

CURF AND WIMBLINGTON COMBINED INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Curf and Wimblington Combined Internal Drainage Board
held at the Middle Level Offices, March on Tuesday the 14th May 2019

PRESENT

M E Heading Esq (Chairman)	Mrs A J Langley
R Gowler Esq (Vice Chairman)	R E Mason Esq
R J Angood Esq	Donald S Morris Esq
S Edgley Esq	D G Nicholas Esq
D R Stokes Esq	

Miss Samantha Ablett (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Morgan Lakey (representing the Consulting Engineers) were in attendance. Mr Guy Wakeham attended as a member of the public.

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

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs M Davis, C Gowler Esq, C E Martin Esq and L A Nicholas Esq.

B.397 Declarations of Interest

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

B.398 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 15th May 2018 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.399 Vacancy in Membership

Further to minute B.361, Miss Ablett referred to an email received from P J Lee & Sons.

Consideration was given to the filling of the vacancy in membership of the Board.

RESOLVED

That Mr G Wakeham be co-opted to membership of the Board.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Wakeham to his first meeting of the Board.

B.400 Land Drainage Act 1991
Board Membership - Fenland District Council

Miss Ablett reported that Fenland District Council had re-appointed Councillor Mrs M Davis to be a Member of the Board under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

B.401 Inspection of District

Consideration was given to whether the Board should undertake an inspection of the District in 2020.

RESOLVED

That an inspection of the District was not required in 2020.

B.402 Wayleave Agreement with UK Power Networks

Miss Ablett reported that the Chairman had authorised entering into a wayleave agreement for the re-routing of a power cable at Boots Bridge, Manea.

B.403 Change of attendants at the Board's Pumping Stations

Further to minutes B.364(a) and B364(b), Miss Ablett reported that Mr Peter Bailey had taken over the duties at Finchams Farm Pumping Station and Mr Oliver Horne had taken over the duties at Bensons Pumping Station.

B.404 Updating IDB Byelaws

Further to minute B.375(e), the Board considered their updated Byelaws.

RESOLVED

That the updated Byelaws be adopted.

B.405 Policy Statement

Further to minute B.375(f), the Board reviewed and approved their Policy Statement which had been updated following the publication of the National Audit Office (NAO) report on IDBs in March 2017.

RESOLVED

That the revised Policy Statement be adopted.

B.406 Requirements for a Biosecurity Policy

Further to minute B.380, the Board considered their Biosecurity Policy.

RESOLVED

That the Biosecurity Policy be adopted.

B.407 Clerk's Report

Miss Ablett advised:-

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.

The Chairman advised that it was agreed to hold two Chairs' meetings per annum, to include all IDB and DDC Chairmen, and that this would be an opportunity to discuss a number of areas and for Chairmen to bring issues to the Middle Level Commissioners if and when required. He confirmed that these meetings were proving to be useful with health and safety being a good example of one area where Boards could potentially work together to try and fulfil their requirements.

He reported that there were concerns within a number of Boards regarding membership; some Boards found it difficult to attract new Members, some struggled to obtain a sufficient number of Members to be inquorate and that Chairmen thought there was a huge amount of duplication of work with Byelaws and Policy Statements being examples.

The Chairman reported that at the first Chairs meeting it was agreed to consider future Board arrangements, with the real driver being to try and make sure that as much of the ratepayers money was spent on delivering maintenance and improvements on watercourses and as little as possible spent on administration and paperwork and the Clerk had been tasked to look at what structures may be efficient.

The Chairman advised that the first option being discussed was that of one Board being responsible with the administration side and then within that one Board there would be a number of sub-committees, who would recommend or decide on how much money was to be spent in an area, together with what and where works were to be carried out on the ground.

He highlighted that this option was not something that was to happen within the next couple of years but perhaps five to ten years from now, when the agricultural outlook may be very different.

Mr Stokes voiced concerns regarding the different rates set by the Boards and this resulting in some Boards having to pay more.

Miss Ablett advised that this could be overcome with differential rating for Boards, which was the case now with Boards that had already amalgamated.

Mr Angood advised that some Boards had a very different level of investment and had been shrewder over the years. He stated that the strength of IDBs was the level of local involvement and if that was lost then it would be pointless. In his opinion amalgamation was already happening organically and if this option was forced upon the Board, he would be against it.

Miss Ablett confirmed that the option shown was not being forced onto Boards and that the briefing paper was intended to generate general discussion amongst Board members and any questions they may have were to be put to the Chairman for him to raise at the next Chairs meeting.

Mr Morris highlighted that the briefing paper noted it may not be possible to have an elected committee which he thought was going down the wrong path. The paper also made reference to going to mediation if there were any disagreements and he considered that this would surely give rise to increased costs, whereas at the moment all areas were decided by the Board at its' meeting.

Mrs Langley stated that she saw it as having the same meeting, as now, but as a committee, which would be looking at its' Consulting Engineers' report, reviewing its finances and setting the rate, but the rest of the material included in the agenda would be dealt with by the single Board.

Mr Morris stated he could not understand why this was necessary when Boards could decide to amalgamate themselves, as they were doing at the moment.

Mrs Langley confirmed that none of the Members wanted to hand over control of the Board's money, rate, assets or maintenance works, but she would be quite happy to relinquish all the health and safety, Byelaws, policies and matters of report.

The Chairman commented that it was not yet known what the best solution would be but he was keen to try and get the best value for money for the ratepayers and get as much of the ratepayers' money spent on maintaining and improving drainage throughout the District. He confirmed that there was still an awful lot of work to be done regarding any future arrangements.

Miss Ablett concluded that there appeared to be mixed views amongst Members of the Board which she would report back to the Clerk.

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 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 gave a presentation on how incident management is organised and dealt with in the Netherlands.

