

MARCH EAST INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the March East Internal Drainage Board
held at the Middle Level Offices, March on Thursday the 6th June 2019

PRESENT

C E Martin Esq (Chairman)	R D Gladwin Esq
C W Albutt Esq (Vice Chairman)	J E Heading Esq
J F Clark Esq	D J Henson Esq
M Cornwell Esq	C Marks Esq
A Dunham Esq	R E Mason Esq
G C Dunham Esq	D S Morris Esq
A J N Gee Esq	F H Yeulett Esq

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

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from A W Coulson Esq, P G Hayes, and Councillor M Purser.

B.1260 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.1261 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 7th June 2018 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1262 Land Drainage Act 1991 Board Membership – Fenland District Council

Miss Ablett reported that Fenland District Council had re-appointed Councillors J F Clark and M Cornwell and appointed Councillors C Marks, D Divine, M Purser and F Yeulett to be Members of the Board under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

Miss Ablett also reported that Councillors Mrs M Davis, S Court and A Pugh were not re-appointed.

The Chairman welcomed Councillors Marks and Yeulett to their first meeting of the Board.

B.1263 Election of Board Members

Miss Ablett reported that the term of office of the Members of the Board will expire on the 31st October 2019 and he submitted the proposed register of electors which is applicable to the 2019 election and this was approved.

RESOLVED

That the Register be approved.

B.1264 Amalgamation

Further to minute B.1225, Miss Ablett reported that, as had been resolved at the last Board meeting, the Board approved to amalgamate with Euximoor IDB; for differential rating to be considered over a period of 3 years and for the process to be commenced immediately.

Mr Heading advised he had previously proposed that a differential rating system be used for a period of three years, as a suitable compromise, to obtain agreement of all Board members to the amalgamation and added the process should be progressed as soon as possible.

The Chairman confirmed that he was in agreement with both the amalgamation of the two Boards and for differential rating to be used.

The Vice Chairman confirmed that the matter had been discussed at the Euximoor IDB meeting, the previous evening, and also that Members had expressed their disappointment that nothing had happened over the previous 12 months. He suggested the Board instruct the Clerk to initiate the process immediately and with some urgency.

Miss Ablett advised that the Clerk would be required to arrange a meeting with the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of both Boards to discuss various points i.e. the name of the new Board, the number of members etc.

Mr Mason enquired whether there were any accounts figures available from Euximoor IDB to ensure the new Board would not have to fund any large capital expenditure.

The Vice Chairman reported that Euximoor IDB was an uncomplicated, well run Board, which was kept in good order and only had two pumping stations.

Miss Ablett confirmed that Euximoor IDB had sufficient funds to meet any capital expenditure envisaged over the next couple of years and Mr Morris advised that differential rating would be used to overcome any problems or concerns arising in the early years.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Clerk commences the amalgamation immediately and as a matter of urgency.
- ii) That the Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to take such action as may be necessary.

B.1265 Drain Maintenance – Point 177 – Grounds Avenue

Further to minute B.1226(vi), Miss Ablett reported that a letter had been sent to both landowners requesting that improvement works be undertaken to the private watercourse. One landowner had responded advising that, as Fenland District Council had carried out improvements to the watercourse, he had assumed they were responsible for maintaining the channel.

Both landowners had subsequently been advised that the Board would be willing to carry out the works, but this would be at the landowners' expense and a contribution of £750 had been requested from each. However, only one of the landowners had confirmed that he would be willing to make a contribution.

Miss Ablett reported that the Consulting Engineer had emailed both the Chairman and the Vice Chairman advising that the flooding of the watercourse had previously occurred because (due to the condition of the watercourse) the Anglian Water sewer serving the area could not discharge efficiently. He further advised that the Board should consider whether, as a profit making organisation and as the main beneficiary, Anglian Water should also contribute to the maintenance works.

Members discussed the matter and authorised the Chairman to inspect the site with Mr Lakey, the Middle Level Commissioners' Assistant Operations Engineer, and be authorised to take such action as was necessary.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to inspect the site with Mr Lakey and to take such action as was necessary.

