans or ditch infilling proposals for the District to enable water vole mitigation actions to be put in place. This is essential to ensure the Board does not contravene water vole habitat protection legislation.

Invasive species

None noted but Board members are asked to keep an eye out for any aquatic plants that appear unfamiliar and 'blanketing' a water course. A local campaign to raise awareness of Floating Pennywort will happen in May, further info will be sent out then.

Bats

Bat boxes will be revisited at a later date. The Conservation Officer is interested to hear of any sightings.

Barn Owls

Limited data from boxes in 2018; a full round of visits will be made in June 2019.

Otters

Reports from various locations within the vicinity.

Kingfisher

Active in the district but no confirmed nesting in 2018. All sightings welcomed.

Water Vole

Confirmed in the vicinity of the District in 2019 and therefore likely to be present, several monitoring boards have been left in place along the Sixth District Drain to detect activity and will be checked later in June.

Other

Discussions are underway about a national mink control strategy which will undoubtedly require the knowledge of drainage boards, farmers and land owners in the fens. In the first instance, **any reports of mink** (dead or alive) in the District are gratefully received by the Conservation Officer.

Please see Appendix 2 for a nationwide species alert on the highly invasive Asian Hornet which poses a threat to native honey bees and other pollinators. It has not yet been found in Cambridgeshire.

Records, photos or information relating to wildlife interest in the District will be welcomed by the Conservation Officer.

Opportunities

The following are some potential future options.

- Pollinator Strategy

The declining number of pollinating insects (such as bees, butterflies, hoverflies and moths) across Britain has been widely studied and reported in the media. A report in February 2019 suggesting as many as 40% of species are in decline. With such a critical role to play in food-producing systems this represents a significant issue. There may be opportunities to look at how Internal Drainage Boards can support insect populations both on drainage networks through sowing of flowering mixes and management, or on adjacent land by allowing verges of arable plants to develop and flourish through spring and summer.

- Turtle Doves

The UK's fastest declining migrant breeding bird is on the verge of extinction across the country. Studies show that East Anglia remains a core area for them and the Cambridgeshire fens in particular. They show a preference for sites near water which puts them well within reach of the important work of IDBs.

Turtle Doves can be supported in different ways: through nesting habitat creation/management (they need tall, dense hedgerows or scrub), arable pond creation, low density planting of seed-rich plants and supplementary feeding in spring.

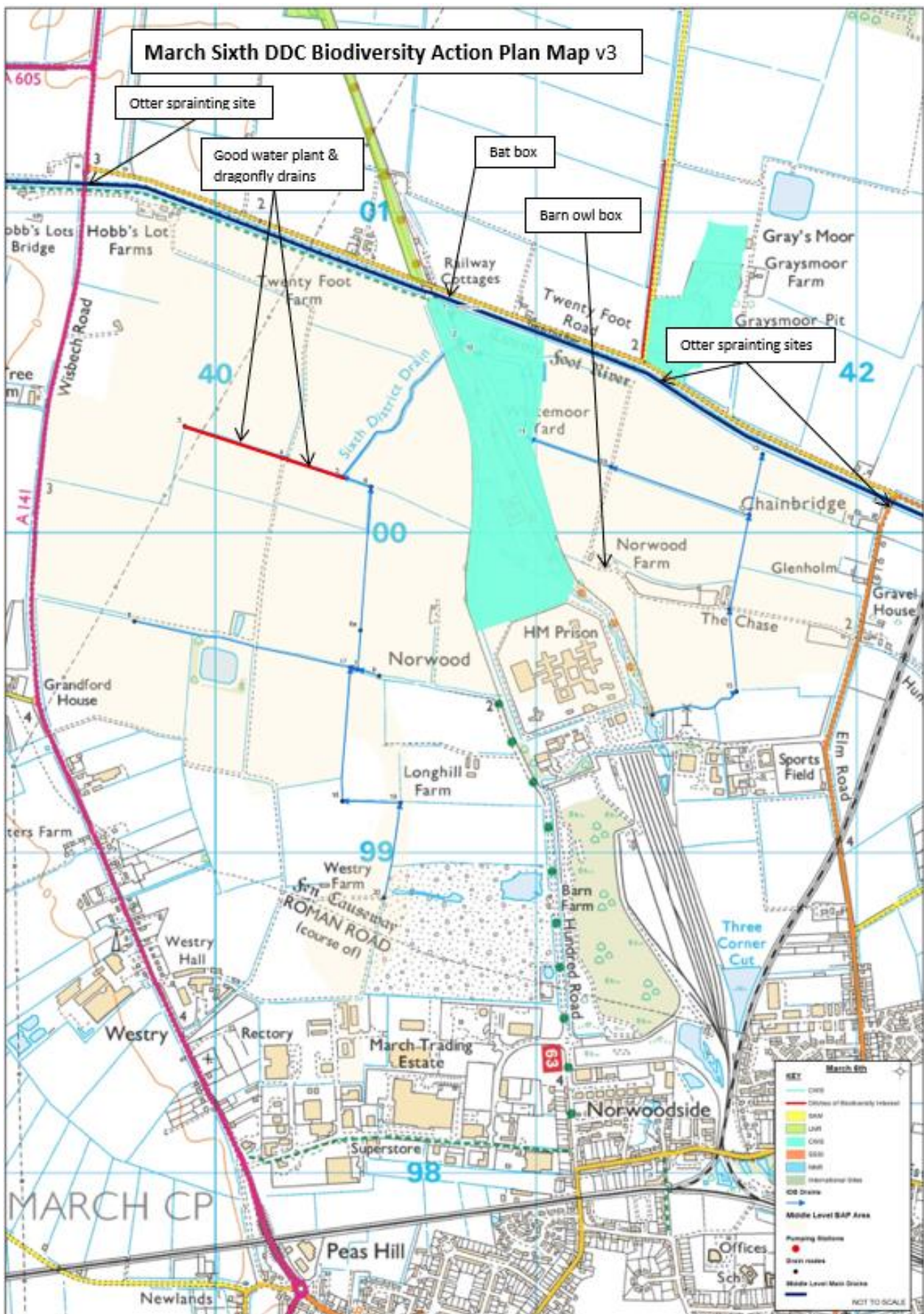
- Swifts

Like Turtle Doves, swifts are declining at an alarming rate, we have lost nearly half our population in the last 20 years. Being dependent on man-made structures however means simple, cost-effective steps can be taken to help. For example, installing 'swift bricks' on old pumping stations or nest boxes on farm buildings 5m high or more.

The Middle Level will be looking at options for its Head Office and other buildings in spring 2019. There may be opportunities for savings through bulk orders and cost-sharing.

If you would like to discuss any of these ideas, adopt them in your IDB or make suggestions of your own please contact the Conservation Officer.