John Curtin 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 referred to the 25 year environment plan and to various Government publications made in 2018, which can be viewed 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.

RESOLVED

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

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 is included.

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.

The Vice Chairman reported that water intake into the Middle Level system was via one point at Stanground and current flows were very low and, in his opinion, unless there is reasonable rainfall there could be the possibility of shortages. He reported that part of the work of the group was to model the intake for Anglian Water which could hopefully lead to a better overall allocation for agricultural use.

vi) Anglia Farmers

Further to minute B.392, Miss Ablett advised that the running of the remainder of the Anglia Farmers electricity contract had been monitored and was pleased to report that the service provided had 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.

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

RESOLVED

That the actions of the Chairman be approved and the Board remain with Anglia Farmers for a further contract period post 30th September 2019.

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.

B.408 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

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

Curf & Wimblington Combined I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – April 2019

Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

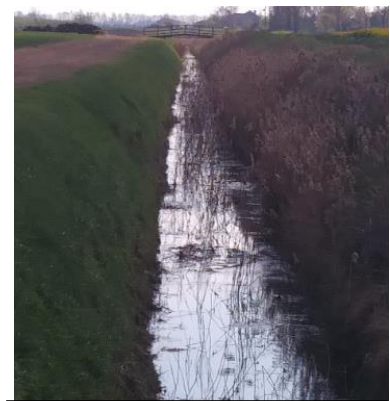
The maintenance works carried out last year generally accorded with the maintenance programme approved by the Board at its last annual meeting.

A Roundup herbicide application was applied to the Board's drains included within last year's phased machine cleansing programme, and also to other District drains where it was required to control sporadic growths of emergent aquatic vegetation.

With the Chairman's prior approval, the Western bank profile of reach 40-41 was reshaped during the adjacent programmed machine cleansing works, removing any areas of bank subsidence and under cutting, representing a saving for the Board.

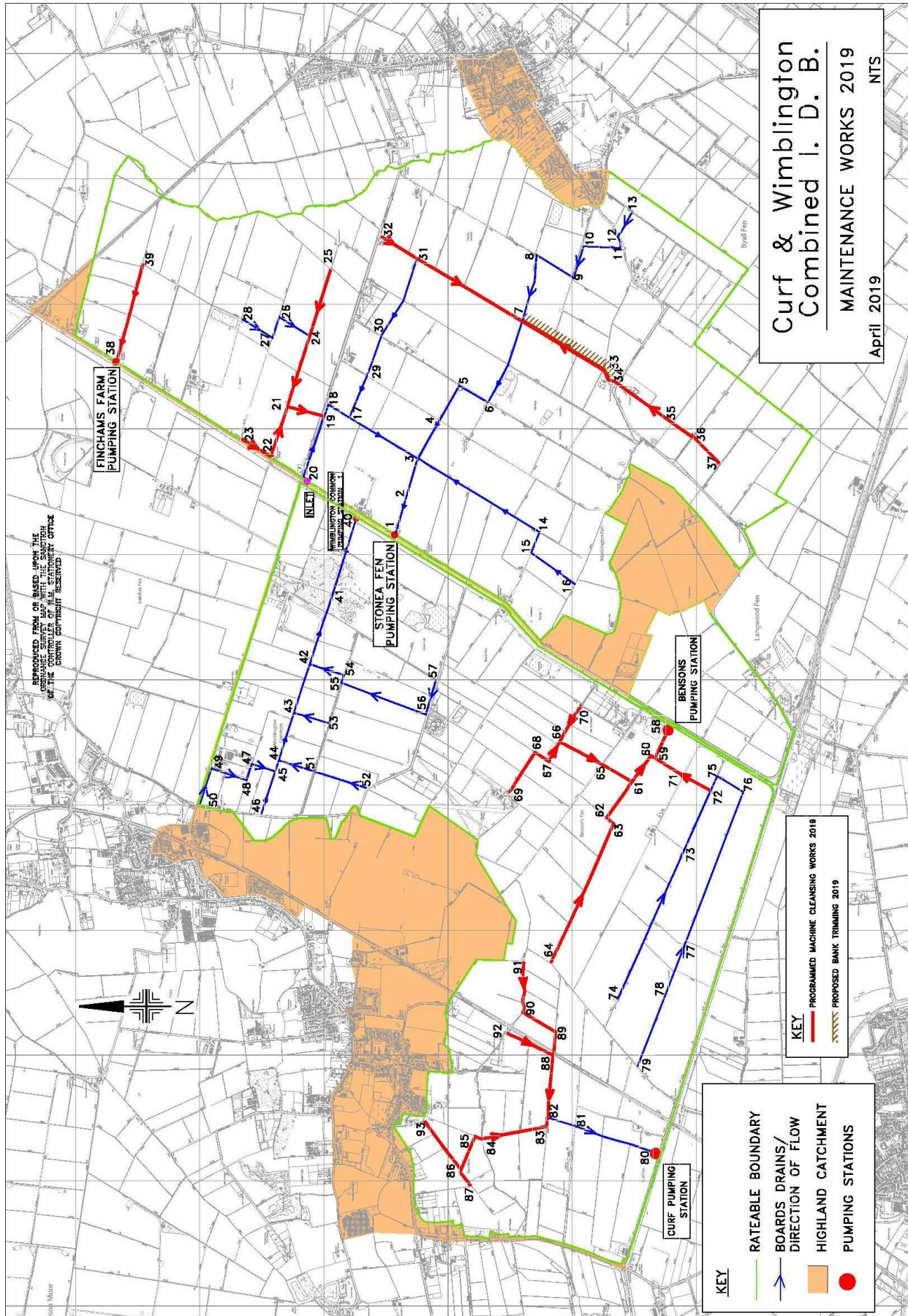
A recent inspection of the Board's District drains has revealed that the majority are in a generally satisfactory condition and being maintained to a good standard. The inspection indicates that many of the District drains that fall within this year's phased machine cleansing programme, will only require light machine cleansing to retain their good status.

