

## MARCH WEST AND WHITE FEN INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the March West and White Fen Internal Drainage Board  
held at the Middle Level Offices, March on Tuesday the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2018

### PRESENT

|                                 |                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| J L Brown Esq (Chairman)        | H T Kisby Esq    |
| M J Mottram Esq (Vice Chairman) | C Miller Esq     |
| T E Alerton Esq                 | J A Neal Esq     |
| N J Bates Esq                   | A Pugh Esq       |
| D J Fountain Esq                | H W Whittome Esq |

Mr Robert Hill (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Morgan Lakey (representing the Consulting Engineers) were in attendance. Mr Malcolm Downes (Mechanical and Electrical Engineer) attended for part of the meeting.

### Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from M Cornwell Esq, S R Court Esq, R A Dring Esq and D G West Esq.

### B.81 Declarations of Interest

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

### B.82 Confirmation of Minutes

#### RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2017 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

### B.83 Appointment of Chairman

#### RESOLVED

That J L Brown Esq be appointed Chairman of the Board.

### B.84 Appointment of Vice Chairman

#### RESOLVED

That M J Mottram Esq be appointed Vice Chairman of the Board.

### B.85 Election of Members of the Board

Mr Hill reported that, as the number of candidates for membership of the Board did not exceed the number of persons to be elected (THIRTEEN), the following candidates were elected as Members of the Board for a period of three years from the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018, viz:-

|                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| ALTERTON Tony EDWIN    | KISBY Henry T         |
| BATES Nigel John       | MILLER Colin          |
| BROWN Jonathan Lindsey | MOTTRAM Michael James |
| DRING Ricky Anthony    | NEAL James Andrew     |
| FOUNTAIN David John    | WEST Daniel George    |
| WHITTOME Hugh William  |                       |

(NB) – Councillors M Cornwell, S R Court and A Pugh are also Members of the Board as the nominee of Fenland District Council under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

Mr Hill also reported that Messrs Mike Kisby and Ralph Potts did not seek re-election to the Board and consequently there were now two vacancies on the Board.

Mr Hill advised that Mr Kisby had been a member of the Board since September 1970 and had been Chairman from June 1982 to May 2011. Ralph Potts had been a member of the Board since March 1984.

#### RESOLVED

- a) That the Board's appreciation of the services rendered by Messrs Kisby and Potts be recorded in the minutes.
- b) That the Clerk confirm with Mr Potts whether he still wished to continue as a pump attendant at Duncombes Pumping Station and inform the Chairman of his decision. The Chairman be authorised to take any further action that may be required.

### B.86 Vacancy in Membership

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

#### RESOLVED

That Mr Paul Hayes and Miss Emma Alterton be invited to become Members of the Board if they are willing to do so.

### B.87 Banking arrangements

Mr Hill outlined the requirements for setting up direct debit facilities for the collection of drainage rates for March West and White Fen IDB.

## RESOLVED

That the Chairman or Vice-Chairman, together with either the Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer, are authorised to enter into any documents relating to the operation of the company's bank accounts, including but not limited to Bacstel-IP and Secure-IP Service [*direct debit indemnity*].

### B.88 Works affecting the District system – Mr D Betts

Further to minute B.43, Mr Hill reported that the Consulting Engineers had confirmed that all matters had been dealt with to their satisfaction and there were no matters outstanding from last year.

### B.89 Residential Property – Australia Farm – Mr C Baxter

Further to minute B.44, Mr Hill reported that the Consulting Engineers had confirmed that all matters had been dealt with and there were no matters outstanding.

The Vice Chairman confirmed that this was the case.

(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest when this item was discussed.

### B.90 Water Transfer Licences

Further to minute B.50, Mr Hill referred to a letter received from ADA dated the 27<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 Board.

### B.91 Proposed Retail Park to the west of Hostmoor Avenue, March – Brossman Mills Ltd

Further to minute B.51, the Chairman reported that there had no further significant developments concerning this matter and that the Consulting Engineers had given a full update in their report.

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

### B.92 Association of Drainage Authorities Further Research on Eels

Further to minute B.62(e), the Board considered making a further contribution towards the research on eels.

## RESOLVED

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

### B.93 Fish Harvesting at Pumping Stations

Further to minute B.64, Mr Lakey reported that investigations had been made into harvesting fish within the District watercourses, but that it had proved difficult to find a suitable outlet.

Recent inspections had indicated that the majority of carp within the District system were in the Staffurths Bridge Main Drain.

The Chairman referred to the issue of Moores pump last year and the requirement to lower water levels this year for the removal of the pump for overhaul.

Mr Lakey considered that following the inspection, the lowering of water levels was not likely to cause a similar problem this year.

Mr Whittome reported that due to the width of the Staffurths Bridge Main Drain, it had been possible to lower water levels to carry out maintenance works without causing any problems.

The Chairman agreed that it was more likely for there to be problems in the smaller watercourses.

Mr Whittome queried if it was possible to only dam-off the drain immediately upstream of the pumping station. In response to the Vice Chairman, Mr Lakey estimated that a temporary dam structure could cost between £2,000-£3,000.

The Vice Chairman queried the possibility of making a temporary earth dam for the removal of the pumps, to which Mr Lakey considered that this would be possible.

### RESOLVED

To continue to monitor the number of fish within the District watercourses, particularly ahead of any planned maintenance works.

### B.94 Network Rail – Level Crossing Reduction Scheme

Further to minute B.65, Mr Hill reported that proposals for this area had been withdrawn from this round of closures.

Mr Alerton confirmed that the proposed closures had been withdrawn as the correct notification procedures had not been followed and it was anticipated that the proposals for closures were likely to arise in future years.