Peter Beckenham, June 2019 / mobile 07765 597775



Drainage Ditch Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
1	Manage ditches for biodiversity as well as for drainage	1.1	Establish and maintain a management plan for routine IDB operations incorporating key biodiversity features	Conservation Officer	2015	Plan finalised and followed each year	<i>A map-based plan has been produced. It will be updated and added to as further information becomes available.</i>
		1.2	Look for opportunities to provide natural erosion protection such as marginal plant ledges when re-profiling ditches	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	If re-profiling is carried out, opportunities identified	<i>No opportunities to carry out this action were identified during the period.</i>
		1.3	Provide natural erosion protection as in 1.2 if opportunities available	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	Length of ditch with ledge / natural vegetation revetment	<i>As above.</i>
2	Identify ditches of conservation interest and manage appropriately	2.2	Ensure appropriate management of ditches for priority species	Conservation Officer, Plantlife, Wildlife Trust	Ongoing	Specified in management plan	<i>Priority ditches identified in the management plan map.</i>
3	Support the Conservation Officer in working with landowners to benefit wildlife in the district	3.1	Refer private landowners to the Conservation Officer for advice on creating field margin buffer zones and wildlife-friendly ditch management	Conservation Officer, Natural England, Wildlife Trust, FWAG	Ongoing	Number of contacts received and passed to Conservation Officer	<i>No enquiries received.</i>
4	Control invasive species	4.1	Report any sightings of non-native invasive species immediately to the Conservation Officer and control as appropriate	Conservation Officer, Environment Agency, Plantlife, Wildlife Trust	Ongoing	Reports to Conservation Officer	<i>No invasive non-native plants recorded</i>

Reedbed Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
1	Identify, assess and map any areas of reedbed over 0.5ha in size	1.1	Pass details of any known areas to Conservation Officer	Wildlife Trust, Natural England, Environment Agency	2012	Review of reedbed areas carried out	<i>No new areas of reedbed over 0.5ha present.</i>
2	Support appropriate reedbed creation	2.2	Manage the District adopted drains, where possible, to assist private landowners who wish to create areas of reedbed on their own land	Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency	Ongoing	(a) Number of requests received (b) Number of landowners assisted	<i>No formal approaches were received during the period.</i>
3	Take conservation value of reedbed into account when planning and carrying out ditch and river maintenance	3.2	Where reeds are present, commence mowing or cleansing work outside the bird breeding season (7 th April – 15 th July). Where reeds are growing in water be aware of the potential for late-nesting reed warblers being present until late August and avoid mowing in that location. In exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, seek advice from the Conservation Officer.	Conservation Officer, Wildlife Trust, RSPB	Ongoing	Reeds not cut during bird nesting season	<i>Reeds or other vegetation were not cut during bird nesting season.</i>

Open Water Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
1	Promote the creation of ponds, lakes and reservoirs in appropriate areas	1.1	Consider pond creation as mitigation when a ditch has to be filled in or culverted	Local authorities, Amphibian & Reptile Conservation, Wildlife Trust	Ongoing	(a) Number of mitigation opportunities (b) Number of ponds created	<i>(a) No ditch infilling occurred, (b) no pond creation opportunities in mitigation available.</i>
		1.2	Support creation of flood storage areas and reservoirs	Environment Agency, Natural England, Wildlife Trust, RSPB	Ongoing	Number of projects involved with	<i>No application for flood storage areas or reservoirs received.</i>
		1.3	Assist private landowners with advice, information or contacts as necessary	Amphibian & Reptile Conservation, Wildlife Trust	Ongoing	(a) Number of information requests (b) Number responded to	<i>(a) No formal information requests received, (b) 0</i>

2	Look for opportunities to create open water habitat when managing ditches	2.1	Create a pool at an appropriate ditch junction when re-profiling (see the Drainage Channel Biodiversity Manual, technique CL3)	Conservation Officer	2010	One pool successfully created	<i>No opportunities of this type occurred during the period.</i>
3	Support appropriate habitat creation as part of gravel pit restoration	3.1	Support inclusion of wetland habitats such as wet woodland, wet grassland, scrub and open water in gravel pit restoration schemes	Aggregates companies, local authorities, RSPB, WWT, Wildlife Trust	Ongoing	Number of schemes involved with	<i>No gravel pit schemes currently active.</i>

Water Vole Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
1	Manage ditches according to the law and to best practice for water vole	1.1	Assume water voles are present when carrying out works (discuss special circumstances with the Conservation Officer) and follow the ADA water vole mitigation guide	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	Measures incorporated in management plans	<i>Water vole friendly ditch maintenance practices were adhered to.</i>
		1.2	Publicise good practice for rat control near drainage ditches	Conservation Officer, Wildlife Trust	Ongoing	Good practice publicised	<i>Good practice for rat control was publicised via the Environmental Officers newsletter issue 5.</i>
2	Enhance drainage ditch habitat to benefit water vole	2.1	Look for opportunities to add a marginal shelf when re-profiling banks	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	(a) Opportunities identified (b) Measures taken	<i>(a) No opportunities identified. Many of the District drains are too narrow for this measure to be practical. (b) No measures taken.</i>
		2.2	Consider using coir roll to stabilise banks and provide marginal vegetation	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	(a) Sites considered (b) Measures taken	<i>No appropriate sites for this measure were identified during the period.</i>
3	Monitor water vole populations	3.1	Set up a survey programme to monitor water vole populations	Conservation Officer, Wildlife Trust	2010	Surveys carried out	<i>Informal presence/absence surveys were carried out by the CO and will be re-visited each year.</i>

		3.2	Provide data on water vole to the relevant Biological Records Centres	Conservation Officer, CPBRC, NBIS	Ongoing	Data sent via Conservation Officer annually	<i>Records passed on.</i>
4	Control mink as necessary	4.2	Carry out mink control as part of the Middle Level programme and <u>report all sightings</u> to the Conservation Officer	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	(a) Number of trapping days (b) Number of mink caught	<i>(a)0 (b) 0. All sightings of this species very important</i>

Otter Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
Conservation Officer	Improve otter habitat	1.1	Identify and maintain existing key bushes and trees near watercourses likely to be important for otters		2012 and ongoing	Sites identified and listed in management plans	<i>Key bushes and trees identified on the Biodiversity Action Plan map.</i>
2	Monitor otter populations	2.3	Ensure any dead otters are reported to the Conservation Officer and transferred to the Environment Agency for post mortem	Environment Agency	Ongoing	Otters reported to Conservation Officer, if found	<i>None reported.</i>
3	Reduce otter deaths related to eel and crayfish trapping and road traffic	3.1	Report incidents of suspected illegal netting, trapping or fishing to the Environment Agency Fisheries Officers and the Conservation Officer	Environment Agency, Angling Clubs & syndicates	Ongoing	Incidents reported, if discovered	<i>Otters being drowned in illegal eel nets remain a concern. Members are requested to be watchful for suspicious activity and report it to the Conservation Officer on 07765 597775 immediately.</i>

Bats Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
1	Improve habitat for bats	1.1	Put up at least 2 bat boxes at appropriate sites, e.g. pumping stations	Bat Conservation Trust	2015	Number of bat boxes sited	<i>One bat box previously installed at Norwood Pumping Station on 26/06/12.</i>

		1.2	Pollard suitable trees to provide bat roosts		Ongoing	Number of trees pollarded	<i>Any key trees identified on the Management Plan map.</i>
		1.3	Identify potential sites for a bat hibernaculum, e.g. in disused buildings or tunnels	Conservation Officer, Bat Conservation Trust	As opportunities arise	(a) Potential sites looked for (b) Site created	<i>To be considered</i>
2	Collect information on bat populations	2.1	Monitor bat boxes	Bat Conservation Trust	2015 onwards	(a) Number of boxes monitored (b) Number of boxes used by bats	<i>Checks will be made later in year</i>
		2.2	Pass bat box information to CPBRC and NBIS	Environmental Officer, CPBRC, NBIS	2015 onwards	Data via Environmental Officer annually	<i>Data passed on.</i>

Kingfisher Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
1	Improve the quality of kingfisher habitat	1.1	Provide at least one potential nest hole in sheet pilings	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	Number of nest sites provided	<i>Limited opportunities</i>
		1.2	Leave kingfisher fishing perches where possible (e.g. occasional branch)	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	Number of perch sites left	<i>Many drains have suitable natural perches for kingfishers.</i>
2	Collect records of kingfisher breeding between March and July	2.1	Note sightings of potential breeding kingfisher and pass information to CPERC via the Conservation Officer	Conservation Officer, CPERC	Ongoing	Data sent via Conservation Officer annually	<i>Occasional sightings but no confirmed nesting in 2018</i>