However, the inspection did highlight the bank profile along the eastern bank of reach 7-34 has become undesirably steep and undermined in several places. As this reach falls 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 whilst the contractor's machine is carrying out the machine cleansing works. A provisional sum has been included in the estimated costs for this item.



Steep bank on Reach 7-34

Following the Board's agreement at the annual meeting in 2016, Finchams Farm Pump drain, reach 38-39, has been included within the Board's phased machine cleansing programme on an annual basis. Board members will be aware of the on-going reactive/emergency machine cleansing that has been required for several seasons. A sum to allow for the cleansing work to be undertaken has been included within the Board's estimated costs.



A sum has also been included within the estimate to allow for drains that fall within this year's phased machine cleansing programme, and any others that require a Roundup application to control aquatic weed growth to be treated later in the growing season.

The Board's flail mowing contractors, Messrs Ashman, have indicated that they are available to undertake the Board's flail mowing requirements this year. A sum for the completion of flail mowing of the Board's drains for the ensuing year has been included in the estimated costs.

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

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

1. Machine cleanse reaches within this year's Phased Cleansing Programme:

Bensons Pumping Catchment

• Main Pump Drain Reach 58-59	260	m	@	1.20	312.00
• Reach 60-59-71-72	550	m	@	1.10	605.00
• Reach 60-61-62-63-64	1950	m	@	1.10	2145.00
• Reach 61-65-66	700	m	@	1.10	770.00
• Reach 70-66-67-68-69	1050	m	@	1.10	1155.00

Stonea Fen Pumping Catchment

• Ghant Drove Reach 32-31-7-33-34-35-36-37	3350	m	@	1.10	3685.00
• 19-21	300	m	@	1.10	330.00
• 25-24-21-22-23	1900	m	@	1.10	2090.00

Finchams Farm Catchment

• Reach 38-39	800	m	@	1.00	800.00
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Curf Pumping Catchment

• Reach 82-88-89-90-91	1450	m	@	1.10	1595.00
• Reach 88-92	450	m	@	1.10	495.00
• Reach 82-83-84-85-86-87	1000	m	@	1.10	1100.00
• Reach 85-93	450	m	@	1.10	495.00

2. Bank trimming work Reach 7-34	Item	Sum	1500.00
3. Allow sum for Roundup application to District Drains	Item	Sum	<u>1250.00</u>

Carried forward 18327.00

	Brought forward		18327.00
4. Flail mowing of District drains	Item	Sum	8000.00
5. <u>Provisional Item</u> Allow sum for emergency cott clearance, culvert clearance or bank slip repair works	Item	Sum	1500.00
6. Fees for inspection, preparation and submission of report to the Board, arrangement and supervision of herbicide application and maintenance works	Item	Sum	2200.00
	TOTAL	£	30,027.00

Orders for the application of Roundup herbicide 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 treatments.

Pumping Stations

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

Bensons

The new pump no 1 (complete with canister) supplied by Sulzer was installed in May 2018 and has, since then, done the lion's share of pumping. The last routine check carried out in April found no problems with the pump or the installation. Moreover, it also appears to be much more tolerant of the disturbed flow presentation caused by the new weedscreen cleaner and does not trip out on overload as pump no 2 tends to. It is the Engineer's recommendation that consideration be given to purchasing an identical unit to replace the current pump No 2 as it will be in a similar condition to the old failed pump No 1.

The 5 year electrical condition report is due in June 2019 and will be scheduled accordingly.

Stonea Fen

The combination drive gearbox on pump no 2 was removed and sent away to be re-sealed and was re-fitted in September 2018.

The cleaner trolley and grab assembly was removed for overhaul in June 2018 and after general repairs to the hoist cables, trolley wheels, position switches and seals the cleaner was re-installed and commissioned in September 2018.

The 5 year electrical condition report was carried out on the 17th April with no remedial actions required.

Finchams Farm,

The 5 year electrical condition report is due in February 2020 and will be scheduled accordingly.

Wimblington Common

The 5 year electrical condition report is due in February 2020 and will be scheduled accordingly.

Curf

The 5 year electrical condition report was carried out on the 17th April with no remedial actions required.

Pumping Hours

Bensons

Year	Pump No 1 (current hours counter reading)	Pump No 2 (current hours counter reading)	Total Hours Run
18/4/18 – 17/4/19	56 (7933)	69 (8066)	125
20/4/17 - 18/4/18	16 (7877)	553 (7997)	569
14/4/16 - 20/4/17	16 (7861)	205 (7444)	221
21/4/15 -14/4/16	417 (7861)	513 (7444)	930
5/4/14 – 21/4/15	299 (7586)	55 (6931)	354
5/4/13 – 14/4/14	80 (7287)	361 (6876)	441
27/3/12 – 5/4/13	59	763	822
28/4/11 – 27/3/12	4	34	38
23/4/10 – 28/4/11	9	218	227

Curf

Year	Pump No 1 (current hours counter reading)	Pump No 2 (current hours counter reading)	Total Hours Run
18/4/18 – 17/4/19	88 (6958)	19 (6673)	107
24/4/17 - 18/4/18	247 (6870)	122 (6654)	369
14/4/16 - 24/4/17	67 (6623)	115 (6532)	182
21/4/15 -14/4/16	201 (6556)	83 (6417)	284
5/4/14 – 21/4/15	240 (6355)	199 (6334)	439
5/4/13 – 14/4/14	129 (6115)	281 (6135)	410
14/3/12 – 5/4/13	378	339	717
28/4/11 – 14/3/12	2	4	6
23/4/10 – 28/4/11	193	2	195