[Post meeting note – Immediately following the meeting the Chairman and Vice Chairman, together with Mr Lakey, visited the site and discussed the options available.]

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to Anglian Water to enquire whether they would pay for the entire channel maintenance.

B.1266 Updating IDB Byelaws

Further to minute B.1238(e), the Board considered their updated Byelaws.

RESOLVED

That the updated Byelaws be adopted.

B.1267 Policy Statement

Further to minute B.1238(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.1268 Requirements for a Biosecurity Policy

Further to minute B.1243, the Board considered their Biosecurity Policy.

RESOLVED

That the Biosecurity Policy be adopted.

B.1269 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.

Miss Ablett referred to the briefing paper and advised that this was just one option being put forward for discussion as 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 in quorate, there were not many of the younger generation coming forward and the numbers of farms was reducing. She confirmed that sub-committees could be formed to discuss any necessary drainworks so that local knowledge was retained and differential rating could be used to allow for any significant differences in drainage rates.

The Chairman advised that a very general discussion had taken place at the Chairs meeting and considered that, although there would only be one Board, the various sub-committees would effectively be doing what the Board did at the moment and although the aim was to reduce administration and save money, he could not envisage there being huge savings at the end of the day.

Councillor Cornwell enquired whether there had been any consultation with the District Council as they were a considerable ratepayer. Miss Ablett reiterated that at this stage the briefing paper was purely for discussion purposes and if there was sufficient interest shown by the various Boards the Clerk would investigate the matter in greater detail.

Mr Heading confirmed that he was fully in favour of amalgamating all the administered Boards within the Middle Level as there would be huge advantages and he considered the driving force should be to keep the drainage rate as low as possible for the ratepayers.

Councillor Cornwell stressed that he considered the way forward should be to encourage smaller boards to amalgamate and once this proved satisfactory to all members of the Boards, they may then consider amalgamating into one Board at a later date. He considered amalgamating all Boards at this time would be a long and complex process.

The Chairman advised that, in view of the Board's proposed amalgamation, he had raised this point at the Chairs meeting.

Mr Heading recommended that the Board ask the Clerk to prepare a proper briefing paper in order that an informed decision could be made and although the Chairman was in agreement he was concerned that the Clerk was not at the stage to be able to do so.

Councillor Yeulett advised that as a newly appointed Member he would like to inspect the District and the pumping station and gain more knowledge of the March East IDB. The Chairman confirmed that this could be arranged and Mr Lakey enquired whether, in view of the proposed amalgamation, the Board wished to inspect both Districts.

The Chairman considered an Inspection should be arranged sooner rather than later, in September or October, and asked that Mr Lakey liaise with the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of both Boards to obtain a suitable date and to invite the Members of both Boards. He also considered that the Clerk should be asked to attend so that further questions regarding the potential future arrangements of all Boards could be discussed.

Mr Heading reported that the Environment Agency were proposing to carry out, in the near future, a review on future investment planning for the Lower River Great Ouse catchment, which was expected to cost in the region of a seven figure sum, and it was also their intention that the Middle Level Commissioners and all IDBs would contribute to the cost of the review. Although nothing had been agreed at this stage, the Board should be made aware that this was their intention.

RESOLVED

a) That Mr Lakey liaise with the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of both Boards to arrange an Inspection in September/October this year and to invite the Members of both March East and Euximoor IDBs.

b) That the Clerk be requested to attend the Inspection so that further questions regarding the briefing paper could be discussed.

ii) Applications for byelaw consent

That the following applications for consent to undertake works in and around watercourses had been approved and granted since the last general meeting of the Board:-

<u>Name of Applicant</u>	<u>Description of Works</u>	<u>Date consent granted</u>
Mr M Pocklington	Filling the head of the open dyke for a distance of 8.0m – Mill Hill Lane, March	8 th June 2018

Matthew Homes	Install a 12m long, 600mm dia circular pre-cast concrete pipe in an existing length of private watercourse with 2 no concrete bagged outfalls – south west of 40 March Road, Wimblington	25 th June 2018
Mr P Purse	Piping and filling of approx. 30 metres of private watercourse – Meadowcroft, Silt Road, March	15 th August 2018
Matthew Homes	Install a 12m long, 600mm dia circular pre-cast concrete pipe in an existing length of private watercourse with 2 no reinforced concrete outfalls – south west of 40 March Road, Wimblington	6 th September 2018