Barn Owl Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
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1	Improve the quality of barn owl habitat	1.1	Put up at least 2 barn owl nest boxes in suitable locations	Wildlife Conservation Partnership	2015	Number of nest boxes provided	<i>One barn owl box was previously installed at Norwood Farm in 2012.</i>
		1.2	Pollard suitable trees to provide natural nest sites	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	Number of trees pollarded	<i>Any suitable trees will be identified on the management plan map.</i>
2	Collect records of barn owl presence	2.1	Monitor nest boxes for use. Have occupied boxes checked for success by licensed barn owl ringers.	Wildlife Conservation Partnership	2015	(a) Number of nest boxes checked. (b) Number of nest boxes used	<i>Checks will be made in June 2019.</i>
		2.2	Pass barn owl box information to CPBRC and NBIS	Conservation Officer, Wildlife Conservation Partnership, CPBRC	2015	Data sent via Conservation Officer annually	<i>Data sent.</i>

Procedural Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
1	Provide training on IDB BAP and conservation management of drainage channels for all relevant staff by 2013	1.1	Establish programme of 1-day courses for IDB staff and members	Conservation Officer, Wildlife Trust, Natural England, other specialists	2013	(a) Number of courses held (b) Number of Board members / staff attending courses	<i>(a) 0 (b) Any Board members able to attend the next IDB BAP meeting on 4th December 2019. would be very welcome.</i>
		1.2	Establish suitable training for contractors' staff	Conservation Officer, Contractors	2013	Contractors attended training course	<i>No courses specifically run for contractors during the period.</i>
2	Take biodiversity into account when planning and undertaking capital works	2.1	Consult with the Conservation Officer and choose the best possible mitigation solutions for biodiversity, e.g. fish-friendly pumps	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	(a) Number of capital schemes undertaken (b) Number of schemes commented on	<i>No schemes commented on.</i>

APPENDIX 1.

Biodiversity Action Plan Updates (*Cliff Carson, January 2016*)

The Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) for all the Boards in the Middle Level BAP Partnership were created in April 2010 and included five-year targets such as bat box, barn owl box and kingfisher nesting hole provision to be achieved by March 2015. [Many] IDBs have achieved their targets and it is now time to consider updating the BAP for a further five years.

Internal Drainage Boards and the role they play in flood protection and wildlife conservation are more in the public eye than they were five years ago. By providing practical actions for species such as bats, barn owls, black poplars, otters, water voles and kingfishers and publicising this work, IDBs are viewed very positively by the general public and government.

The direction for future BAP action will aim to consolidate the good foundations established during the first five years. There will be a need to record the activity at 80+ bat boxes, 90+ barn owl boxes, 80 otter holts, many water vole sites and 80+ kingfisher sites in the 36 Districts of the Middle Level IDB BAP Partnership. There will be a need to engage with local communities to recruit volunteers to help with this and other conservation work.

The areas we will be looking to develop during the next five years include education, training, surveying & recording, and publicising the work of IDBs. Other areas in need of support include pollinators, amphibians and reptiles and aquatic invertebrates. The creation of micro habitats at ditch margins and ponds benefits most of those groups. While actions towards those were included in the previous BAPs, the ambitious targets for specific species received most of the time and effort during the period.

Talks are in progress with the Association of Drainage Authorities, Natural England and fund-raising bodies with a view to making a funding bid that would support these aims and the next round of Biodiversity Action Plan targets. Having a BAP is not a statutory duty (although having regard for the environment and to prevent damage is) so IDBs can benefit from grants for this purpose.

If a funding bid is successful it will affect the scope and size of our BAP targets for the next five years so until we know what funds may be available we are carrying on with the targets in the existing plans.

My thanks once again to the Board members who have supported the practical biodiversity work in the past and for your continued support in the future.

Cliff Carson Environmental Officer

APPENDIX 2.

Species Alerts: New Zealand Pigmyweed (aka 'Crassula') and Asian Hornet

Crassula:



Picture left (GBNNS): Crassula close-up, right: ditch with crassula 2017 (Cliff Carson)

Environmental Impact:

Except in deep water, New Zealand pigmyweed tends to form dense mats, from 0.5m above water to depths of 3m under water, which apparently shade out other plants. These can also apparently cause oxygen depletion of the underlying water leading to *a decline in invertebrates, frogs, newts and fishes.*

Economic Impact:

New Zealand pigmyweed may have adverse economic impacts where it forms dense mats in shallow water, *obstructing movement of water and increasing flood risk*

Asian Hornet:

Please see attached sheet regarding this species of significant concern in the UK. Report any sightings to the Conservation Officer with urgency.

The Asian hornet is a species of hornet which is not native to the UK. It is smaller than our native hornet and poses no greater risk to human health than other hornets or bees which serve vital ecological functions.

To date, there have been 13 confirmed sightings of the Asian hornet in England.

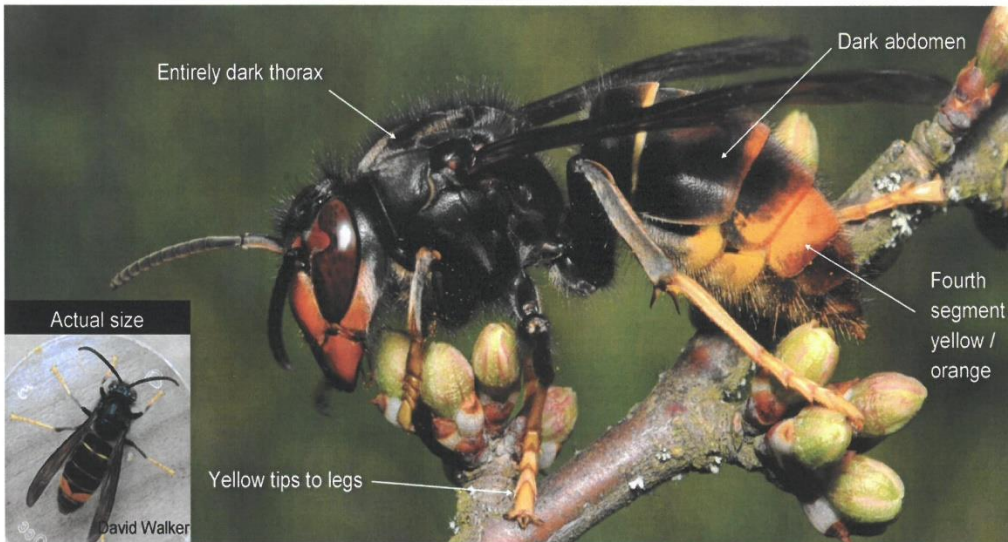
ASIAN HORNET

Vespa velutina

What is it?

An invasive non-native hornet originally from Asia. Asian hornet is a highly aggressive predator of native insects and poses a significant threat to honey bees and other pollinators. In 2004 it was accidentally introduced to France where it has spread rapidly and into neighbouring countries. Since 2016 a number of sightings have been recorded in the UK.

Suspected sightings should be reported immediately using the details provided at the bottom of this poster.



Where might I see it?

May be seen on flowering plants, around beehives, around rotting / fermenting fruit and protein, and at street markets attracted by sweet fruit and fish stalls.

Active from February to November across England and Wales.

What does it look like?

- Slightly smaller than native hornet
- Dark abdomen, 4th segment yellow / orange
- Bright yellow tips to legs (native hornet dark)
- Entirely brown or black thorax (native hornet more orange)

Asian hornet abdomen Native hornet abdomen



Asian hornet nest



'Hawks' outside honey bee colonies



DANGER!

This hornet stings.
Do not disturb an active nest.
Seek advice using the details below.