Finchams Farm

Year	current hours counter reading since installation of replacement controls in 1986	Total Hours Run
18/4/18 – 17/4/19	10648	162
20/4/17 - 18/4/17	10486	376
14/4/16 - 20/4/17	10110	208
21/4/15 -14/4/16	9902	314
5/4/14 – 21/4/15	9588	322
14/3/13 – 5/4/14	9266	284
17/2/12 – 24/4/13	-	567
28/4/11 – 17/2/12	-	10
23/4/10 – 28/4/11	-	273

Stonea Fen

Year	Pump No 1 (current hours counter reading)	Pump No 2 (current hours counter reading)	Total Hours Run
18/4/18 – 17/4/19	153 (4546)	37 (9112)	190
20/4/17 - 18/4/18	433 (4393)	194 (9075)	627
14/4/16 - 20/4/17	52 (3960)	278 (8881)	
21/4/15 -14/4/16	426 (3908)	130 (8603)	556
14/4/14 – 21/4/15	488 (3482)	152 (8473)	640
24/4/13 – 14/4/14	523 (2994)	191 (8321)	714
20/2/12 – 24/4/13	632	645	1277
28/4/11 – 20/2/12	24	38	62
26/4/10 – 28/4/11	288	83	371

Wimblington Common

Year		Total Hours Run
18/4/18 – 17/4/19	13269	100
20/4/2017 - 18/4/17	13169	279
14/4/16 - 20/4/17	12890	173
21/4/15 -14/4/16	12717	751
14/4/14 – 21/4/15	11966	693
24/4/13 – 14/4/14	11273	299
8/2/12 – 24/4/13	-	550
21/4/11 – 8/2/12	-	26
26/4/10 – 21/4/11	-	200

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 26 new applications have been received and dealt with since the last meeting:

MLC Ref.	Council Ref.	Applicant	Type of Development	Location
472	F/YR18/0263/O	Mrs C M Larham	Residential (7 plots)	High Street, Manea
473	F/YR18/0295/O	Mr J Allen	Residential (3 plots)	Newgate Street Doddington
474	F/YR18/0314/F	Mr F Simpson	Residence	Fallow Corner Drove, Manea
475	F/2004/17/CW & F/YR17/2004/CCC	Plasgran Ltd	Waste/ General Industrial	Manea Road, Wimblington*
476	F/YR18/0322/F	Mr & Mrs Lepla	Residence	School Lane, Manea
477	F/YR18/0346/F	Mr & Mrs Evans	Residence	Turf Fen Lane, Doddington
478	F/YR18/0482/F	Mr F Hu	Residence (Shed)	Church Lane, Doddington
479	F/YR18/0698/F	Mr K Ayres	Residence (Hobby room)	Westfield Road, Manea
480	F/YR18/0775/PNCO4	Mr J McGarvie	Residential (3 plots)	Nixhill Road, Wimblington
481	F/YR18/3107/COND	Mr B Savage & Miss C Green	Residence	Westfield Road, Manea

482	F/YR18/0827/F	Mr B Warner	Residence (Garage and car port)	Kingsland Close, Doddington
483	F/YR18/0899/F	Mr F Simpson	Residential (3 plots)	Fallow Corner Drove, Manea
484	F/YR18/0975/F	Mr M Belger	Residence (Extensions)	Manor Estate, Doddington
485	F/YR18/0973/F	Mr C Rouse	Residence	Newgate Street, Doddington
486	F/YR18/0967/F	Mr & Mrs P Lawrence	Residence	Westfield Road, Manea
487	F/YR18/1026/O	Mrs C M Larham	Residential (4 plots)	High Street, Manea
488	F/YR18/1082/F	Mr & Mrs Newton	Residence (Extension)	New Street, Doddington
489	F/YR18/1080/F	Mrs P Lepla	Residential (2 plots)	School Lane, Manea
490	F/YR18/1074/F	IFEX Structural	Residence	Westfield Road, Manea
491	F/YR18/1075/F	Mr M Welsh	Residence (Extension)	Primrose Hill, Doddington
492	F/YR18/1098/F	Mr S Redhead	Residential/Kennels	Manea Road, Wimblington
493	F/YR18/1085/F	Mr P Lepla	Residential (2 plots)	School Lane Manea
494	F/YR18/1128/F	Mr & Mrs Kingham	Residential (2 plots)	Cooks Green, Doddington
495	F/YR18/1121/O	Ms H Fleming	Residential (2 plots)	High Street, Manea
496	F/YR19/0115/F	Mr & Mrs P Lawrence	Residence	Westfield Road, Manea
497	F/2004/CW/C1	Plasgran Ltd	Waste/ General Industrial	Manea Road, Wimblington*

Planning Applications ending 'CW' relate to County Waste

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

Planning applications ending 'COND' or 'DISC' relate to the discharge of relevant planning conditions

From the information provided it is understood that all the developments propose to discharge surface water to soakaways, infiltration devices and/or Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The applicants have been notified of the Board's requirements.

Mr M Welsh chose to use the Infiltration Device self-certifying process for a residential extension at Primrose Hill, Doddington (*MLC Ref No 491*) 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 Boards' interests.