### B.95 Consulting Engineers' Report

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

## **March West & White Fen IDB**

### **Consulting Engineers Report – April 2018**

#### **Weed Control and Drain Maintenance**

##### **March & Whittlesey Area**

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



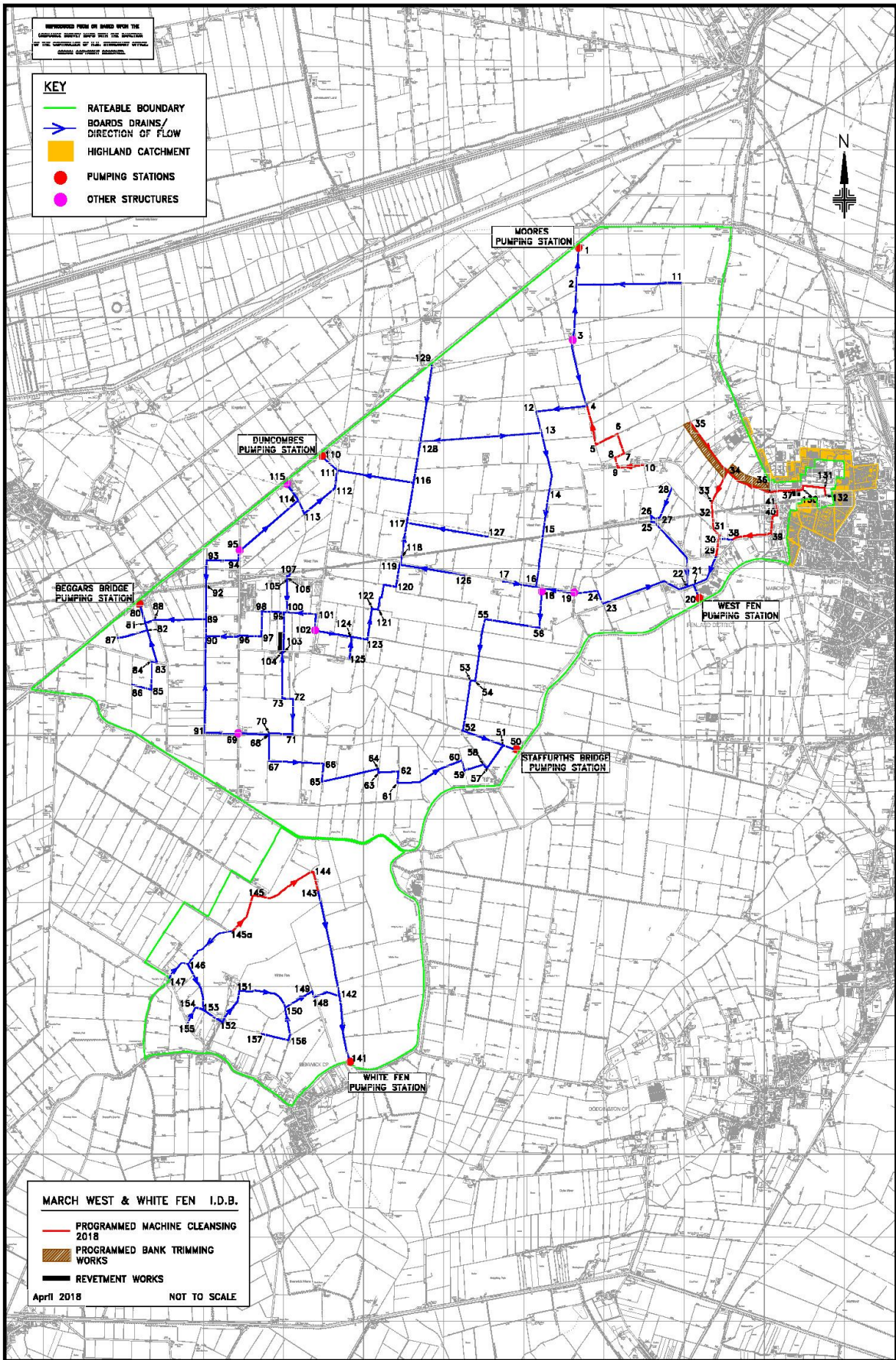
**Duncombes Main Pump Drain**

Following the Board's resolution in 2007 to implement a phased programme of bank revetment works within the Board's system, toe board and piling works, approximately 500 metres in length, were undertaken along the Duncombes main pump drain last autumn. The bank revetment works included a continuation of the previous trial use of recycled aggregates (brick bats), as used at other sites.

Provisional notices for this year's intended machine cleansing works have been sent out. The extent of this year's phased programme of maintenance works is shown on the following site plan.

As the Board's annual meeting falls during the early part of the growing season, it is proposed that an inspection of the Board's drains be undertaken during the summer months to identify areas of bank subsidence and to prioritise the worst affected reaches to be dealt with as a continuation of the phased programme of bank revetment works. In this respect, a sum has been allocated in the Board's estimated costs to allow for toe board and piling works to be undertaken to stabilise and return the side sloping banks to their original profile.

A recent inspection of the Board's District drains has revealed that the majority 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 phased machine cleansing programme, will only require light machine cleansing to retain their good status.



However, the inspection did highlight areas of bank subsidence along reaches 21-29, 37-130 and at Point 103. The subsidence at reach 21-29, adjacent to the old Greenvale site, has been monitored for some time and has now reached a point where it requires attention, this matter will be dealt with as a separate agenda item. Two subsequent sites will also require timber piling/revetment works to re-instate the channel and bank profile once access is available following the harvest of adjacent crops.



Reach 37-130



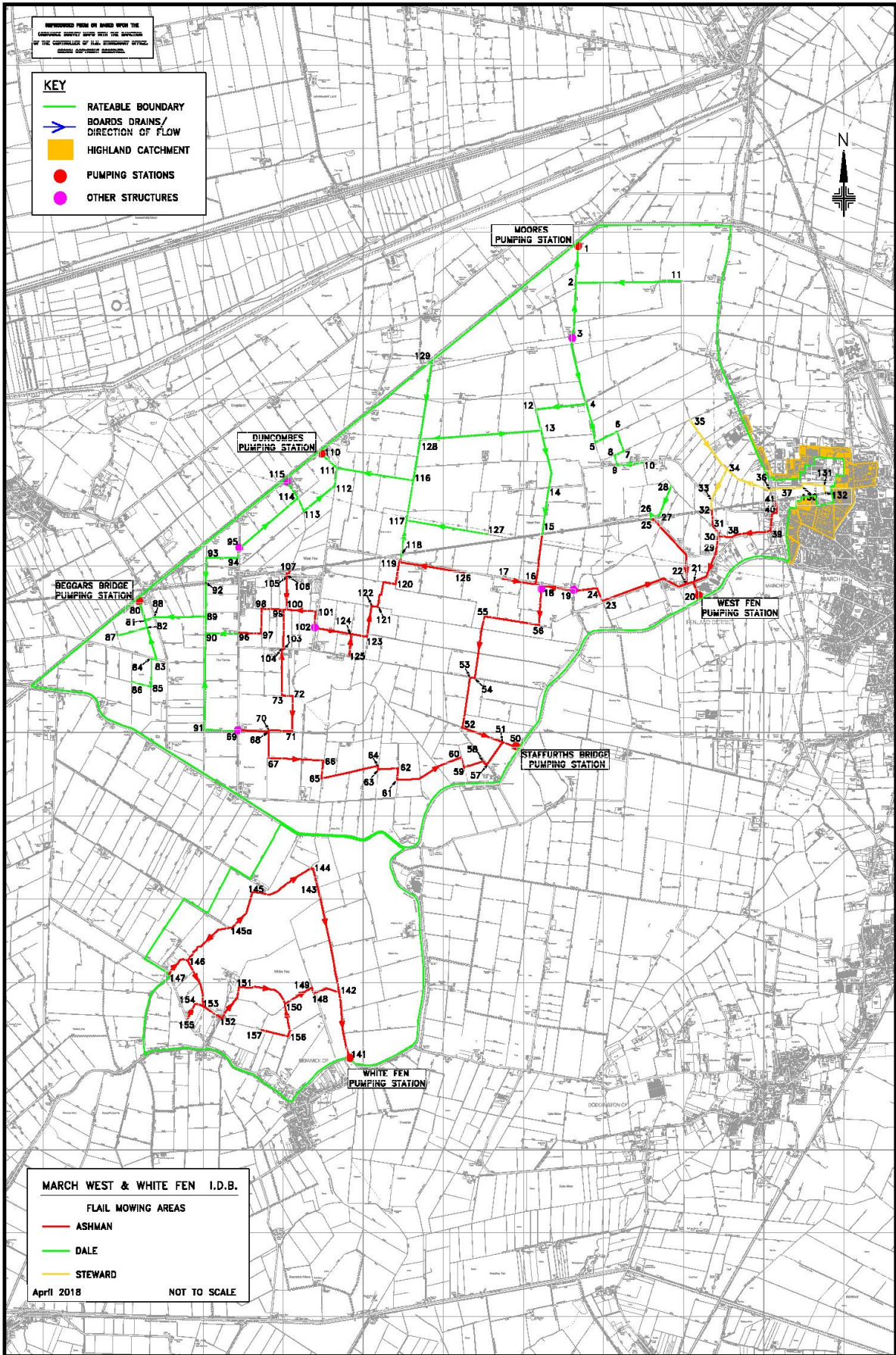
Point 103



Reach 34-36

It was also noted that the bank profile along reach 35-34-36 has become unnecessarily steep and undermined in several places. As these reaches fall within this year's annual machine cleansing programme it is considered it would be cost effective for the Board to undertake bank trimming of the affected reach, to return it to its original profile while the contractor's machine is carrying out the machine cleansing works.

An allowance has also been included within this year's estimated costs to allow for a Roundup herbicide application to be made in advance of the programmed machine cleansing work, and in any other district drains identified as requiring herbicide treatments to control emergent weed and reed growths following the Board's inspection later in the summer months.





Following the Board's agreement at its last annual meeting, the contract to undertake flail mowing works was divided between Messrs Ashman, Mr J Steward and Mr R Dale. The site plan on the previous page shows how this work has been allocated for each individual contractor. The three contractors are all available for this season's work, and the Board may wish to take the opportunity to discuss on what basis they wish to proceed with the flail mowing requirements for the coming year.

A provisional sum has been allocated within the Board's estimated costs to allow for emergency machine cleansing, Cott (filamentous algae) removal or culvert clearance works that may become necessary later in the year.

The estimated cost of this year's recommended Weed Control and Drain maintenance works is as follows. Please refer to the previous site plan for locations.