Report any sightings of this species:

with the free iPhone and Android recording app: **Asian Hornet Watch**

online at: **www.nonnativespecies.org/alerts/asianhornet**

by email: **alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk**



Representing Drainage Water Level & Flood Risk Management Authorities

Rural Innovation Centre, Avenue H,
Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG
Telephone: +44 (0) 2476 992889
Email: admin@ada.org.uk
Website: www.ada.org.uk
Twitter: @ada_updates

By email to all IDB Clerks/Chief Executives

Thursday 18 October 2018

Dear Clerks

ADA Communications

Communicating with our members is an essential part of ADA's work. We strive to keep you, your Board Members, and other members of staff well informed about the work of ADA, IDBs, and other risk management authorities, as well as news and issues that directly affect your work. We have been working hard in recent years to enhance our two primary communications channels, the quarterly ADA Gazette magazine, and monthly ADA News Stream email, and we hope you continue to find both useful reading.

The implementation of the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 have given us cause to take stock and consider how best to receive the consent of those individuals from member organisations who wish to receive communications such as these from ADA.

Stay Connected

With this in mind we've launched a new ADA Members Communications Form, which we would like all individuals associated with our members to complete, including the staff and board members of IDBs.

The form can be filled out and returned electronically via the link at www.ada.org.uk/communications or in writing using the printable version (see attached). Please note that ADA needs to receive a completed form from each individual in order for them to continue to receive communications from ADA in 2019.

Your assistance

We would like to request that this form is circulated to all of your Board Members along with papers for your next IDB meetings. If you could then collect and return completed forms, it would be of a great assistance to us at the ADA office. Please also circulate the form and this letter to all relevant staff.

We would also like to request that the form is included in induction materials for new staff and board members. By doing this we will continue to capture the express consent of those individuals who will directly benefit from communications from ADA.

Privacy

We have also updated ADA's Privacy Policy (www.ada.org.uk/privacy) to clearly and simply explain how we collect and use personal information as a membership body and how we will keep this data secure.

Of course, in the future any individual can withdraw their consent at any time, by simply contacting ADA and informing us which communications they no longer wish to receive, if any, and we will update our records accordingly.

Thank you for your and your IDB/s assistance.

Yours sincerely

Ian Moodie MSc, Technical Manager, ADA

ADA – representing drainage, water level and flood risk management authorities

Member of EUWMA- the European Union of Water Management Associations

ADA is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England No 8948603

March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners

Notice of conclusion of the audit

Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2018

Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014
Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015 /234)

- 1 The Audit of accounts for the March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners for the year ended 31st March 2018 has been concluded and the accounts published.
- 2 The Annual Governance & Accountability Return is available for inspection by any local government elector of the area of March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners on application to:

The Clerk
March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners
85 Whittlesey Road
March
Cambridgeshire
PE15 0AH

between the hours of 9.00am and 4.00pm on Mondays to Fridays (excluding public holidays), when any local elector may make copies of the Annual Return.

- 3 Copies will be provided to any local elector on payment of £2.40 for each copy of the Annual Return

Announcement made by: D C Thomas - Clerk to the Board

Date of Announcement: 12th September 2018

Annual Internal Audit Report 2017/18

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2018.

The internal audit for 2017/18 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
K. (For local councils only)			
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

25/06/18

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

WHITING & PARTNERS INTERNAL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

M. Hayden
SIGNATURE REQUIRED
Whiting & Partners

Date

30/06/2018

* * SEE ATTACHED SHEET FOR ITEMS NOT DIRECTLY COVERED THIS YEAR

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners **Year Ended 31st March 2018**
Supplementary Schedule – Regarding “Not Covered” in Year per Annual Return

Internal Control Objective Section	Date of most recent summary audit work carried out on this area	Date of most recent detailed audit work carried out on this area	Date when next planned detailed audit work will commence
A	Year ended 31/03/2018		
B	Year ended 31/03/2018	Year ended 31/03/2017	Year ending 31/03/2020
C	Year ended 31/03/2018	Year ended 31/03/2016	Year ending 31/03/2019
D	Year ended 31/03/2018		
E	Year ended 31/03/2018	Year ended 31/03/2016	Year ending 31/03/2019
F	Year ended 31/03/2018	N/A – no petty cash	N/A – no petty cash
G	Year ended 31/03/2018	Year ended 31/03/2017	Year ending 31/03/2020
H	Year ended 31/03/2018	Year ended 31/03/2017	Year ending 31/03/2020
I	Year ended 31/03/2018		
J	Year ended 31/03/2018		

Our internal review work for the year ended 31st March 2018 is based on a combination of annual whole system review, annual analytical review and other works; this is in addition to the more detailed sampling methodology outlined above, carried out on a planned cyclical basis as modified if appropriate in light of the current year assessment.

Conclusion

From our work carried out, the internal control objectives listed above are satisfactory for the year ended 31/03/2018.

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

M Haydon – Whiting & Partners

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

Date

Whiting & Partners

7-9-2018



PARTNERS

Philip M Peters FCA
Mark N Haydon CA
James D Cater FCA
Paul N Tatum FCA
J James Harrison FCA

Andrew P Winearis FCA
Christopher D Ridgion FCCA
Richard C Meadows FCA
Ian G C Piper FCA
Christopher P Kelly FCA

Barbara Nicholas CTA
Andrew R Band FCA
Trina J Nunn FCA
Keith J Day FCCA
Amanda E Newman FCA

ASSOCIATES

Richard A Alecock ATT
Kim Clayden FCA
Jonathan P Moore ACCA
Stephen D Malkin CAT
Paul M Jefferson ACA

PRACTICE MANAGER

Janet Frostick

Registered to carry on audit work in the UK and Ireland; regulated for a range of investment business activities; and licensed to carry out the reserved legal activity of non-contentious probate in England and Wales by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2017/18

We acknowledge as the members of:

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2018, that:

	Agreed		*Yes* means that this authority:	
	Yes	No*		
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>	
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>	
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>	
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>	
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>	
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>	
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>	
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>	
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A	<i>has met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response. Describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified.

This Annual Governance Statement is approved by this authority and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

dated

19/06/2018

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval is given:

Chairman

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)
Authority web address

AUTHORITY WEBSITE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2017/18 for

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2017 £	31 March 2018 £	
1. Balances brought forward	93,346	94,132	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	11,009	10,361	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	1,593	996	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	0	0	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	11,816	12,378	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	94,132	93,111	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	96,006	97,038	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	544,700	544,700	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets. N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2018 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return present fairly the financial position of this authority and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer

SIGNATURE 

Date 22nd May 2018

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

19/06/2018

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where approval of the Accounting Statements is given

SIGNATURE 

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2017/18

In respect of **March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners DB0050**

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2018; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

2 External auditor report 2017/18

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with *Proper Practices* and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

- The annual internal audit report focuses on ten internal control objectives covering an authority's key financial and accounting systems and concludes whether, in all significant respects, the internal control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the authority. We note that the internal auditor has not provided a conclusion on the following internal control objectives: B, C, E and H. The annual internal audit report will inform the authority's response to assertions 2 and 6 in the annual governance statement. As a result, the authority must ensure that assurance that has not been provided via these control objectives has been sought elsewhere.

3 External auditor certificate 2017/18

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2018.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

Date

08/09/2018

* Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews for 2017/18 in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)

MNH/BB/SAB/MM053

27 July 2018

Messrs. D Thomas and R Hill
Middle Level Offices
85 Whittlesey Road
March
Cambs.
PE15 0AH

Dear Messrs. D Thomas, R. Hill and S Ablett,

Internal Drainage Boards - Internal Audit 2017-2018

Having completed the internal audit for the various Internal Drainage Boards administered by the Middle Level Commissioners officers for the year ended 31 March 2018, we are pleased to provide you with the following recommendations to be considered for implementation. We have included some general points and some points which are related to specific boards.

General Points

1. Surplus Balances

In the prior year we were pleased to note that you had taken on our earlier recommendation to place surplus balances in interest yielding accounts. However, these were short term deposits and it does not appear that in this audit year these have been reinvested. This has resulted in a noticeable drop off in interest income for the number of IDB's this year.