- *Developments at Delfland Nurseries, Benwick Road, Doddington – Delfland Nurseries Ltd (MLC Ref No 101, 186 & 423)*
- *Residential development, off-site road improvements and associated works involving demolition of existing agricultural building on land east of Bevills Close and north of*

Eastmoor Lane, Doddington – Client of Woods Hardwick (MLC Ref Nos 177 & 182), Ashley King Developments (MLC Ref No 294) & Stafford Infrastructure Engineering (SIE) [Client of Lee Bevans] (MLC Ref No 314) & Whetstone Developments Ltd (MLC Ref No 360 & 426)

- *Residential development on land south of 21 and 27 School Lane, Manea - Leigh Property Investments Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 195 & 300) & – SSL (Fund) General Partnership (MLC Ref No 318), Leigh Property Investments Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 361 & 368) & BGS Developments Ltd (MLC Ref No 440)*
- *Developments at Skylark Garden Centre and Country Store, Manea Road, Wimblington - Skylark Garden Centre (MLC Ref No 234 & 435) (Previously Wimblington Common MLC Ref No 046 & 048 – Mr R Gowler)*
- *Grain storage facility at the former Dalgety Arable Limited site, Manea Road, Wimblington - Executors of F Knowles Will Trust (A Knowles) (MLC Ref No 194) & Mr T Knowles (MLC Ref Nos 245, 254, 264, 379, 400 & 445)*
- *Erection of 38 x 2-storey dwellings comprising; 2 x 4-bed, 16 x 3-bed and 20 x 2-bed, with garden sheds and erection of 2.1 metre high fencing at land south west of Williams Way, Manea - Crestel Partnership Ltd (MLC Ref No 309)*
- *Erection of 29 dwellings involving demolition of existing buildings at Lavender Mill, Fallow Corner Drove, Manea– Mr K Jordan & M Judd (MLC Ref No 413)*
- *Erection of a storage building at land north of Two Hoots, 100 Westfield Road, Manea - Mr R Morris (MLC Ref No 419)*

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.

Developments at the plastic recycling centre on land at former Baker Youngs' nursery site, Manea Road, Wimblington - Plasgran Ltd (MLC Ref No 193, 258, 275, 475 & 497)

Further to previous reports a planning application for the partial demolition of the existing 'maintenance' shed at the front of the site and erection of a detached 'finished goods' building and extension to the existing granulation building to create a 'storage canopy' (both for storage of processed material awaiting collection) was submitted to the County Council in its role as the Waste Planning Authority (WPA).

The drainage strategy prepared by the applicant's engineering consultant, MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd, advises that:

- (a) The run-off created by the increased impermeable area will discharge into the adjacent Board's Drain via the existing attenuation pond and outfall structure.

(b) The design discharge will increase by 1.6 litres per second.

Despite not being consulted in respect of this proposal the drainage strategy also advises that it has been “developed to ensure that surface water drainage from the proposed development is in accordance with Cambridgeshire County Council’s Surface Water Guidance and the Internal Drainage Board requirements.”

3.5 Impermeable areas are based on the current layout and are shown on the Drainage Area Plan provided in Appendix 3 and are as follows:

- Existing buildings allowed for under the original drainage design (F/08/02005) = 5376.3m²
- Existing hardstanding (including access) allowed for under original drainage design (F/08/02005) = 7510.5m²
- Additional buildings proposed (factoring in partial loss of existing building) = 2555.8m²
- Additional hardstanding proposed = 7680.6 m²
- Total impermeable area now on site = 20567.4m²

Extract from MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltds Drawing Number 1867-29 REV. C – Drainage Layout

Whilst a detailed review of the relevant documents has not been undertaken and assuming that the detail is correct the above extract infers that the impermeable area created will be nearly double that currently on site.

Planning Permission was granted by the WPA in June subject to the imposition of planning conditions including those of relevance to the Board.

An approval of details reserved by condition application, including Condition 17 - Surface water drainage scheme and Condition 18 - Surface water drainage maintenance, was submitted to the WPA in June and according to the County Council’s planning webpage the determination period for the application has been extended to the beginning of May.

Despite having several concerns about the submission documents the County Council, in its role as the LLFA, was able to recommend the discharge of condition.

The construction of 2 agricultural irrigation reservoirs, by the extraction and export off-site of approximately 685,000 tonnes of unprocessed sand and gravel at Lyons Farm, Wimblington Fen, Wimblington – Nicholas Farms (MLC Ref Nos 211, 244, 269, 427 & 428)

A response to the letter previously sent to the applicant's agent in September 2016 and subsequently sent to the applicant in May 2017, as requested at the Board's 2017 meeting, minute B.324 Consulting Engineers' Report item (v) has still not been received.



During a recent inspection the above structures were noted within the channel and the adjacent maintenance access strip. It is also understood that part of the reservoir embankment also encroaches within the Board's maintenance access strip. According to the Board's records consent has not been sought for these encroachments and thus they contravene the Board's Byelaws and as such are a criminal act.

The structures concerned are of poor design and, in their current arrangement, are likely to be damaged during routine maintenance procedures and would require re-positioning if the channel slopes are to be re-profiled in the future.

The Clerk to the Board has been advised of the position and it is initially suggested that:

- (i) The occupier is given six months to remove the offending structures re-instating the channel profile to its former condition
- (ii) Appropriate applications be made to the Board for any replacement structures and/or encroachment within, over, under the Board's Drain or associated 9.0m wide maintenance access strip.

Failing this, appropriate enforcement action should be taken against the applicant.

Therefore, in order to resolve this matter and guide further discussions it would be beneficial to receive the Board's opinion and further instruction.

Residential development (Kingsland Close) at 65 Newgate Street, Doddington - Mr J Kingsland (MLC Ref No 284)

Further to the Board's instruction at the last meeting, minute B.366 Consulting Engineers' Report (iv) Residential Development (Kingsland Close) at 65 Newgate Street, Doddington - Mr J Kingsland (MLC Ref No 284), for a note to be entered on the Local Land Charges Register (LLCR) was sent to the District Council following last year's meeting.

No subsequent associated enquiries have been received.

Following a request from the County Council, in its role as the LLFA, assistance was given to a member of its Flood Risk and Biodiversity team concerning a report of flooding on the site. As the site is outside of the Board's rateable area this is primarily for the LLFA to investigate and resolve this problem.