1. Machine cleanse the following reaches:

|                                |      |   |   |      |         |
|--------------------------------|------|---|---|------|---------|
| <u>Moores Catchment Area</u>   |      |   |   |      |         |
| 4-5-6-7-8-9-10                 | 1600 | m | @ | 1.10 | 1760.00 |
| <u>West Fen Catchment Area</u> |      |   |   |      |         |
| 21-29-30-31-32-33-34-35        | 2350 | m | @ | 1.10 | 2585.00 |
| 34-36                          | 600  | m | @ | 1.10 | 660.00  |
| 38-39-40                       | 700  | m | @ | 2.50 | 1750.00 |
| 37-130-131-132                 | 800  | m | @ | 1.10 | 880.00  |

|  |              |     |  |  |                    |
|--|--------------|-----|--|--|--------------------|
| 2. Bank Trimming Works   |              |     |  |  |                    |
| 35-34-36   | Item         | Sum |  |  | 2700.00            |
| 3. <u>Provisional Item</u>   |              |     |  |  |                    |
| Allow sum for bank reinstatement works   | Item         | Sum |  |  | 15000.00           |
| 4. Roundup herbicide application   | Item         | Sum |  |  | 1200.00            |
| 5. Flail mowing of District Drains   | Item         | Sum |  |  | 9000.00            |
| 6. <u>Provisional Item</u>   |              |     |  |  |                    |
| Allow sum for emergency machine cleansing, Cott removal or culvert clearance   | Item         | Sum |  |  | 2000.00            |
| 7. Fees for inspection, preparation and submission of the report to the Board, arrangement and supervision of herbicide applications and maintenance | Item         | Sum |  |  | 2500.00            |
|  | <b>TOTAL</b> |     |  |  | <b>£ 40,035.00</b> |

## **White Fen Area**

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



**Damage to the top of the bank, hindering flail mowing works and threatening the bank's stability**

It was noted during the autumn maintenance works that the one metre wide 'cross compliance' strip along the eastern side of reach 142-143 had been removed during cultivation works. This resulted in grass sods being deposited within the drainage channel. The resultant cultivation hindered flail mowing progress along the affected reach. Board members are respectfully reminded of the importance of the retention of field margins and the possibility of increased maintenance costs to the associated drainage board if the side slopes of the bank are damaged.

Provisional notices of this year's intended machine cleansing works, in accordance with the phased maintenance programme approved at the 2009 annual meeting, have been sent out. The extent of this year's phased programme of maintenance works is shown on the previous site location plan.

Roundup Pro Biactive herbicide was applied to reaches in advance of the phased programmed machine cleansing works.

As the Board's annual meeting falls during the early part of the growing season, it is proposed that a detailed District inspection be undertaken during the summer months to identify any additional works or herbicide applications that may be required.

The Board's flail mowing contractors, Messrs Ashman, have indicated they will be available to undertake the Board's flail mowing requirements this year. In anticipation of the Board's agreement a £2,000.00 flail mowing budget has been allocated within the estimated costs for this year.

Provision has been included within the Board's estimated expenditure to allow for a Roundup herbicide application to be applied to drains included within this year's phased machine cleansing programme, and to any other district drains where an herbicide treatment is required, to control reed stands or substantial growths of emergent aquatic vegetation.

A provisional sum has been included within the Board's estimate to allow for emergency machine cleansing, cott removal, culvert clearance or bank revetment works that may be required later in the year.

The estimated cost of this year's recommended Weed Control and Drain maintenance works is as follows. Please refer to the previous site plan for locations.

|   |      |     |   |      |                  |
|---|------|-----|---|------|------------------|
| 1. Machine cleanse reach 143-144-145-145a   | 1600 | m   | @ | 1.80 | 2880.00          |
| 2. Allow sum for Roundup application  | Item | Sum |   |      | 600.00           |
| 3. Allow sum for flail mowing in advance of machine cleansing works   | Item | Sum |   |      | 2000.00          |
| 4. <b><u>Provisional Item</u></b><br>Allow sum for emergency machine cleansing Cott removal, culvert clearance or bank revetment works                  | Item | Sum |   |      | 1000.00          |
| 5. Fees for inspection, preparation and submission of report to the Board, arrangements and supervision of herbicide applications and maintenance works | Item | Sum |   |      | 700.00           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  |      |     |   |      | <b>£7,180.00</b> |

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

### **Pumping Stations**

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

#### **Duncombes**

Pump no 2 continues to operate with a faulty seal/chamber leakage sensor. Monitoring of the motor for signs of moisture ingress will continue to be carried out until the pump is removed for a full inspection and overhaul. A recent test of the motor windings showed no indication of any moisture ingress into the motor.

#### **Moore's Bridge Pumping Station**

Removal of the Moore's pump for overhaul, which had been planned for late summer 2017, was postponed due to problems with risk of fish kills. By the time the drain water level had been lowered sufficiently to access the discharge flange bolts there was concern that winter was approaching and

it was agreed with the Chairman that the overhaul would be postponed until spring 2018. Due to the prevailing wet conditions the work has been delayed and is now planned for late April when weather conditions are expected to have improved.

### **West Fen**

It has been noted that the pipework bolts in the wet well are badly corroded and require replacement, with the Chairman's approval this is to be carried out in spring 2018 with the pump in situ.

### **White Fen**

#### **Replacement Automatic Weedscreen Cleaning Equipment**

In accordance with the Chairman's authorisation an order was placed with Stainless Metalcraft for a new automatic weedscreen cleaner and for replacement weedscreen cleaning equipment.

Installation of the new weedscreen (which required the intake damming off and dewatering), was carried out in conjunction with the drain works during October 2017. Once installed this allowed the weed cleaner erection to follow on together with the electrical works. All works were completed and commissioned during November.

During March 2018 it was found that a grab pivot pin had come out of its bush and damaged a hydraulic ram. This was reported to Metalcraft who quickly completed repairs under warranty and made modifications to prevent the fault reoccurring.

As previously reported the VJ adaptors on the delivery pipes below the intake sump covers will, at some point, require replacement; this however is not urgent.

### **Pumping Hours**

#### **Beggars Bridge**

**Total Hours Run February 2017 – March 18 = 187 (12049)**

Total Hours Run February 2016 – February 2017 = 110 (11862)

Total Hours Run April 2015 – February 2016 = 133 (11725)

Total Hours Run April 2014 – April 2015 = 94 (11592)

Total Hours Run April 2013 – April 2014 = 112 (11498)

Total Hours Run April 2012 – April 2013 = 519 (11386)

## Duncombes

### **Total Hours Run February 2017 – March 18 = 572**

No 1 Hours Run February 2017 – March 18 = 285 (7846)

No 2 Hours Run February 2017 – March 18 = 287 (7900)

No 1 Hours Run February 2016 – February 2017 = 72 (7561)

No 2 Hours Run February 2016 – February 2017 = 141 (7613)

Total Hours Run February 2016 – February 2017 = 213

No 1 Hours Run April 2015 – February 2016 = 94 (7489)

No 2 Hours Run April 2015 – February 2016 = 74 (7472)

Total Hours Run April 2015 – February 2016 = 168

No 1 Hours Run April 2014 – April 2015 = 183 (7395)

No 2 Hours Run April 2014 – April 2015 = 207 (7398)

Total Hours Run April 2014 – April 2015 = 390

No 1 Hours Run April 2013 – April 2014 = 131 (7212)

No 2 Hours Run April 2013 – April 2014 = 144 (7191)

Total Hours Run April 2013 – April 2014 = 275

No 1 Hours Run April 2012 – April 2013 = 528 (7081)

No 2 Hours Run April 2012 – April 2013 = 737 (7047)

Total Hours Run April 2012 – April 2013 = 1265

## Staffurths Bridge

### **Total Hours Run February 2017 – March 18 = 301**

No 1 Hours Run February 2017 – March 18 = 140

No 2 Hours Run February 2017 – March 18 = 161

No 1 Hours Run February 2016 – February 2017 = 466 (9315)

No 2 Hours Run February 2016 – February 2017 = 112 (9387)

Total Hours Run February 2016 – February 2017 = 578

No 1 Hours Run April 2015 – February 2016 = 77 (8849)