Due to a number of the IDB's holding significant cash reserves we would recommend these surplus balances are reinvested in order to achieve a greater return on public funds.

Comment:

Investment opportunities are kept under review, but during the period, interest rates again reduced, which led to further restrictions in relation to investments. During this period, the minimum balance to invest with approved bodies increased to £1m, which was beyond the ability to access for individual boards.

Cont....



PARTNERS

Philip M Peters FCA
Mark N Hayden CA
James D Carter FCA
Paul N Tatum FCA
J James Harrison FCA

Andrew P Winnebs FCA
Christopher D Ridgway FCCA
Richard C Woodrow FCA
Ian G G Piper FCA
Christopher P Kelly FCA

Barbara Nicholas CTA
Andrew R Baird FCA
Tina J Nunn FCA
Keith J Day FCCA
Amanda E Newman FCA

ASSOCIATES

Richard A Atcock AFT
Kim Clayton FCA
Jonathan P Moore ACCA
Stephen D Malin CAT
Paul M Jefferson ACA
Chris J Yorke FCCA

PRACTICE MANAGER

Juvet Frodick

Registered to carry on audit work in the UK and Ireland; regulated for a range of investment business activities; and licensed to carry out the reserved legal activity of non-contentious probate in England and Wales by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

Bury St. Edmunds

Ely

Godmanchester

King's Lynn

March

Miltonhall

Peterborough

Ramsey

St Ives

St Neots

Wisbech

2. Risk Management

- (a) We are pleased to note that each board is undertaking a formal risk management strategy and reviewing this on a regular basis. In its current form the risk management document presented annually to the board does not show evidence of when the individual risks were last reviewed. We would recommend that this is documented going forward to prove regular reviews are occurring.
- (b) As you are aware there is increasingly more risk and regulations surrounding digital systems and the retention of sensitive data. We note that currently within your risk management strategy there is no specific areas that cover IT security and data management (which has increasingly come into the spotlight as a result of the introduction of GDPR regulations in May 2018). We would strongly recommend that this area is addressed swiftly, so as to ensure that there are adequate procedures in place to avoid and/or deal with data breaches that could lead to significant regulatory penalties under the new General Data Protection Regulations.

Comment:

Each individual Board has a risk register which is reviewed at 5 year intervals. Between this process the Boards review the annual risk management process at meetings to all areas are covered.

Within the current risk register there are two identified risks:

- Computer Programming services & Telemetry Installations,
- Critical incident loss of data

Both of which are managed by the Middle Level Commissioners. As part of the process for the introduction of GDPR, the administered Boards appointed the Middle Level Commissioners solicitor as Data Protection Officer who carried out a review of current procedures which will be updated along with the risk registers if considered necessary.

3. Opera Bank Reconciliations

As in prior years we have noticed that there are still issues with the Opera bank reconciliation function, as such in some cases the Opera unreconciled reports do not tie back to the main cashbook reconciliation. We are aware that this is a software issue and not down to human error. In all cases with the assistance of the manual reconciliation provided, no differences were identified in the year end bank and cash figures.

Comment:

As referred to, this is a minor software glitch associated with system shut-downs at the time transactions being processed, with part of the transaction getting on the unreconciled report. We should now be able to have these postings rectified remotely by our software provided through our maintenance agreements, but this is obviously done after the event. As mentioned, these do not constitute an error with the transaction postings which require any adjustments to the accounting ledgers.

4. **Aged Creditors and Debtors**

We are pleased to note that in most boards old debtors and creditors have been addressed and cleared, however there remains items in some IDB's that exceed the legal time limit for the life of debt (6 years). As such we would urge you to review these older balances owing/owed and write back as appropriate. Where items are significantly aged but not written back we would suggest justification of this is shown on the debtors and creditors schedule as part of the accounts preparation process.

Comment:

Detailed schedules are kept and reviewed annually, with appropriate actions taken.

5. **Published Minutes**

As in the prior year we have identified some isolated errors between the published minutes on the Commissioners website and the underlying accounts, in all cases the error was with the published minutes. As such we would suggest that the figures to be published are reviewed rigorously prior to publication in order to avoid this happening going forward.

Comment:

The point relates to the transposition of figures from one format to another and had been previously identified and further procedures put in place to minimise the risk.

6. **Rate Software**

As in prior year we are satisfied that the rate software is operating as expected. However, on enquiry we understand that the programme is still not being used to its full capabilities as a result of it not being fully linked to the Opera software. This was highlighted in the prior year and therefore we question whether the system is delivering full value for money to the boards and ratepayers as it appears the system is effectively being used in the same way as the preceding system.

As mentioned in the prior year's management letter it was identified that only one member of staff has a working knowledge of the new rates system and is the only member of staff who can access the programme. This could lead to great operational impact if the employee became indisposed or decided to leave the organisation. As such we would urge that further users are trained to avoid over reliance on one member of staff and promote segregation of duties.

Comment:

The installation/commissioning of the new software took longer than initially anticipated and through this process the software was restricted to one workstation, the software is currently on two workstations, both of which are used. There is an operational manual for the operation of the software and staff are required to keep an updated procedures manual for their areas of work. During the installation of the new software, the other finance officer was on maternity leave so it was not possible for her to be trained in its operation at the same time. There continue to be delays in getting the software fully integrated with the accounting software and training will continue to give additional cover.

7. ADA Subscription

We notice that ADA subscription appear not to be accounted for on an accruals basis, as the subscription run in line with the calendar year and not an accounting year. As such we would suggest going forward that all boards adopt the accruals concept for these subscriptions. It is noted on review that there is not material difference between cost and accruals bases on recalculation due to the minimal year-on-year variance in subscription cost; therefore this is merely to ensure consistency of approach.

Comment:

The approach to dealing with these subscriptions had been consistent but was highlighted following a number of boards withdrawing their annual subscriptions and then recommencing leaving a 'gap'. A schedule has been drawn up to ensure a consistent approach moving forward.

8. Bank Reconciliation Verification

During the course of auditing IDB's, it appears that the verification on the bank reconciliation for the first two months of the year has not been done, in addition on some boards the year end bank reconciliation had not been verified. We understand that this is a busy time for the accounts department, due to the preparation of the Accounts and Annual Returns for the year for a number of IDB's. However, this could lead to potential material errors or manipulations if checks are not carried out. As such we would strongly suggest that concerted effort is made to resolve this issue in the coming year.

Comment:

Concerning the first quarter of the financial year the bank statements are reconciled monthly by input into the accounting software, it not being possible to proceed without the reconciliation being complete, but, due to work-loads finalising year end accounts during this period it is not possible to carry out the manual reconciliation check, which is then done at the end of the first quarter. This matter has been discussed further and additional processes will be put in place for the first quarter of the next financial year. With regards to the verification of year end bank reconciliations, this is an "administration" error in that the reconciliations have been completed, together with all supporting documents for the preparation of the year end accounts, but the statement had not been signed. Again, we have looked at this for future procedures.

9. Building Insurance

We note from the property insurance schedule provided that the buildings (excluding pumping stations) were last revalued for insurance purposes in 2012. We would suggest that due to residential and commercial property values increasing in recent times that the buildings owned by the IDB's would be worth more in today's market and could therefore potentially be slightly underinsured. As such we would suggest that, as with the pumping stations in 2015, the IDB's with such property revalue for insurance purposes and carry out regular revaluations going forward.

Comment:

Residential property insured valuation were reviewed by Board chairman during February 2018 (Middle Level Commissioners had valuations carried out by Maxey Grounds) and revisions were, where approved, put in place for insured values as from 1 April 2018.

10. District Officer Fee

We understand that in some circumstances additional work from the District Office is required over and above the fee level agreed in the minutes at the beginning of each financial year, leading to additional fees. We would recommend that should this situation arise, any amounts over and above that agreed within the minutes need to be minuted and specifically authorised by Chairman.