Erection of residential development on land west of Teachers Close, Manea – Mr P Jolley (MLC Ref No 285), Portman Developments (MLC Ref No 308), Matthew Homes (MLC Ref No 404, 418 & 441) & Client of Woods Hardwick (MLC Ref No 433)

It is understood that development has commenced on site.

Erection of 32 dwellings at land north of 28-30 High Street, Manea – Primepower Properties Ltd (MLC Ref No 374)

No further correspondence has been received from the applicant or the applicant's agents and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests. However, it is understood that this site is currently up for sale.

Development in the vicinity of The Oaks and Cathedral View, Turf Fen Lane, Doddington – Various applicants including Brand Associates (MLC Ref No 392), Mr & Mrs G Glowacki (MLC Ref No 398), Mr M Wilson (MLC Ref No 436), Mr R Glowacki (MLC Ref No 442) & Mr & Mrs Evans (MLC Ref No 477)

Further to the Board's instruction at the last meeting, minute B.366 Consulting Engineers' Report (v) Development in the vicinity of The Oaks and Cathedral View, Turf Fen Lane, Doddington – various applicants including Brand Associates (MLC Ref No 392), Mr and Mrs G Glowacki (MLC Ref No 398), Mr M Wilson (MLC Ref No 436) and Mr R Glowacki (MLC Ref No 442), for a note to be entered on the Local Land Charges Register (LLCR), this was sent to the District Council following last year's meeting.

No subsequent associated enquiries have been received.

In view of this decision it is presumed that the Board will require such notes to be entered on subsequent sites until the matter is resolved to its satisfaction.

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 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 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).



Flood Risk Management Trainees

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.

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

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

A meeting was held in early April and with the exception of the flooding experienced at Kingsland Close, Doddington, as discussed above, there are currently no known new issues within the Board's catchment.

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.

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.

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)

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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

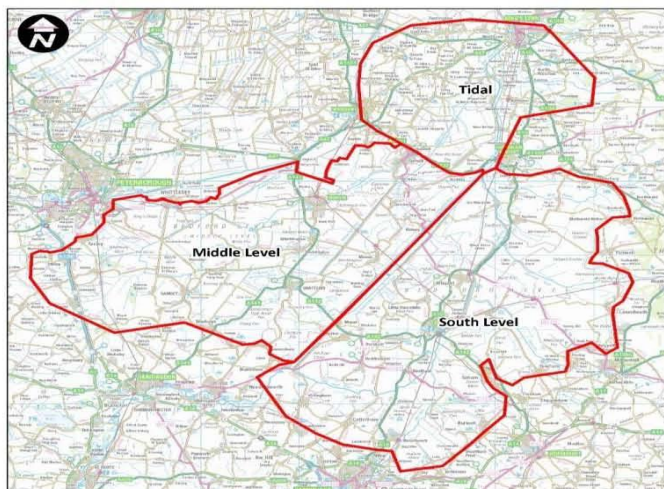
It is understood that there is a significant variation in the types of schemes which may be eligible for FCERM GiA funding. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that the attention given to investigating a strategic approach should be proportional to the size of the scheme. Therefore, for smaller schemes (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.

Flood risk management for the Fens Project

Phase 1
Data gathering
and collective
ownership

Phase 2
High level
action plan /
strategy

Phase 3
onwards
Phased action
plans



Ely Group of Internal Drainage Boards



middle level
commissioners



Norfolk County Council



General Advice

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

- (a) The replacement of the bridge deck at Boots Bridge on the Sixteen Foot River has necessitated the diversion of an electric cable from the bridge such that it now runs underground through land owned by the Board, from its Wimblington Combined Pumping Station to a pole adjacent to Boots Bridge. This work required a wayleave to be agreed with the Board. The deck replacement works at Boots Bridge are due for completion during the next few months.

Works at the bridge also required the removal of a gate and fencing at the south west corner and will require new barriers and gates to be installed to meet the needs of the Board, adjacent landowners and MLC.

Consulting Engineer

30 April 2019

Curf & Wimblington Combined (308)\Reports\April 2019

Mrs Langley expressed concern that Mr Ashman had completed the drain maintenance far too late last year. Mr Lakey advised that Mr Ashman was aware of this and had now reduced his workload and had assured him that works would be completed in a timely manner.

Members discussed grassed margins, different crops having different timings and obstacles to overcome and agreed they could help if there was more communication with them.

It was agreed that the Chairman would liaise with both the Consulting Engineer and Mr Ashman to improve the efficiency and increase conservation benefits.

Miss Ablett referred to the Consulting Engineer's recommendation that, in view of the condition of pump no. 2 at Bensons pumping station, the Board considered replacing it with an identical unit as used for pump no.1 and that the cost of this was likely to be in the region of £40,000.

Mrs Langley enquired of the position regarding Finchams pump as £50,000 had been allowed in the capital improvement programme for pumping and control equipment replacement. She considered that if the Board were going to replace one pump in a couple of years' they needed to decide which one was a priority.

Miss Ablett advised that the fact that the Consulting Engineer had highlighted Bensons No. 2 pump as potentially requiring attention, he must feel that this was the pump with which he had most concern.

Mr Lakey advised that as Finchams pump is of a smaller size and there were no issues with access or overhead cables this would not cost as much as the Bensons No.1 pump.

Mr Angood stated that before any decision could be made the Board should obtain a quotation.

Mr Lakey reminded the Board of the 5 year condition report, due in February 2020, and that the Consulting Engineers could be asked whether Finchams needed replacing and the Board request a quotation for both Bensons no. 2 pump and Finchams.

Members agreed that quotations should be obtained for both pumps.

Miss Ablett referred Members to a number of applications for which no further information had been received since the Board's last correspondence with the applicants and advised that at present these have not been chased as the Engineer has not been instructed by the Board to do so.

It was agreed that the Planning Engineer should follow up these applications on behalf of the Board.