No 2 Hours Run April 2015 – February 2016 = 154 (9275)

Total Hours Run April 2015 – February 2016 = 231

No 1 Hours Run April 2014 – April 2015 = 666 (8772)

No 2 Hours Run April 2014 – April 2015 = 60 (9121)

Total Hours Run April 2014 – April 2015 = 726

No 1 Hours Run April 2013 – April 2014 = 259 (8106)

No 2 Hours Run April 2013 – April 2014 = 525 (9061)

Total Hours Run April 2013 – April 2014 = 784

No 1 Hours Run April 2012 – April 2013 = 23 (7847)

No 2 Hours Run April 2012 – April 2013 = 996 (8536)

Total Hours Run April 2012 – April 2013 = 1019

## Moores

### **Total Hours Run April 2017 – March 18 = 104 (3434)**

Total Hours Run January 2016 – April 2017 = 99 (3330)  
Total Hours Run April 2015 – January 2016 = 7 (3231)  
Total Hours Run April 2014 – April 2015 = 132 (3224)  
Total Hours Run April 2013 – April 2014 = 152 (3092)  
Total Hours Run April 2012 – April 2013 = 48 (2940)

### West Fen

#### **Total Hours Run February 2017 – March 18 = 287**

Total Hours Run February 2016 – February 2017 = 200 (12145)  
Total Hours Run April 2015 – February 2016 = 121 (11945)  
Total Hours Run April 2014 – April 2015 = 371 (11824)  
Total Hours Run April 2013 – April 2014 = 225 (11453)  
Total Hours Run April 2012 – April 2013 = 504 (11228)

### White Fen

#### **Total Hours Run April 2017 – April 18 = 85**

**No1 Hours Run April 2017 – April 18 = 74**

**No2 Hours Run April 2017 – April 18 = 11**

No 1 Hours Run February 2016 – April 2017 = 364 (3071)  
No 2 Hours Run February 2016 – April 2017 = 1 (1604)  
Total Hours Run February 2016 – April 2017 = 365

No 1 Hours Run March 2015 – February 2016 = 140 (2707)  
No 2 Hours Run March 2015 – February 2016 = 24 (1603)  
Total Hours Run March 2015 - February 2016 = 164

### **Eel Regulations**

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

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

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

### **Internal Consultation with the Board**

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

### **Planning Procedures Update**

#### ***Informatives on Decision Notices***

Despite positive steps being taken, a review of the decisions that have recently been made has identified that informatives are being added to some but not all relevant Decision Notices advising the applicants of their separate legal obligation to comply with the requirements of the Board’s Byelaws and the Land Drainage Act.

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

#### ***Planning Agents Training Day***

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

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

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

## Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 31 new development related matters have been received and, where appropriate, dealt with since the last meeting:

| <b>MLC Ref.</b> | <b>Council Ref.</b> | <b>Applicant</b>                         | <b>Type of Development</b>  | <b>Location</b>                               |
|-----------------|---------------------|--|---|---|
| 661             | Enquiry             | Client of Stirling Maynard               | Residence and<br>4 x mobile home bases                              | Crazy Acres, Benwick                          |
| 662             | F/YR17/0188/F       | Mrs L Harding                            | Residence   | Whittlesey Road, March                        |
| 663             | F/YR17/0201/PNC04   | Charbel Properties                       | Residential<br>(2 plots)  | Wisbech Road, March                           |
| 664             | F/YR17/0251/F       | Mulberry Commercial<br>Holdings Ltd      | Industrial<br>(Retail Units)  | Wisbech Road, March                           |
| 665             | F/YR17/0218/F       | Mr & Mrs H Kisby                         | Residence   | Middle Road, March                            |
| 666             | Enquiry             | Client of Roy Lobley<br>Consulting       | Agricultural<br>(Anaerobic digester<br>plant)                       | Turf Fen Drove, Turves*                       |
| 667             | F/YR16/0453/F       | Mr M A Edgoose                           | Residential<br>(4 plots)  | Silver Street, March                          |
| 668             | F/YR17/0331/F       | Mr & Mrs Barnes                          | Residence<br>(Extension & car port)                                 | Benwick Road, Whittlesey                      |
| 669             | F/YR17/0440/F       | Ms L Perry                               | Residence   | March Road, Fronting<br>School Close, Turves  |
| 670             | F/YR17/0470/F       | Mrs D Brown                              | Potter's studio   | Benwick Road, Whittlesey                      |
| 671             | F/YR17/0490/F       | Dawe Developments                        | Residential<br>(4 plots)  | Elliott Road, March                           |
| 672             | F/YR17/0615/F       | Royston Farms Ltd                        | Residence   | Burnthouse Sidings, Turves                    |
| 673             | F/YR17/0598/F       | Charbel Properties                       | Residential<br>(2 plots)  | Wisbech Road, March                           |
| 674             | F/YR17/0833/F       | Mr B Smith                               | Agricultural  | Chase Road, Benwick                           |
| 675             | F/YR17/0825/F       | J Bates & Sons                           | Agricultural<br>(Anaerobic digester<br>plant)                       | Beggars Bridge, Coates*                       |
| 676             | F/YR17/0997/F       | Mrs Rowell                               | Residence   | South Green & fronting<br>Fieldside, Coates   |
| 677             | F/YR17/0440/F       | Ms L Perry                               | Residence   | March Road, Fronting<br>School Close, Turves* |
| 678             | F/YR17/1043/F       | Mr A Smith                               | Residence and<br>6 x mobile home bases                              | Crazy Acres, Benwick*                         |
| 679             | F/YR17/1084/F       | Mr & Mrs N Jones                         | Residence<br>(Garage)   | Burnthouse Road, Turves                       |
| 680             | Enquiry             | Client of Cannon<br>Consulting Engineers | Anaerobic digestion<br>facility                                     | Whitemoor Road, March                         |
| 681             | F/YR17/1127/O       | Mr T Knowles                             | Residential<br>(up to 118 plots)                                    | The Green and Wisbech<br>Road, March*         |
| 682             | F/YR17/1207/F       | Miss A Ward                              | Residential<br>(2 plots)  | Elliott Road, March*                          |
| 683             | F/YR17/1190/F       | Mr R Dempsey                             | Residence<br>(Orangery & triple<br>garage with games<br>room above) | Duncombes Road, March                         |
| 684             | F/YR18/0048/O       | Charbel Properties                       | Residential<br>(2 plots)  | Wisbech Road, March                           |
| 685             | F/YR18/0038/O       | Messrs S & N Morton                      | Residential<br>(2 plots)  | Wisbech Road, March                           |
| 686             | F/YR18/0023/F       | Mr & Mrs Dickerson                       | Residence<br>(Extension)  | Nursery Drive, March                          |



|     |  |                     |                            |                         |
|-----|--|---------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 687 | F/YR18/0052/O                              | Mrs J Woolnough     | Residential<br>(2 plots)   | March Road, Turves      |
| 688 | F/YR18/0082/O                              | Mr Morton           | Residential<br>(2 plots)   | Wisbech Road, Westry    |
| 689 | Enquiry                                    | Veolia UK           | Waste Transfer Station     | Hostmoor Avenue, March  |
| 690 | F/2001/18/CW                               | RH & RW Clutton LLP | Aerobic digestion plant    | Whittlesey Road, March  |
| 691 | Byelaw & Discharge<br>Consent applications | Ms S Griffin        | Replacement septic<br>tank | Whittlesey Road, March* |

***Entries ending 'PNCO' relate to prior notification change of use issues***  
***Entries ending 'CW' relate to County Waste Matters***

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

The following applications are for development where the discharge is attenuated before it reaches the Board's system:

- (i) Mr M A Edgoose (MLC Ref Nos 667)
- (ii) Mr T Knowles (MLC Ref No 681)
- (iii) Veolia UK (MLC Ref Nos 689)

The following applicants have chosen to use the soakaway self-certifying process, and, in doing so, agreed that if the soakaway was to fail in the future they would be liable for discharge consent.