RESOLVED

That the action taken in granting consents be approved.

iii) 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. As no member of this Board attended any of the local workshops in the area the Board will not 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.

iv) 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.

v) 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.

vi) 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.

vii) Anglia Farmers

Further to minute B.1255, 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.

viii) 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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

B.1270 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

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

March East I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – May 2019

Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

The maintenance works carried out last year generally accorded with the phased maintenance programme approved by the Board in 2008.

Due to access and weather related issues the approved machine cleansing works in the Bridge Lane and Priory Golf Centre drains, reach 71-70-78, were postponed last season and will now be included in this year's machine cleansing programme. The revetment work approved by the Board to address the bank subsidence along the Binnimoor Fen Pump Drain, reach 3-5, was also postponed. This was done with the Chairman's prior approval and was due to issues with restricted access for the excavator transport at the Sixteen Foot, Bedlam Bridge, with the highway being closed to traffic for resurfacing.

Provisional notices for the 2017 phased programmed machine cleansing works were issued last year. The extent of this year's works is shown on the following site plan.

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



Reach 55-56
Part of this year's programme that will only require light machine cleansing to retain the good status



Reeds & Emergent weeds, requiring an application of Roundup herbicide

It was noted during the inspection there are several drains in the district where stands of reed and emergent weed are now showing signs of active regrowth. It will be pertinent to apply treatments of Roundup herbicide to these drains when conditions and field access allow.