Comment:

The main issue relates to the situation if additional works have been carried out, which are included on the same invoice from the officer. This has been looked at and additional procedures will be put in place concerning this.

11. IT Security

We are pleased to note that you have taken on board our prior recommendations and that all staff have been provided with their own passwords and login details, this has ensured accountability of work carried out within the accounting and rates systems.

12. Amalgamated IDBs

We are also pleased to note that all NS&I accounts for the amalgamated IDB's has been updated and there are no accounts for previously separate IDB's still active.

Specific Point(s)

Sutton & Mepal IDB

We note that the depreciation charges in relation to additions from the previous year, calculated in the prior year on a pro-rata basis from the date of acquisition, have not been changed in the current year to reflect a full years charge. This does not affect the figures for the annual return as assets are shown at deemed cost. We have communicated this during the course of the audit and note that the error will be adjusted on the next year accounts.

Finally we take this opportunity to thank your staff involved in our audit for their assistance and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Whiting & Partners

Whiting & Partners



Annual Report for the year ended

31 March 2018

The Law – the following annual report is provided in accordance with Paragraph 4 of Schedule 2 to the Land Drainage Act 1991.

No later than 31 August 2018 a copy must be provided to:

- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Flood Management Division, Floor 3, Seacole, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF via floodreports@defra.gsi.gov.uk
- National Flood and Coastal Risk Manager (Strategic Delivery), The Environment Agency, Horizon House, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AH via rachael.hill@environment-agency.gov.uk
- The Chief Executives of:
 - all local authorities that pay special levies to the Board;
 - all County Councils or London Boroughs within which the Board is situated.

Please complete the form electronically. If you are unable to complete the form electronically, please complete in BLOCK LETTERS using **black ink**.

Please round all cash figures down to nearest whole £.

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Section A – Financial information

Preliminary information on special levies issued by the Board for 2018- 19

Information requested below is essential in calculating future formula spending share. It is not covered elsewhere on this form or by the external auditor's certificate.

Special levies information for financial year 2018-19 (forecast)	
Name of local authority	2018-19 forecast £
1. FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL	4,079
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
Total	4,079

Section A – Financial information (continued)

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31 March 2018

All Internal Drainage Boards must ensure that the Income and Expenditure information provided below is consistent with the Board's annual accounting statements which have been prepared in accordance with proper practices found in *Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – A Practitioners' Guide to proper practices to be applied in the preparation of statutory annual accounts and governance statements March 2017*

	Notes	Year ending 31 March 2018 £
INCOME		
1. Drainage Rates		6,010
2. Special Levies		4,351
3. Higher Land Water Contributions from the Environment Agency		929
4. Contributions received from developers/other beneficiaries		38
5. Government Grants (includes capital grants from EA and levy contributions)		0
6. PSCAs from EA and other RMAs		0
7. Loans		0
8. Rechargeable Works		0
9. Interest and Investment Income		29
10. Rents and Acknowledgements		0
11. Other Income		0
Total income		11,357
EXPENDITURE		
12. New Works and Improvement Works		0
13. Total precept to the Environment Agency		1,035
14. Watercourse maintenance		3,740
15. Pumping Stations, Sluices and Water level control structures		3,312
16. Administration		3,727
17. PSCAs		0
18. Rechargeable Works		0
19. Finance Charges		0
20. SSSIs		0
21. IDB Biodiversity and conservation (other than item 20 expenditure)		348
22. Other Expenditure		216
Total expenditure		12,378

EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS		
23. Profits/(losses) arising from the disposal of fixed assets		0
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		-1,021
24. Developers Funds income not applied in year		50,194
25. Grant income not applied in year		0

Notes:

11. Include all other Income, such as absorption account surpluses (for example plant and labour absorption accounts).
12. State the gross cost of undertaking minor capital works that have not been capitalised and the annual depreciation charges of all major schemes that have been capitalised. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with delivery of the schemes.
13. State the total precept demanded for the year as properly issued by the Environment Agency, in accordance with section 141 of the Water Resources Act 1991. Providing that the precept has been properly issued as before stated it should always be included here, even when the Board has appealed against the amount of contribution, in accordance with section 140 of the Water Resources Act 1991. Where the Board knows with certainty the outcome of any such appeal, it should also include the appropriate accrual/prepayment.
14. State all costs associated with the maintenance of watercourses, meaning work associated with open channels, pipelines, culverts, bridges, etc. Plant, vehicle and labour charges should include a fair proportion of the overheads such as depot/workshop costs, employment on-costs, insurances and depreciation, etc. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with delivery of the maintenance programme.
15. State all costs associated with maintaining and operating the pumping stations, sluices and water level control structures. Plant, vehicle and labour charges should include a fair proportion of the overheads such as depot/workshop costs, employment on-costs, insurances and depreciation, etc. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with maintaining and operating the pumping stations, sluices and water level control structures.
16. Include the cost of non-technical staff only, office accommodation, annual depreciation of office equipment that has been capitalised, minor office equipment that has not been capitalised, postages, telecoms', stationery, printing, advertising, auditing of accounts, general insurances and all other costs associated with supporting the organisation. Please note that this does not include support costs, which are directly associated with the delivery of front line services.
17. State all costs associated with the PSCA
18. State all costs associated with undertaking work for third parties. Plant, vehicle and labour charges should include a fair proportion of the overheads such as depot/workshop costs, employment on-costs, insurances and depreciation, etc. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with undertaking the rechargeable work.
19. Include the cost of servicing any borrowing, in terms of bank/loan/hire purchase Interest payable.
20. State all costs associated with undertaking works – capital or maintenance – specifically for helping to achieve favourable condition on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). In most cases, these costs will be incurred in implementing actions set out in SSSI Water Level Management Plans or SSSI River Restoration Plans.

21. State all costs associated with undertaking works – capital or maintenance – that are likely intended to help conserve biodiversity (other than works on SSSIs). These costs are likely to be incurred in implementing actions set out in an IDB’s Biodiversity Action Plan or other conservation actions on non-designated sites.
22. Include all other expenditure, such as a provision for bad/doubtful debts, write-offs, and absorption account deficits (for example plant and labour absorption accounts).
23. For the disposal of assets, state the difference between any proceeds from the sale/disposal of the asset and the cost of the asset less accumulated depreciation.
24. Total balance of developer fund year end.
25. Unspent grant at year end.

Section B –IDB Reporting

Policy Delivery Statement

Boards are required to produce a publicly available policy statement setting out their plans for delivering the Government’s policy aims and objectives. It is recommended that these statements be published on Boards’ websites where they have them and reviewed every three years.

Is an up to date statement in place and copy (or weblink) provided to Defra, and EA? Yes No

Biodiversity

Please indicate whether your Board has a Biodiversity Action Plan.....Yes No

If “yes” is the Biodiversity Action Plan available on your website?.....Yes No

What year was your Biodiversity Action Plan last updated?.....

Have you reported progress on BAP implementation on your web site?.....Yes No

When was biodiversity last discussed at a Board meeting (date)?.....

Do you have a biosecurity process?.....Yes No

SSSI water level management plans

Please indicate whether your Board is responsible for any SSSI water level management plans?.....Yes No

If so, which ones:

Area of SSSI with IDB water level management plans.....

Area of SSSI where IDB water level management activities are contributing to recovering or favourable condition?

Area of SSSI where IDB water level management actions are required to achieve recovering or favourable condition?

Access to environmental expertise

Does your IDB have access to environmental expertise? If so please tick all those options below through which environmental expertise is regularly provided to your IDB:

Appropriately skilled Board Members (e.g. Board member from an Environmental Body/Authority)

Co-opted members

Directly employed staff

Contracted persons or consultants

Environmental Partners/NGOs

Other (please describe)

Asset Management

What system/database does your Board use to manage the assets it is responsible for?