Miss Ablett referred to the development at the plastics recycling centre at Manea Road, Wimblington (MLC Ref. Nos. 193, 258, 275, 475 & 497) and enquired whether the Board wished for the Consulting Engineers to write to Cambridgeshire County Council on their behalf.

It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Cambridgeshire County Council, as LLFA, regarding their discharging of conditions despite concerns and also to the applicant regarding the need to apply for discharge consent.

With regards to the construction of irrigation reservoirs at Lyons Farm, Wimblington (MLC Ref No. 211, 244, 269, 427 & 428), Miss Ablett advised that as consent had not been sought for the structure, the Boards Byelaws had been contravened and enquired what action the Board wished to take.

Mr Nicholas advised the Board that no correspondence had been received by either him or his agent and that the structures had been installed correctly by FJS. Mr Lakey confirmed that it was not a matter of whether the structures had been installed correctly but of a contravention of the Boards' Byelaws. Miss Ablett also advised that this was also a matter of governance as Board Members must be treated in the same way as any other member of the public. Mr Nicholas requested that both the Consulting Engineer and Planning Engineer meet with him and his agents on site to discuss the matter further.

RESOLVED

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

- (ii) Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

That the recommended works be undertaken.

- (iii) That the Middle Level Commissioners be requested to obtain quotations for replacing both the No. 2 pump at Bensons Pumping Station and the pump at Finchams Farm Pumping Station.

- (iv) That, on behalf of the Board, the Planning Engineer be requested to follow up those applications where no responses had been received.

- (iv) Development at Manea Road, Wimblington (MLC Ref. Nos. 193,258,275,475 & 497)

That a letter be sent to Cambridgeshire County Council, as LLFA, regarding their discharging of conditions despite concerns and also to the applicant regarding the need to apply discharge consent application.

- (v) Development in the vicinity of The Oaks and Cathedral View, Turf Fen Lane, Doddington (MLC Ref. Nos. 392,398,436 & 442)

That notes continue to be entered on the Local Land Charges Register on subsequent sites in the vicinity of the development of The Oaks and Cathedral View.

- (vi) Construction of Irrigation Reservoirs at Lyons Farm, Wimblington (MLC Ref Nos. 211, 244, 269, 427 & 428)

That the Consulting Engineer and the Planning Engineer meet with Mr Nicholas and his agents on site to discuss the application further.

(NB) – The Vice Chairman declared an interest in planning applications (MLC Ref Nos 046, 048, 234 and 435) for Skylark Garden Centre.

(NB) – Mr D Nicholas declared an interest in planning applications (MLC Ref Nos 211, 244, 269, 427 and 428) for Nicholas Farms.

B.409 Capital Improvement Programme

The Board considered their future capital improvement programme.

RESOLVED

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

B.410 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Miss Ablett referred to the Conservation Officer's Newsletter, dated December 2018, previously circulated to Members.

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.411 Pumping Station duties

a) The Board gave consideration to the payment in respect of pumping station duties for 2019/2020.

Miss Ablett referred to the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award indicator which was 3.00%.

b) The Board gave consideration to the fuel allowances payable to Messrs Horne and Carson.

RESOLVED

i) That the Board agree that the sum of £5,311.00 be allowed for the provision of pumping station duties for 2019/2020.

ii) That no fuel allowances be allowed going forward.

B.412 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.

Update on the EA grant-in-aid position

Miss Ablett reported 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.

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

B.413 Environment Agency – Precepts

Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2019/2020 in the sum of £9,873 71 (the precept for 2018/2019 being £9,404).

B.414 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

(a) Miss Ablett reported that the sum of £4,825.72 (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency (£5,126.51 representing 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2018/2019 less £300.79 overpaid in respect of the financial year 2017/2018).

(b) Further to minute B.373(b), Miss Ablett referred to the discussions with the Environment Agency over the monies available to fund highland water claims.

RESOLVED

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

B.415 Letting of Herbage

Consideration was given to the letting of herbage in the District in 2020.

RESOLVED

That herbage be let as follows viz:-

i) Narrow Drove, Green Drove (from Narrow Drove to the South Bank) and South Bank (from the Commissioners' Pumping Station to Block Fen Drove) to Mr Robin Gowler for £10 per annum.

ii) North Bank (from Boots Bridge to the Commissioners' Pumping Station) to M F Martin Limited for £5 per annum.

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

B.416 Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Subscriptions

Miss Ablett reported that it was proposed by ADA to increase subscriptions by approximately 2% in 2019, viz:- from £616 to £629.

RESOLVED

That the increased subscription be paid for 2019.

b) Future ADA Communications

Miss Ablett referred to a letter received from ADA dated 18th October 2018 and to the form included with the agenda.

In order to continue to receive communications from ADA in 2019, ADA required a completed form from each Member. The form could also be completed and returned electronically via the link at www.ada.org.uk/communications.

B.417 The Forgotten Corner of Fenland

Miss Ablett referred to the document put together by Graham Chappell of FRSC (Charlottes Way) charity.

In Councillor Davis' absence, Miss Ablett reported that the document gave a detailed history and explanation of the proposal to submit a joint, multi-council, multi-agency bid for Cambridgeshire County Council Local Highways Improvement Funding for the installation of a suitable stretch of safety barrier at the Honey Farm bend on the Sixteen Foot Bank. The cost of such a barrier was upwards of £50,000.

Miss Ablett reported that Councillor Davis had asked whether the Board would consider making a contribution of £1,000 to the fund to match that already committed by the Middle Level Commissioners.

RESOLVED

That, with regret, no contribution be made.

B.418 Contravention of Byelaws – Infilling of Ditch – Byall Fen Drove

Miss Ablett reported that a complaint had been received regarding the infilling of a ditch at Byall Fen Drove. The landowner had erected a fence inside his boundary, leaving a strip of land and the ditch, which he believed he had riparian ownership of and a farmer had then filled the ditch in and taken land up to his fence.