RATEABLE AREA 2866ha



BINNIMOOR FEN PUMPING STATION

BEDLAM BRIDGE PUMPING STATION

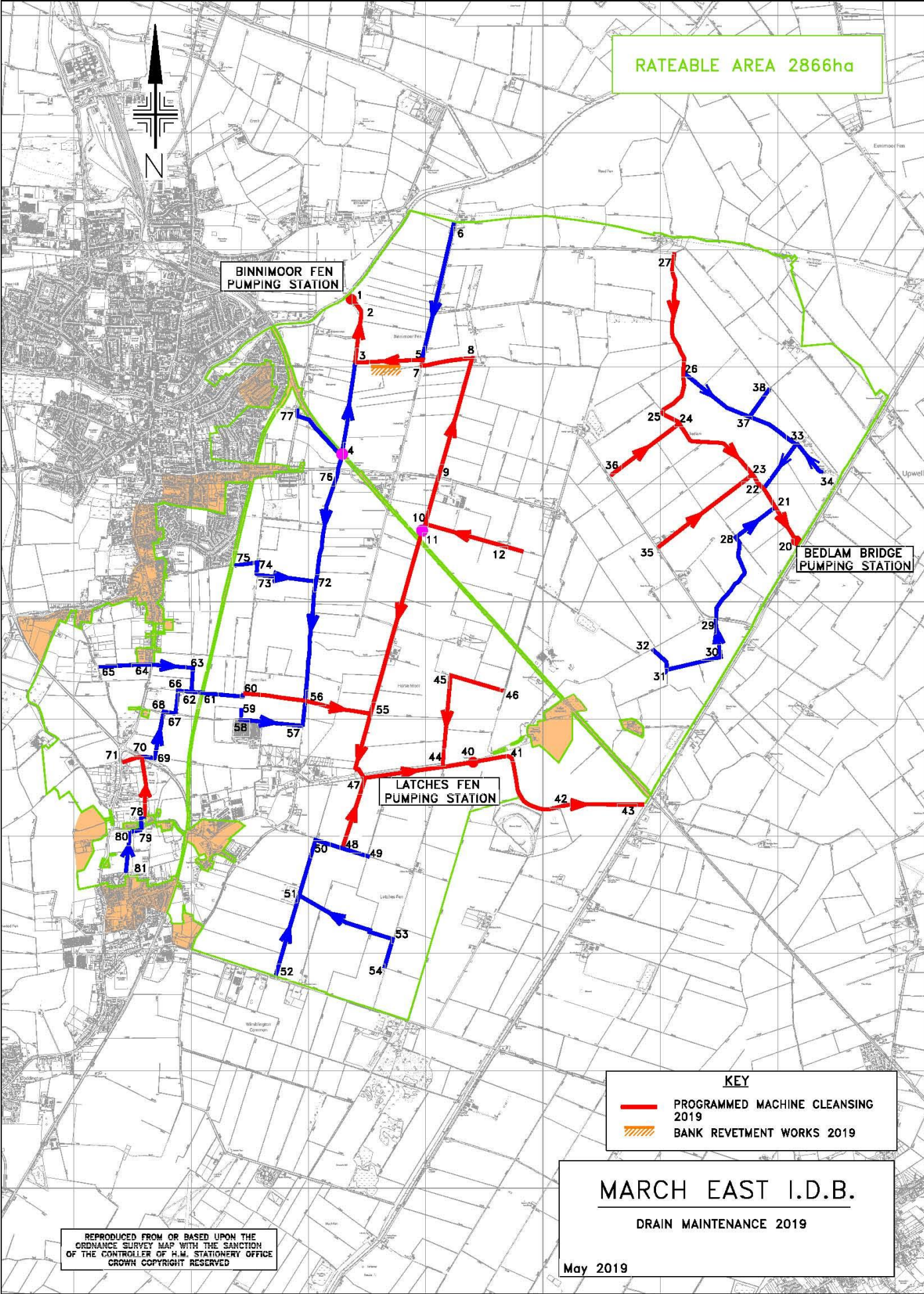
LATCHES FEN PUMPING STATION

KEY

- PROGRAMMED MACHINE CLEANSING 2019
- BANK REVETMENT WORKS 2019

MARCH EAST I.D.B.
DRAIN MAINTENANCE 2019
May 2019

REPRODUCED FROM OR BASED UPON THE
ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE SANCTION
OF THE CONTROLLER OF H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE
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Orders for the application of herbicides by the Middle Level Commissioners are accepted on condition that the application is weather dependant, and they will not be held responsible for the failure or efficacy of any treatment.

Pumping Stations

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

Weedscreen

In accordance with the Board's instructions an order was placed with CW Group for the manufacture and installation of a replacement weedscreen. The fabrication is complete but owing to high drain levels that have been maintained over the past months it is unlikely that damming off for its installation will be possible until later in the year.

Pumping Hours

Bedlam Pumping Station

Hours Run	May 12 – May 13	May 13 – May 14	May 14 – May 15	May 15 – May 16	May 16 – May 17	May 17 – May 18	May 18 – May 19
No 1	(11114) – (11322) = 208	(11322) – (11536) = 214	(11536) – (11731) = 195	(11731) – (12082) = 351	(12082) – (12303) = 221	(12303) – (12501) = 198	12501 12556 =55
No 2	(9052) – (9778) = 726	(9778) – (10136) = 358	(10136) – (10877) = 741	(10877) – (10936) = 59	(10936) – (10949) = 13	(10949) – (11486) = 537	11581 11486 =95
Total	934	572	936	410	234	735	150

Binnimoor Pumping Station

Hours Run	May 12 – May 13	May 13 – May 14	May 14 – May 15	May 15 – May 16	May 16 – May 17	May 17 – May 18	May 18 – May 19
No 1	(99) – (421) = 322	(421) – (646) = 225	(646) – (1020) = 374	(1020) – (1194) = 174	(1194) – (1300) = 106	(1300) – (1532) = 232	1560 1532 =28
Total	322	225	374	174	106	232	=28

Latches Fen Pumping Station

Hours Run	May 12 – May 13	May 13 – May 14	May 14 – May 15	May 15 – May 16	May 16 – May 17	May 17 – May 18	May 18 – May 19
No 1	(18380) – (19915) = 1535	(19915) – (20744) = 829	(20744) – (21621) = 877	(21621) – (22134) = 513	(22134) – (22528) = 394	(22528) – (23375) = 847	23768 23375 =393
No 2	(466) – (524) = 58	(524) – (552) = 28	(552) – (589) = 37	(589) – (640) = 51	(640) – (643) = 3	(643) – (652) = 9	654 652 =2
Total	1593	857	914	564	397	856	=395