ADIS

Paper Records

Other Electronic System

Has your Board continued to undertake visual inspections and update asset databases on an annual basis?

Yes

No

What is the cumulative total of identified watercourse (in km) that the Board periodically maintains?

How many pumping stations does the Board operate?

What is the cumulative design capacity of the Board's pumping station(s) (enter zero if no stations are operated)?

Health and Safety

Does the Board have a current Health and Safety policy in place?

Yes

No

Does the Board have a responsible officer for Health and Safety?

Yes

No

Have there been any reportable incidents in the past year?

Yes No

If so, please summarise in the box below:

Guidance and Best Practice

Has your IDB adopted a formal Scheme of Delegation?

Yes No

Has your IDB provided training for board members in the last year in the any of the following areas?

Governance

Finance

Environment

Health, safety and welfare

Communications and engagement

Other (please describe)

Is your Board’s website information current for this financial year? (Board membership, audited accounts, programmes of works, WLMPS, etc).....

Yes No

Has your IDB adopted computerised accounting and rating systems?

Yes No

Has your board published all minutes of meetings on the website?.....

Yes No

Does the Board publish information on its website on its approach to maintenance works and provide contact details to allow for and encourage public engagement?

Yes No

When planning maintenance and capital works are environmental impacts taken into account and wherever possible best practice applied?

Yes No

Has your Board adopted the following governance documents?

Standing Orders

Yes No

Have the Standing Orders been approved by Ministers.....

Yes No

Byelaws.....

Yes No

If you have Byelaws, have you adopted the latest model byelaws published in 2012.....

Yes No

Have the Byelaws been approved by Ministers.....

Yes No

Code of Conduct for Board Members

Yes No

Financial Regulations.....Yes No
 Register of Member's Interests.....Yes No
 Anti-fraud and corruption policy..... Yes No

Board membership and attendance

How many Board members (in total – elected and appointed) do you have on your IDB?	9
Seats available to appointed members under the Land Drainage Act 1991.	4
Number of elected members on the board at year end.	7
Number of appointed members on the board at year end.	2
Mean average number of elected members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year.	4
Mean average number of appointed members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year.	2

Have you held elections within the last three years?.....Yes No N/A
 Did elections comply with the requirements specified by the Secretary of State under Regulation 28 of the Land Drainage (Election of Drainage Boards) Regulations 1938?..... Yes No N/A

Complaints procedure

Is the procedure for a member of the public to make a complaint about the IDB accessible from the front page of its website?.....Yes No

Number of complaints received in the financial year?	0
Number of complaints outstanding in the financial year?	0
Number of complaints referred to the Local Government Ombudsman?	0
Number of complaints upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman?	0

Public Engagement

Set out what your Board has done in this financial year to engage with the public (tick relevant box(es) below):

- Press releases
- Newsletters
- Web site
- Meetings
- Shows/events (including open days/inspections)
- Consultations
- Notices

Percentage (in value) of drainage rates outstanding at year end?

Section B: NOTES

Guidance and Best Practice

Has your Board published **all** minutes of meetings on the web site? In answering this question, this should apply to all the main Board meetings held in the year and any appropriate meetings the Board has held with external stakeholders.

Board membership and attendance

When referring to **elected members** of the Board, this relates to the number of landowners/drainage rate payers that are elected to the Board.

When referring to **appointed members** of the Board, this relates to the number of members appointed by the local authorities to represent the local council taxpayers.

When referring to mean average number of elected and appointed members in attendance at meetings at each board meeting – **this should be expressed as a number of attendees** and not as a percentage attendance.

With regard to elections, under Schedule 1 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, elected members should hold office for three years, at which point a further election is held. When elections are held, they should comply with the requirements under Regulation 28 of the Land Drainage (Election of Drainage Boards) Regulations 1938 – to advertise and notify local stakeholders accordingly.

Section C – Declaration

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

I confirm that the information provided in sections A-C or with this form is correct.

Signature

Date

Name in BLOCK LETTERS

MISS SAMANTHA ABLETT

Designation

ASSISTANT TREASURER

Email address

ADMIN@MIDDLELEVEL.GOV.UK

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET 2018/2019

	<u>Approved budget</u> <u>2018/2019</u> £	<u>Actual to</u> <u>31.12.2018</u> £	<u>Forecast to</u> <u>31.03.2019</u> £	<u>Remarks</u>
1 Insurances	575	436	450	
2 Drainworks (including Environmental measures)	7,750	4,707	7,750	- Includes provisions to end of year:- 1,000
3 Repairs and renewals	1,500	243	1,000	- Includes provisions to end of year:- 500
4 Electricity	1,300	451	1,300	- Includes provisions to end of year:- 850
5 Administration charges, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	4,000	1,028	4,100	
6 Environment Agency - Precept	1050	1,050	1050	
	16,175	7,915	15,650	
LESS Deposit Accounts interest, etc	3,547	2,993	3,643	
	12,628	4,922	12,007	

MARCH SIXTH DDC
INSURED VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS

PUMPING STATION

As At
31st March 2019

NORWOOD PUMPING STATION

544,000.00

544,000.00

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2018/19

We acknowledge as the members of:

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2019, that:

	Agreed		‘Yes’ means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors’ rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority’s accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			<i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each ‘No’ response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets should be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)

Authority web address

AUTHORITY WEBSITE ADDRESS

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Payments 2018/2019 (1st April 2018 - 31st March 2019)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DISPLAY</u>	<u>NET</u>	<u>VAT</u>	<u>GROSS</u>
06/04/2018	Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	172.40	34.48	206.88
06/04/2018	Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery and Health and Safety contract	1,808.61	361.72	2,170.33
06/04/2018	Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Weed control and drain maintenance 2018, planning and development applications)	571.00	114.20	685.20
26/04/2018	Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply	69.55	3.77	73.32
26/05/2018	Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply	93.08	4.96	98.04
31/05/2018	Environment Agency - Precept	525.00	0.00	525.00
20/06/2018	Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2018	542.00	108.40	650.40
26/06/2018	Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply	189.52	37.90	227.42
29/06/2018	Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	121.40	24.28	145.68
26/07/2018	Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply	31.82	1.69	33.51
26/08/2018	Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply	21.41	1.13	22.54
10/09/2018	Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	436.06	0.00	436.06
10/09/2018	Middle Level Commissioners - Binding of minutes (Account from Brignell Bookbinders)	77.00	15.40	92.40
10/09/2018	Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board reports, planning and development applications)	211.72	42.34	254.06
17/09/2018	PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit Fee (2017-2018 accounts)	200.00	40.00	240.00
26/09/2018	Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply	17.86	0.95	18.81
11/10/2018	Davies Contracting Ltd - Drain maintenance	2,180.00	436.00	2,616.00
29/10/2018	John Steward - Flail mowing	726.00	0.00	726.00
29/10/2018	Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	121.40	24.28	145.68
29/10/2018	Middle Level Commissioners - Preparation of highland water claims	81.93	16.39	98.32
29/10/2018	Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages and telephone charges	860.76	172.15	1,032.91
28/11/2018	Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply	52.25	2.77	55.02
30/11/2018	Environment Agency - Precept	525.00	0.00	525.00
30/11/2018	Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	21.50	4.30	25.80
30/11/2018	Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to Gravity Outfall and Health & Safety improvements	1,106.34	221.27	1,327.61
17/12/2018	Middle Level Commissioners - Chemical weed control of District drains	461.39	92.28	553.67
31/12/2018	Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply	138.50	7.38	145.88
24/01/2019	Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	113.96	22.79	136.75
30/01/2019	Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply	77.09	4.11	81.20
20/02/2019	Association of Drainage Authorities (River Great Ouse branch) - Subscription 2018-2019	5.00	1.00	6.00