The Consulting Engineer had inspected the site and confirmed that the ditch had been filled with sugar beet cuttings but that no additional land had been taken. He also advised that as no

consent application had been received with regards to the filling of the ditch this was in contravention of the Board's Byelaws.

Miss Ablett confirmed that the farmer was a Board member and must be dealt with in the same manner as any other land owner/occupier and therefore a consent application was required. Members agreed that this was a matter of governance and a consent application must be made.

RESOLVED

That the necessary consent application form be sent to the farmer concerned for completion.

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

B.419 Determination of annual value for rating purposes

The Board considered the recommendation for the determination of annual value for rating purposes.

RESOLVED

- i) That the determination recommended be adopted by the Board.
- ii) That the Clerk be empowered to serve notices and to take such other action as may be necessary to comply with statutory requirements.
- iii) That the Chairman and the Clerk be empowered to authorise appropriate action on behalf of the Board in connection with any appeal against the determination.

B.420 Rate arrears

Consideration was given to writing off rate arrears amounting to £28.35.

RESOLVED

That the arrears be written off.

B.421 Health & Safety

Further to minute B.378, the Chairman advised that, following last year's Board meetings and the request for Boards to appoint a Health and Safety Officer, the response reported back to the Chair's meeting was that not all Members of the Boards felt they had the necessary degree of expertise in this area and they would like more support.

He reported that three health and safety consultants had been approached and were asked to tender and it had been agreed at the Chairs meeting to enter into a 3 year contract with Cope Safety Management with the annual payment being split between the Boards and assuming all Boards joined the arrangement, the cost to the Board would be £600 per annum.

The Chairman added that, particularly in the first year or so, it was understood that extra support may be needed and Cope would provide this at a day rate of £500 or at an hourly rate of £85 for part days.

He stated that he did not want to be wholly responsible for ensuring that the Board was fully compliant with health and safety legislation and proposed that the Board use the services provided by Cope Safety Management.

Miss Ablett confirmed that ultimately the Board were still responsible for health and safety matters but that the appointment of a professionally qualified contractor would greatly reduce the risks.

All Members agreed that, due to the importance of health and safety, this was the best option for the Board.

RESOLVED

That Cope Safety Management be appointed for a period of three years at a cost of £600 per annum, together with additional charges for any extra assistance requested.

B.422 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2017/2018

- a) The Board considered and approved the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2018.
- b) The Board considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2018.

B.423 Defra IDB1 Returns

Miss Ablett referred to the completed IDB1 form for 2017/2018.

The Chairman enquired how Boards were going to record which Members may have had training and attended any relevant courses.

Miss Ablett advised that this would be a matter for the Clerk as he arranged any training sessions and advised Boards of any courses available externally, i.e. by ADA, and she would obtain this information from the Clerk in order to be able to complete the IDB1 Return on the Board's behalf.

The Chairman confirmed that having attended the Good Governance training session and following all the health and safety meetings he had attended, he considered he had received adequate training in this area also. He stressed the importance of Members being seen to have attended training courses so as to demonstrate to Defra that Members had adequate knowledge relating to Internal Drainage Boards.

B.424 Budgeting

Miss Ablett referred to the budget comparison of the forecast out-turn and the actual out-turn for the financial year ending 31st March 2019.

B.425 Review of Internal Controls

Members considered and expressed satisfaction with the current system of Internal Controls.

B.426 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.

The Board agreed that the pumping station valuations should be recalculated by the Consulting Engineers for review at next year's meeting, at which time they would consider whether the insurance values should be index linked.

Mrs Langley enquired whether a report on the pumps could be prepared by the Consulting Engineer and included in next year's meeting papers for the Members information. She requested that this should include the age of the pumps, their condition, when they were last refurbished, together with photographs of each pump.

Members considered this would be useful when reviewing matters regarding the pumps.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Consulting Engineers be requested to recalculate the pumping station valuations.
- ii) That the Consulting Engineer be requested to prepare a report on the pumps to include the age of the pumps, their condition, when they were last refurbished, together with photographs of each pump.

B.427 Exercise of Public Rights

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

B.428 Annual Governance Statement – 2018/2019

The Board considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended on the 31st March 2019.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2019.

B.429 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £150,232.50 which had been made during the financial year 2018/2019.

(NB) – The Vice Chairman declared an interest in the payments made to R & J A Gowler.

(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest (as a Member of the Middle Level Board) in the payments made to the Middle Level Commissioners.

B.430 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2018/2019

The Board considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2019 as required in the Audit Regulations.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Return, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2019.

B.431 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2019/2020

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2018/2019 and were informed by Miss Ablett that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by contributions would be 90.37% and by special levy on local billing authorities and by contribution would be 9.63%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved,.
- ii) That a total sum of £86,270 be raised by drainage rates and special levy and by way of contribution from the Middle Level Commissioners under the Wimblington 2nd District Drainage Order 1922.
- 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 and contribution from the Middle Level Commissioners are £74,444, £7,699 and £4,127 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 21.00p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v) That a Special levy of £7,699 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vi) That a contribution of £4,127 be made by the Middle Level Commissioners in respect of Byall Fen in accordance with Wimblington 2nd District Drainage Order 1922.
- vii) That the seal of the Board be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levy referred to in resolution (v).

viii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levy by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.432 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.433 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Tuesday the 12th May 2020.

B.434 Letter to Ratepayers

The Chairman enquired whether Members considered it would be a good idea to advise ratepayers that the rate had been maintained at the same rate for a couple of years but this may need to be increased at some point in the future.

RESOLVED

That a letter be sent to ratepayers with the rate notices advising that the rate set by the Board had been maintained at the same rate for a couple of years, but this may need to be increased at some point in the future.