- (i) *Mr B Smith - Agricultural development at Chase Road, Benwick* (MLC Ref No 674)
- (ii) *Mr & Mrs Dickerson - Residential (extension) at Nursey Drive, March* (MLC Ref No 686)

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 a 2-storey 4-bed dwelling with attached double garage involving demolition of existing bungalow and shed at Australia Farm Bungalow, Whittlesey Road, March - Mr R C & J L Brown (EC Brown & Sons)* (MLC Ref Nos 230, 346, 514 & 546)
- *Erection of 5 bungalows and 2 semi-detached houses on land north of Red Barn, Turves* (MLC Ref Nos 232, 268 & 453) *and Erection of 24 dwellings at land north of Red Barn, Turves* (MLC Ref No 497) – *Mrs A Blewett and Mr W Aldridge*

- *Residential development and associated parking at Baxter's Dairy and land south of Peas Hill Road, March – D J & N R Baxter; D J & G W Tuffs & J Helmer (MLC Ref No 238) & CGT Developments (MLC Ref Nos 328 & 443); Mr G Wilding (MLC Ref Nos 599, 601 & 627)*
- *Erection of 5 no wind turbines on land north of Burnthouse Farm, Burnthouse Sidings, Turves - Abbey Group (Cambridgeshire) Ltd (MLC Ref No 420) and Fivestone Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 462 & 547) & Construction of 5 Megawatt solar energy farm, to include the installation of solar panels with on-site equipment rooms and plant, access tracks, security fencing and cameras at land west of 15 Burnthouse Sidings, Turves - Client of Amazi (MLC Ref Nos 489 & 581) & Abbey Renewables Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 491, 494 & 503) & Burnthouse Solar (MLC Ref No 582)*
- *Residential development on land north of 35 Whittlesey Road, March - Greene King PLC (MLC Ref Nos 526, 544 & 561) & Client of Caldecote Group (MLC Ref No 566)*
- *Erection of a 2-storey 4-bed dwelling and detached garage involving demolition of existing dwelling at 190-194 Whittlesey Road, March – Mr & Mrs P Foreman (MLC Ref Nos 578 & 598)*
- *Re-development of 1-3 Hostmoor & 1 Martin Avenue, March – Client of MTC (MLC Ref No 624) & Harrier Developments Ltd (MLC Ref No 632)*
- *Proposed extension at Marina Drive - Mr G Harding & Ms D Wilson (MLC Ref Nos 629 & 630)*
- *Erection of 4 poultry barns with associated structures and biomass boiler(s), formation of a lagoon and erection of an agricultural dwelling and site office at land west of 405 Whittlesey Road, March – St Lawrence Hall Farms Ltd (MLC Ref No 626)*
- *Change of use of an agricultural building to 3 x 2-storey 3-bed dwellings at White Fen Farm, Whittlesey Road, Benwick – Mr G Burton (MLC Ref Nos 634 & 651 previously White Fen MLC Ref No 039)*

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

*Residential development and associated parking at Baxter's Dairy and land south of Peas Hill Road, March – D J & N R Baxter; D J & G W Tuffs & J Helmer (MLC Ref No 238) & CGT Developments (MLC Ref Nos 328 & 443); Mr G Wilding (MLC Ref Nos 599, 601 & 627); Dawe Developments (MLC Ref Nos 671)*

Further to the last meeting a further planning application was submitted to the District Council in April 2017 (MLC Ref No 671) for the erection of four single-storey dwellings on land to the west of 126 - 128 Elliott Road on the same site that had previously been refused planning permission in July 2015 (MLC Ref No 601).

The application was refused due to the cramped, over developed layout proposed.

*Erection of 3 detached dwellings and garages and formation of vehicular accesses on land south of 710 Whittlesey Road, March - R Green (MLC Ref Nos 430, 502 & 504) & - Ideal Prestige Properties (MLC Ref Nos 570 & 572)*

Outstanding issues associated with this site have recently been resolved. It is understood that the plots have recently been sold.

*Various developments at West Fen Farm, Whitemoor Road, March – Hetherington Properties Ltd (MLC Ref No 448 & 569), Mr W Hetherington (MLC Ref No 539), Client of Cannon Consulting Engineers (MLC Ref No 680) + RH & RW Clutton LLP (MLC Ref No 690)*

Further to previous meeting reports, notably that of 2013, the Commissioners, on the Board's behalf, responded to a provision of flood risk information request in January.



**Extract from Douglas Rule Associates Drawing Number 09-50-01**

A planning application for the construction of a biomethane gas and electricity to grid and biofertiliser aerobic digestion plant was submitted, in February, and is currently being processed by the County Council.

Members will be aware that planning permission was granted for a similar previous proposal which is in close proximity to the significant Board's Drain, Points 13-128. The plans supplied show an export gas pipeline and buried electricity cables and the Board's attention is drawn to the problems that have been encountered in respect of the Local Generation export pipeline, see below.

With the exception of a provision of flood risk information enquiry the Board has yet to be consulted upon this application.

*Works associated with the extension of Anaerobic Digestion (AD) facility at Local Generation Ltd, Wisbech Road, Westry - Local Generation Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 508, 585, 589, 619 & 625)*

Further to the issuing of consent in December 2016, the Board was contacted in July 2017 by the applicant's Solicitor, CMS Cameron Mckenna Nabarrow Olswang LLP (CMS), concerning issues with the consent document raised by Cadent to whom the pipeline would be transferred once complete.

Concern was raised in respect of Clause 9 which advises that in the event of the "pipeline", including any associated works, no longer being required by the Applicant it shall be removed by the Applicant and the bed and banks of the watercourse restored to their former condition to the satisfaction of the Consulting Engineer and that if the Applicant refuses or fails to remove the "pipeline" within at least 21 days of previous notice in writing being given, then the Board may enter on the land and property of the Applicant and remove the works with the costs of such removal being recovered from the Applicant.

It was argued that this approach was not in accordance with ".....Cadent's and general industry practices. The preferred decommissioning method is removal of gas in the pipeline and capping at both ends" adding "...if there is a concern that the gas pipeline rises then the deed of easement would be reviewed and a plan of action for remedy put in place at this point" and concluding that "The IDB cannot step-in since as a statutory requirement only trained gas engineers for safety reasons" [sic]

Whilst elements of this were accepted it was possible to prove that the same clause had not previously been challenged by National Grid, who were previously responsible for similar gas pipelines, when works to gas mains had previously been consented. They were also advised that the Board does not consider it appropriate for public money to be

spent in this manner and will not bear the cost of the removal of the export pipeline and restoration of the banks and watercourse in the future.

Several problems were encountered during this process including the applicant failing to appreciate that:

- The consent is not an easement,
- The Board was not the landowner but had powers over the watercourse,
- How the Board was funded and
- It derived no benefit from the installation of the pipeline concerned.

Following several meetings with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman an amicable situation was reached and a “tri-partite” agreement between the Board, Air Liquide UK Limited and Cadent Gas Limited was issued on 3 April. This included amendment to once clause of the consent in Air Liquide’s favour subject to the payment of £3,000, a sum deemed appropriate by all parties in this instance.

Dealing with this matter incurred additional costs but negotiations were successful in recovering the full costs incurred.

*Proposed Retail Park to the west of Hostmoor Avenue, March - Brossman Mills Ltd*  
(MLC Ref Nos 591 & 611)

Following the Board’s instruction, made at the last meeting, minute B.51 (Proposed Retail Park to the west of Hostmoor Avenue, March – Brossman Mills Ltd), the applicant’s engineering consultant, MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd [MTC], was advised of the position. This resulted in a request to fully explain why the Board had refused the application and returned the associated statutory application fees. MTC was reminded of the content of the previous meeting held with the applicant in October 2016 and subsequent e-mails sent during January and February which advised of the Board’s concerns and position.

Despite the applicant’s previous statement that works would commence on site during the summer no further contact was received until late March when a discussion was held in which the applicant directly requested the Board’s view on potential works to part of the Hostmoor Balancing Pond and the Board’s system between Point 36 and the upstream culvert. Further details are currently awaited.

With the exception of “in passing” references no further information has been received concerning the development to the west of Wisbech Road.