26/02/2019	Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution (Environmental Officer)	347.50	0.00	347.50
26/02/2019	Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2017-2018 accounts)	415.00	83.00	498.00
28/02/2019	T. Alterton - Pumping station duties 2018-2019	665.00	0.00	665.00
28/02/2019	Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply	84.70	4.51	89.21
07/03/2019	Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal	40.00	0.00	40.00
12/03/2019	Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	172.75	34.55	207.30
26/03/2019	Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery and Health and Safety contract	1,805.22	361.04	2,166.26
26/03/2019	Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	113.96	22.79	136.75
28/03/2019	Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply	70.67	3.84	74.51
		<u>15,274.35</u>	<u>2,305.67</u>	<u>17,580.02</u>

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2019
GENERAL FUND

2019			2018		
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year:-		Apr-01	Balance brought forward	
					42,917.18
	Precept	1,050.00	2019	Rate income & Special levy	9,713.45
	Insurances and Rates	436.06	Mar-31	Interest on Deposit Accounts	154.41
	Repairs & Renewals	805.99		Highland Water contributions -	1,042.94
	Fuel	831.59		Development Charges Account	2,518.00
	Drainworks	4,878.61		Write Back of Provision	115.00
	Contractors Charges	665.00		Development Charges Account -	
	Administration charge, Audit fee,			Gravity Outfall Repairs	134.00
	printing, stationery, advertising etc	<u>3,656.23</u>			
		11,273.48			
	Balance carried forward	44,271.50			
		<u>56,594.98</u>			<u>56,594.98</u>

BALANCE SHEET

Capital Section

Liabilities

Capital Provisions Account 544,700.00

Assets

Pumping Station (Valuation)	544,000.00	
Land - Twenty Foot	<u>700.00</u>	544,700.00

Revenue Section

General Fund	44,271.50
Development Charges Account	47,722.17
Sundry Creditors	1,845.32
	<u>638,538.99</u>

Ratepayers' Account	0.00
Value added Tax - Refunds due	539.22
Sundry Debtors	0.00
Balance in hand -	
Barclays - Treasurer's Account	92,470.82
National Savings - Treasurer Account	495.59
Labour Account	<u>333.36</u>
	<u>93,299.77</u>
	<u>638,538.99</u>

March Sixth Internal Drainage Board

Summary of Bank Reconciliations as at 31st March 2019

Treasurers Account 2018/2019

1st April 2018		31st March 2019	
Balance brought forward	96,213.12	Payments made during the year	17,580.02
31st March 2019			
Receipts during the year		Balance carried forward	92,470.82
Clerk's collection account	13,507.12		
Interest on deposit accounts	<u>330.60</u>		
	13,837.72		
	<u><u>110,050.84</u></u>		<u><u>110,050.84</u></u>

National Savings - Treasurers Account 2018/2019

1st April 2018		31st March 2019	
Balance brought forward	492.02	Payments made during the year	0.00
31st March 2019			
Interest on deposit accounts	3.57	Balance carried forward	495.59
	<u>495.59</u>		<u>495.59</u>

Labour Account 2018/2019

1st April 2018		31st March 2019	
Balance brought forward	332.54	Payments made during the year	0.00
31st March 2019			
Interest on deposit accounts	0.82	Balance carried forward	333.36
	<u>333.36</u>		<u>333.36</u>

Barclays Bank PLC

Clients Premium Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2019	92,470.82
Less unrepresented cheques	0.00
O/S lodgement	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	<u><u>92,470.82</u></u>

Labour Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2019	333.36
Less unrepresented cheques	0.00
O/S lodgement	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	<u><u>333.36</u></u>

Cash balances as at 31st March 2019

Barclays Bank PLC

Clients Premium Account	92,470.82
Clients Labour Account	333.36

National Savings

Investment Account per passbook	495.59
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<u>Total reconciled cash balances per accounts</u>	<u><u>93,299.77</u></u>
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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2018/19 for

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2018 £	31 March 2019 £	
1. Balances brought forward	94,132	93,111	<i>Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	10,361	9,713	<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts	996	1,493	<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs	0	0	<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments	12,378	12,323	<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward	93,111	91,994	<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	97,038	93,300	<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	544,700	544,700	<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
10. Total borrowings	0	0	<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	<i>The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets. N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.</i>

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2019 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

Date

10th June 2019

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

March Sixth DDC
Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return
Financial year ended 31st March 2019

		<u>Per Annual Return</u>
Line 1	Balances brought forward	
	General Fund	42,917.18
	Development charges account	50,193.59
		<u>93,110.77</u>
		93,111
Line 2	Rates and Special Levies	
	Agricultural rates	5,634.45
	Special Levies	4,079.00
	Penalty	0.00
	Costs	0.00
	Write-off	0.00
		<u>9,713.45</u>
		9,713
Line 3	Total other receipts	
	Interest	
	General fund	154.41
	Development charges account	180.58
	Consent applications	0.00
	Highland Water	1,042.94
	Discharge contributions	0.00
	Write Back of Provisions	115.00
		<u>1,492.93</u>
		1,493
Line 4	Staff costs	
	Wages/salaries	0.00
	National insurance contributions	0.00
	Pension costs	0.00
	Travelling expenses	0.00
		<u>0.00</u>
		0
Line 5	Loan repayments	
	PWLB - Principal	0.00
	PWLB - Interest	0.00
		<u>0.00</u>
		0
Line 6	All other payments	
	Precept	1,050.00
	Rates, insurances, telephones	436.06
	Repairs and renewals	805.99
	Fuel	831.59
	Drainworks	4,878.61
	Administration	3,656.23
	Development charges fees	0.00
	Contractors charges	665.00
		<u>12,323.48</u>
		12,323
Line 7	Balances carried forward	
	General Fund	44,271.50
	Development charges account	47,722.17
		<u>91,993.67</u>
		91,994
	Reconciliation	
	Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6	91,993.67

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET 2019/2020

	<u>Approved budget</u> <u>2018/2019</u> £	<u>Actual</u> <u>2018/2019</u> £	<u>Proposed budget</u> <u>2019/2020</u> £	<u>Remarks</u>	
1 Insurances	575	436	500	A - Includes: Drain cleansing	2,180
				Flail mowing	<u>726</u>
2 Drainworks (including Environmental measures)	7,750	5,544 ^A	8,000 ^B		2,906
3 Repairs and renewals	1,500	806 ^C	1,500	B - Includes: Engineer's items	5,150
4 Electricity	1,300	832	1,300 ^D	District Labour	700
				Contribution/fees/misc.	<u>2,150</u>
5 Administration charges, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	4,000	3,656	4,175 ^E	C - Includes for: Repairs at gravity outfall	335
6 Environment Agency - Precept	1050	1,050	1103	D - New supply contract with increased unit rates - medium term provision not changed for 2019/20	
	16,175	12,323	16,578	E - Does not include provision for possible new Health & Safety arrangements	
LESS Deposit Accounts interest, etc	3,547	3,964	3,432 ^F	F - Includes developmet charges - 5% maintenance contribution.	2,375
				Calculated highland water claims	958
	12,628	8,359	13,146	Assumes for minimal interest	

March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners

Rate and levy requirements

Under Section 37 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, the appropriate proportions in which the net expenditure of the Commissioners must be borne for 2019/2020 is:-

- a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 58.01%
- b) Proportion to be borne by Special levy issued to Fenland District Council – 41.99%.

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £376.

In 2019/2020 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levy would raise £648.

Revenue cash balance in hand on 31st March 2019 - £44,272.

The estimated net expenditure for the Commissioners Revenue and Capital Programmes in 2019/2020 is £13,146 and equivalent to:-

- a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 20.30p and
- b) a Special levy on Fenland District Council of £5,520

In 2018/2019 a rate of 15.0p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £4,079 on Fenland District Council.

Members should give consideration to the appropriate level of balances and future years rate requirements when setting the rate.

D C THOMAS

Clerk to the Commissioners

June 2019