*Erection of Grain Store Building with associated Gas Tanks and Hardstanding at Agricultural Building at Wades Farm, Grandford Drove, March – J C & M A Martin (MLC Ref Nos 621 & 637)*

Further to the last meeting the outstanding information was received in August and upon consideration it was found that the site investigation and subsequent design used did not meet the requirements stipulated in approved guidance. Therefore, there is some doubt that the proposal meets the Board’s requirements.

It should be noted that following the receipt of further information the LLFA wrote to the District Council in January advising that it had no further comments to make beyond those previously made. This raises several issues, the principles of which are currently being discussed with the LLFA.

*Residential development on land west of 450 March Road, Turves – Cobb Construction (MLC Ref Nos 622, 623, 656 & 657)*

Following successful discussions with the applicant’s agent, an application for the formation of two access culverts in the channel beside March Road have been received and are currently being processed.

*Erection of 3 x 2-storey 4-bed dwellings and 1 x 2-storey 5-bed dwelling and detached garage with playroom/gym above at land east of Silver Street, March - Mr & Mrs Edgoose (MLC Ref Nos 639, 640 & 667)*

An application for discharge consent was received but did not meet the Board’s minimum validation requirements. The applicant was given the opportunity to supply the outstanding information but failed to provide this within the required timescale. As a result the application was recommended for refusal.

No further correspondence has been received from the applicants or the applicants’ agents concerning this site and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board’s interests.

*Erection of a 2-storey 3-bed dwelling with attached garage on land south west of Phoenix House, 341 Wisbech Road, Westry – Ms C Dean (MLC Ref No 643)*

Further to the last Board report, the applicant employed Engineering Support Practice Ltd (ESP) to act as her consultant on drainage matters. ESP took advantage of the surgery appointment system operated by the Commissioners to gain basic advice on the applications required for this development.

ESP submitted two separate soakaway checks, one covering surface water and the other treated effluent. Both checks were passed but as a result of the chosen design the site now has restrictions due to the size of soakaway system proposed which will, for example, limit future extensions.

Beyond this, no further correspondence has been received from the applicant or the applicant's consultant concerning this site and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

*Proposed residential development at Crazy Acres, off Chase Road, Benwick - Client of Stirling Maynard and Partners Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 661) & Mr A Smith (MLC Ref Nos 671) (previously White Fen MLC Ref No 025 & 026 - Mr A Smith)*

Further to the last meeting report, a pre-application consultation response was sent to the applicant's consultant, Stirling Maynard & Partners.

A planning application for a bungalow and six caravan bases was submitted to the District Council in November. The application was subsequently withdrawn in December.

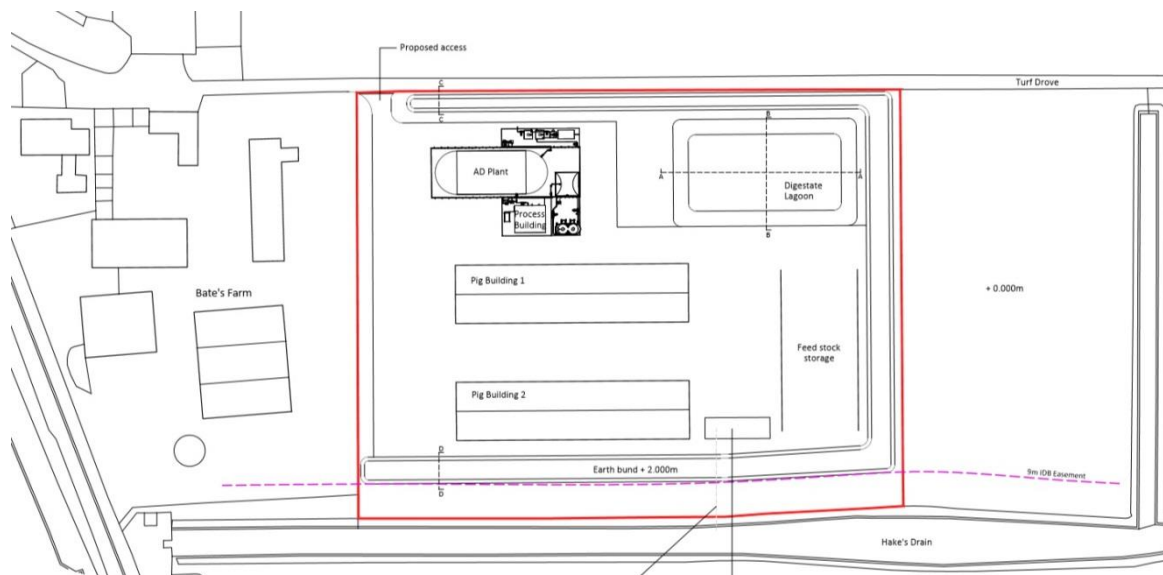
No further correspondence has been received from the applicant or the applicant's agents concerning this site.

*Erection of two pig rearing buildings and feed stock storage area; an anaerobic digester plant and process building; formation of digestate lagoon and construction of 2.0 metre high earth bunding on land to the south of Bates Farm – Client of Roy Lobley (MLC Ref No 666) & J Bates & Son (MLC Ref No 675)*

An application for the above development, which is adjacent to Turves Pumping Station and the Board's system at Points 80-81-88, was submitted to the District Council in

August. According to the District Council Public Access Webpage a decision is currently pending.

With the exception of the provision of a flood risk information enquiry the Board has yet to be consulted upon this application.



**Extract from Robert Doughty Consultancy Ltds Drawing Number 1259-1\_PL\_SP01 Rev. E**

Some of the electricity produced by the plant will be used on the farm with the rest exported as green electricity to the National Grid. No reference is made within the submission to any adverse impacts created by new or updated transmission networks.

*Erection of up to 118no dwellings (outline application with matters committed in respect of access) involving demolition of 147a Wisbech Road on land north of The Green and north of 145-159 Wisbech Road, March – Mr T Knowles (MLC Ref No 681)*

A planning application for residential land on an area of land bounded by the March – Peterborough railway, Meadowlands Retail Park, The Green and Russell Avenue was submitted to the District Council in November.

ESP Ltd has prepared a drainage strategy which includes an attenuation pond in the north western corner of the site that it is presumed will discharge into a railway side watercourse under the railway and into the network of private open watercourses to the north, ultimately discharging into the Board's system to the south of the Tesco Store. With the exception of some preliminary discussion no detailed discussion has occurred with the Board.

According to the Council Public Access Webpage a decision is currently pending.





Extract from Peter Humphreys Associates Drawing No. 5127-06 illustrating the indicative layout

*Replacement of septic tank with a Klargester Unit at Whittlesey Road, March – Sandra Griffin (MLC Ref No 691)*

Following the failure of the applicant's septic tank discussions have taken place in relation to the installation of a private treatment plant (PTP), discharge pipeline and outfall. Applications for both discharge and byelaw consent have been received and subsequently validated. A recommendation for approval has been passed to the Clerk.

### ***Development Contributions***

Contributions received in respect of discharge consent will be reported under the Agenda Item – '*Contributions from Developers.*

### **Fenland District Council (FDC)**

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

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

### ***FDC Liaison Meeting***

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

The actions arising from the meeting included:

- Development of a joint protocol/leaflet to clarify the inter-relationship between FDC, CCC (in its role as the LLFA), the Commissioners and associated IDBs and the EA in relation to flooding and surface water drainage for developers.
- The Commissioners to offer a seminar for "planners".
- The Commissioners to review their approach to responding to planning applications with a focus on major schemes/Broad Concept Plans (BCP's).
- Meeting to discuss the potential tourism opportunities on our waterways perhaps initially focusing on March.
- Communication opportunities for FDC to promote/signpost the Commissioners' information and pre-application process or to join this up with its own processes.
- Investigate whether the FDC Local Validation List review can include requirements to benefit the Commissioners or drainage in general.

Another meeting is to be held in May this year.

### **Fenland Flooding Issues Sub-Group**

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

### **March Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2030**

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

## **Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership (CFRMP)**

The 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:

### ***The Great Ouse Tidal River Baseline report***

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

### ***The Future Fenland Project***

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

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

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

### ***Programme Development Unit (PDU)***

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

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

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

Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) has advised that the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) has also been involved in a similar process with ADA. A response has been prepared by ADA and for more detail see item 38 on the Agenda.

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

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

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

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

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

### ***Rain Gauges Project***

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

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

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

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

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

As members of the CFRMP, the Middle Level Commissioners have been asked to comment on the proposed location of rain gauges. The LLFA advises that the proposed new gauges have been chosen because they are adjacent to major areas of population and known “wet spots”. The nearest rain gauges to the Commissioners’ area are at March WRC (EA gauge) and the Middle Level Commissioners’ Office. In respect of the Commissioners’ interests the District Council suggested a rain gauge within the town itself, on Anglian Water’s facility off Creek Road (MRCCSM), near River Down.

### ***Strategic Flood Risk Planning Advisor***

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

### ***Integrated FRM PhD research project***

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

### **General Advice**

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

- (a) Simon Rutterford – An application for byelaw consent was received to install a security fence adjacent to the Board’s district drain near to Point 39 on land off Whittlesey Road, March. The fence was initially erected without consent and did not meet the Board’s approval. The application was later recommended for approval after a number of changes were made to the position of fence, including the provision of a removable section to allow maintenance of the district drain.

Consulting Engineer

23 April 2018

With regards to the revetment works, the Chairman enquired if the use of brick-bats was more successful than stone, which had previously been used. Mr Lakey considered that the brick-bats were working well in comparison to the stone, as due to the size, it was more likely that the stone would wash into the drains.

Mr Whittome considered that the brick-bats were holding in place well, and in some locations, reeds were starting to grow through, which would further add to the stability.

Mr Fountain commented that it was a reasonably intricate operation to get the brick-bats in place, with the likelihood that some find their way into the watercourse and raised concerns that, in future maintenance operations, it was likely that these could be deposited on the adjacent fields. Mr Lakey said that in future operations, operatives would try to remove any brick-bats before the spoil was deposited on the land. Mr Lakey referred to the proposal to re-profile section 35-34-36 this year ahead of any development of the site.

With regards to flail mowing, in response to the Chairman, Mr Lakey considered the arrangements with three contractors last year worked well and that all three were generally happy with the allocation of work. The Chairman considered that, in the light of this, the same arrangements should be continued this year.

With regards to the works in the White Fen area, the Chairman referred to problems caused by cultivating too close to the brink of the watercourse.

Mr Downes joined the meeting and updated Members on the proposal to remove the pump at Moores pumping station for overhaul.

He referred to the recent works at West Fen pumping station to replace the wet well bolts, which had shown that both the bolts and the suspension tube were badly corroded. The Chairman reported that the thickness of the suspension tube was approximately 1/10<sup>th</sup> of its original size and that the pump would need to be removed for the overhaul/replacement of the suspension tube together with an overhaul of the pump.

In response to the Chairman, Mr Downes considered a budget figure of £15,000 each for the two pumps at Moores and West Fen pumping stations should be used for budgetary purposes, however, the full extent of the overhaul work required would not be known until the pumps had been removed and inspected.

Mr Kisby queried whether a temporary pump would be required for the period the pump at West Fen pumping station was out of service. The Vice Chairman reported that, although there was a 6" electric pump at the station, this would not be able to cope with any level of rainfall. He added that with the Consulting Engineers he had looked at the diversion of the water to Duncombes but there was an issue with the culvert at Trumans Farm corner with the silt levels at the culvert requiring removal and the structure needing attention within the next couple of years.

The Chairman referred to the oil leak on No 2 pump at White Fen pumping station. Mr Downes did not consider this a problem that required immediate attention and could be monitored.

With regards to the rabbit problem at White Fen pumping station, Mr Miller considered that it was now becoming so extensive that the Board should consider the use of a contractor to control the problem.

## 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 adopted.
- iii) That the same arrangements for flail mowing be continued for this year.
- iv) That the pumps at Moores and West Fen pumping stations be removed for overhaul.
- v) That, in advance of the removal of both pumps for overhaul, the water levels be lowered and if it appears there could be an issue in relation to fish within the watercourses, an earth dam be used. The Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to take any actions concerning this, as may be required.
- vi) That the Consulting Engineers be authorised to carry out maintenance works to the culvert at Trumans Farm corner to ensure water can be properly evacuated from the West Fen catchment to Duncombes, prior to the removal of the West Fen pump.
- vii) That the Consulting Engineers obtain quotations for vermin control at White Fen and West Fen pumping stations and the Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to take any further action on receipt of the quotations.

### B.96 Provision of automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment at White Fen Pumping Station

Further to minute B.53, Mr Hill reported that the weedscreen cleaner had now been installed and commissioned and that a loan of £25,000 had been approved by the Public Works Loan Board, repayable over a period of 5 years, at an interest rate of 1.53% with the first payment due in May 2018.

### B.97 Capital Improvement Programme

Members considered the Board's future capital improvement programme.

## RESOLVED

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

### B.98 Environmental Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

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

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

The Chairman referred to Cliff Carson's recent health issues and, although now back at work, he was due to retire at the end of June and the Middle Level Commissioners were currently in the process of finding his replacement.

### B.99 Pumping Station duties

The Board gave consideration to the payments in respect of pumping station duties for 2018/2019.

The Chairman reported that, whilst on the Inspection with the Vice Chairman, they considered having a simple log sheet at each pumping station to record each visit to the station and any actions taken.

#### RESOLVED

- i) That the Board agree that there be no change in the sum allowed for the provision of pumping station duties for 2018/2019.
- ii) That the Consulting Engineers and Mr Whittome draw up a log sheet for use at each of the Board's pumping stations to record each visit to the station and any actions taken.

(NB) – The Vice Chairman and Messrs Bates, Kisby and Whittome declared interests when this item was discussed.

### B.100 State-aided Schemes

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

#### RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

### B.101 Applications for byelaw consent

Mr Hill reported that the following applications for consent to undertake works in and around watercourses had been approved and granted since the last general meeting of the Board, viz:-

| <u>Name of Applicant</u>          | <u>Description of Works</u>   | <u>Date consent granted</u> |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| C J Fountain and Son              | Installation of 30 No field underdrain outfalls between points 114 and 95 Horseshoes Farm area of Turves                              | 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2017 |
| Ideal Prestige Properties Limited | Formation of access culvert to serve plots one and two and another culvert to serve plot three. Whittlesey Road March                 | 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2018 |
| Air Liquide                       | Installation of gas pipeline using directional drilling techniques. This consent replaces one given on 22 <sup>nd</sup> December 2016 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2018  |



|                    |  |                             |
|--------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Mr and Mrs Griffin | Piping and filling of approximately 9 metres of watercourse – 37 Whittlesey Road, March                                    | 5 <sup>th</sup> April 2018  |
| Mrs S Griffin      | Installation of package treatment plant and associated pipework and outfall into Board's Drain – 37 Whittlesey Road, March | 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2018 |

Mr Hill reported that the consent for Air Liquide was in relation to the installation of a gas pipeline under a District watercourse and that as part of the discussions it had been agreed that the sum of £3,000 be paid to the Board for possible future works.

In response to Mr Kisby, Mr Lakey estimated the pipeline to be approximately 8.0m deep and, in response to the Vice Chairman, he confirmed that it was clearly marked. The Chairman considered that the £3,000 received would be more beneficial to the Board now than retaining it for the lifeline of the pipeline.

#### RESOLVED

- i) That the action taken in granting consents be approved.
- ii) That the receipt of £3,000 be transferred to the Board's General Fund.

(NB) – Mr Fountain declared an interest in the consent granted to C J Fountain and Son.

#### B.102 Environment Agency – Precept

Mr Hill reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2018/2019 in the sum of £14,921 (the precept for 2017/2018 being £14,700).

#### B.103 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

- (a) Mr Hill reported that the sum of £516.65 (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency (£517.38 representing 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2017/2018 less £54.73 overpaid in respect of the financial year 2016/2017).
- (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 kept under review.

#### B.104 Contributions from Developers

Mr Hill reported that contributions towards the cost of dealing with the increased flow or volume of surface water run-off and treated effluent volume had been received.

## B.105 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 Wednesday the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

### RESOLVED

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

b) Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse Branch

On the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association held in Prickwillow, Ely on Tuesday the 6<sup>th</sup> 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 £823 to £832.

### RESOLVED

That the increased ADA subscription be paid for 2018.

d) Liability of Board Members

Mr Hill referred to, and the Board noted, a Guidance Note received from ADA dated the 28<sup>th</sup> 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 Board had management liability insurance in place, which was in respect of claims made as a result of a wrongful act against members of the Board arising from the management and operations of the Board and that the cover attached was £5,000,000.

e) Updating IDB Byelaws

Mr Hill referred to a letter received from ADA dated the 20<sup>th</sup> 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 2018 by ADA.

#### RESOLVED

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

g) Floodex 2019

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

#### B.106 Inspection of the District

Mr Hill referred to the notes of the Inspection carried out by the Chairman and Vice Chairman on Wednesday the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

Mr Whittome considered it would be beneficial to have a Board Inspection of the District every 4 years or when there was something significant to view.

#### RESOLVED

To hold a District Inspection on Wednesday the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and the Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to make the necessary arrangements.

#### B.107 Bank Slip – Whittlesey Road, March

Mr Hill reported that following the Inspection referred to in minute B.106, at which this matter was raised, a letter had been sent to Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Authority. A response had been received confirming that the matter had been passed to the Local Highways Officer, who would be arranging an inspection of the damaged roadway in the near future. The Vice Chairman had also reported the matter via the County Council website.

## B.108 Contravention of Byelaws – Security Fence – Whittlesey Road, March

Mr Hill reported that the Consulting Engineers had confirmed that following the erection of the fence it had been requested that the fantail into the District watercourse be removed, which had been dealt with straightaway. However, an electricity pole had subsequently been erected close to the watercourse and, the previous day, works had commenced to construct a hardstanding area within the byelaw distance.

The Vice Chairman reported that whilst on a site visit on the 27<sup>th</sup> March, he had met with the owner, who had confirmed that he was willing to flail mow the banks of the watercourse himself, twice a year, and that the end section of the fence was removable to allow access for an excavator to carry out any maintenance works.

Members raised concerns that the electricity pole was unconsented and that, although they had no objection in principle to a hardstanding area, they would not permit an impermeable area being created.

### RESOLVED

- i) That the arrangements concerning future drain maintenance works be formalised in an agreement between the Board and the owner of the site.
- ii) That the Clerk write to UK Power Networks informing them that the pole has been erected in contravention of the Board's byelaws and requesting details of how they intend to rectify the position.
- iii) That the Clerk write to Rutterford Construction informing them that:-
  - a) The services (electricity and water) they have installed within the 9 metre byelaw strip are in contravention of the byelaws and request details of how they intend to rectify the position.
  - b) The works to install a hardstanding area within the 9 metre byelaw strip requires the consent of the Board, which should be applied for immediately, and although the Board have no objection in principle to the proposal, they would not be able to consent to any impermeable area being created.

## B.109 Capital Programme Strengthening and Delivery

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

## B.110 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 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018 to discuss the challenges facing Boards. Innes Thomson, Chief Executive of ADA, spoke on the arrangements adopted by other Boards around the country.

Matters raised included:-

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

#### B.111 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 Board may wish to pick an area where they consider specific tailored training is pertinent for it in a given year or alternatively might ask that the Middle Level Commissioners arrange some joint training with other Boards which they are happy to do.

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

The Members considered the proposal of the appointment of a Health and Safety Officer and considered as the role was far reaching, more information concerning the role was required. The Chairman considered there should be a uniformed approach to Health and Safety by all the Middle Level Commissioners' administered Boards and he would like further clarification.

#### RESOLVED

- i) That the Chairman and Vice Chairman meet with the Clerk and/or Croner Consulting to discuss the matter further and be authorised to take any further actions as they consider necessary.
- ii) That the Board participate in any training organised through the Middle Level Commissioners.

#### B.112 Defra IDB1 Returns

Mr Hill referred to a letter received from Defra dated the 24<sup>th</sup> 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 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 the IDB1 return was amended and additional information requested, such as details of board membership, attendance at meetings, whether elections are held and confirmation that the complaints procedure is accessible from the home page on an IDB's website. This information will enable Defra to gather more data in relation to IDBs.

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

#### B.113 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 Board were asked to confirm that they were content to adopt a policy as long as it is suitable and will not include overly onerous steps which might restrict their activities.

#### RESOLVED

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

#### B.114 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 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

#### RESOLVED

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

#### B.115 Charging for Environmental Permits

Mr Hill reported on the consultation on charging for Environmental Permits which closed on the 26<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.ada.org.uk/2018/01/ada-responds-environment-agency-charge-proposals-2018).

## B.116 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2016/2017

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

## B.117 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 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.

## B.118 Budgeting

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

## B.119 Review of Internal Controls

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

## B.120 Risk Management Assessment

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

## B.121 Appointment of External Auditor

Further to minute B.1162(c) (March & Whittlesey IDB) and C.827(c) (White Fen DDC), Mr Hill referred to the decision by the Board to join the Sector Led Auditor Appointment Body for the appointment of the External Auditor and that the Smaller Authorities' Auditor Appointments (SAAA Ltd) had formed for this purpose. He reported that they had now confirmed the appointment of PKF Littlejohn to carry out the external audit of the Board for a five year period commencing with the financial year 2017/2018.

### B.122 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.

### B.123 Annual Governance Statement – 2017/2018

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

### B.124 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £208,320.13 which had been made during the financial year 2017/2018.

(NB) - Mr Bates declared an interest in the payment made to him.

(NB) – The Chairman, Messrs Fountain and Whittome declared interests (as Members of the Middle Level Board) in the payments made to the Middle Level Commissioners.

### B.125 Anglia Farmers

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

Mr Hill reported that the contract with Anglia Farmers ceases on the 30<sup>th</sup> 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 Board that they remain with Anglia Farmers for a further contract period, usually 18 months to 2 years, during which time the service provided by them will be monitored, it was the Board's decision and should they wish to be removed from the buying group then it would be the Board's responsibility to negotiate its own separate electricity contract with a supplier.

Mr Hill reported that the Chairman had agreed for the Board to remain with Anglia Farmers.

### RESOLVED

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

### B.126 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2017/2018

The Board considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliations for the year ended on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 as required in the Audit Regulations.



RESOLVED

- i) That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Return, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.
- ii) That the receipt of £3,000 be transferred to the Board's General Fund.

B.127 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2018/2019

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2018/2019 and were informed by 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:-

|                | <u>Area 1</u> | <u>Area 2</u> |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Drainage rates | 92.47%        | 66.71%        |
| Special levy   | 7.53%         | 33.29%        |

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £138,789 be raised by drainage rates and special levy (Area 1 - £37,842; Area 2 - £100,947).
- 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:-

|                | <u>Area 1</u> | <u>Area 2</u> |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Drainage rates | £34,991       | £67,342       |
| Special levy   | £2,851        | £33,605       |

- iv) That drainage rates be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District as follows:-

| <u>Area 1</u>  | <u>Area 2</u>   |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 25.0p in the £ | 12.25p in the £ |

- v) That a Special levy of £36,456 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vi) That the seal of the Board be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levy referred to in resolution (v).
- vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levy by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.128 Display of rate notice

RESOLVED

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

B.129 Date of next Meeting

Mr Fountain requested that agendas be sent out earlier, if possible.

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Tuesday the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2019 and the Chairman be authorised to decide on lunch arrangements.

B.130 Proposed works to the rear of the Tesco site

Mr Alterton reported that in one of his fields, at the rear of the Tesco site, Anglian Water have a water main across his field. There had been a wet hole all summer, but Anglian Water had confirmed that their pipe was not leaking. Mr Alterton requested permission to dig a small drain to drain his land, which would indicate if the problem was Anglian Water's or not. If it proved not to be so, he would take the appropriate steps to formalise the new drainage arrangement with the Board.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve for Mr Alterton to take the actions proposed.

B.131 Erection of dwellings on land north of The Green and 145-159 Wisbech Road, March (MLC Ref No. 681)

Mr Alterton reported on the proposed drainage arrangement for the above planning application.

RESOLVED

That the Consulting Engineers monitor the development to ensure that all works are carried out correctly.