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 39 new applications have been received and dealt with since the last meeting:

<i>MLC Ref.</i>	<i>Council Ref.</i>	<i>Applicant</i>	<i>Type of Development</i>	<i>Location</i>
831	Enquiry	Client of Morton & Hall	Residential	Saxon Way, March
832	F/YR18/3043/COND	Matthew Homes	Residential (13 plots)	March Road, Wimblington
833	F/YR18/0344/F	P Purse & J Warby	Residence (Extension)	Silt Road, March
834	F/YR18/0385/O	Mr K & D Clark	Residential (7 plots)	Bridge Lane, Wimblington
835	F/YR18/0434/F	Mr M Payne	Residence (Garage)	Bridge Lane, Wimblington
836	F/YR18/0442/O	Mr P Jolley	Residential (3 plots)	Eastwood End, Wimblington
837	F/YR18/0495/F	M F Martin Ltd	Agricultural (Canteen and extension to existing coldstore)	Upwell Road, March
838	F/YR18/0520/PNH	Mr & Mrs P Crofts	Residence (Extension)	Knights End Road, March
839	F/YR18/0581/F	Mr A Witts & Miss S Snell	Residence (Extension)	Green Street, March
840	F/YR18/0614/F	Mr & Mrs M Blakey	Residence (Extension)	Wimblington Road, March
841	F/YR18/0607/F	Mr R King	Residence (Extension)	Asplin Avenue, March
842	F/YR18/0645/F	James Development Co Ltd	Residential (2 dwellings)	Jobs Lane, March
843	F/YR18/0642/RM	Mr & Mrs R Jones	Residence	March Road, Wimblington
844	F/YR18/0646/O	Mr P Jolley	Residential (3 plots)	Eastwood End, Wimblington
845	F/YR18/0706/F	Mr & Mrs Kowbas	Residence (Extension)	Mallard Way, March
846	F/YR18/0667/F	Mr & Mrs Baker	Residence (Annexe)	Eastwood End, Wimblington
847	F/YR18/0736/F	Mr & Mrs Miller	Residence (Extension)	Cavalry Drive, March
848	F/YR18/0816/F	Mrs Harrington	Residence (Extension)	Eastwood End, Wimblington
849	F/YR18/0806/F	Mr & Mrs J Smith	Residence	Bridge Lane, Wimblington
850	F/YR18/0838/F	Mr J Brooks	Residence (Extension)	Webb Gardens, Wimblington
851	F/YR18/0849/F	Mr & Mrs Roy-Choudhury	Residence (Extension)	March Road, Wimblington
852	F/YR18/0870/F	Mr & Mrs Joyce	Residence (Extension)	Green Street, March
853	F/YR18/0906/F	Mr C Garrett	Residence (Extension)	Mallard Way, March
854	F/YR18/0943/F	Mr M Betts	Residence (Extension)	Upwell Road, March
855	F/YR18/0955/F	Mr T Nellest	Residence (Extension)	Badgeney Road, March
856	F/YR18/0953/F	Mr & Mrs T Bester	Residence	Jobs Lane, March
857	F/YR18/3134/COND	Ms S Fink	Residential	Mill Hill Lane, March
858	F/YR18/0996/F	Mr & Mrs Pocklington	Residential (Shared access Road)	Mill Hill Lane, March
859	F/YR18/1020/O	Mr P Cole	Residence	Upwell Road, March
860	F/YR18/1043/F	Mrs L Bower	Traveller Site including the erection of a 2-storey 3-bed dwelling	Railway Lane/Coleseed Road, March
861	Enquiry	Client of MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd	Offices	Wimblington Road, March

862	F/YR18/1130/F	Mrs T Bower	Traveller Site including the siting of a static caravan (retrospective)	Railway Lane/Coleased Road, March
863	F/YR18/3144/COND	Construct Reason Ltd	Residential (37 plots)	KIng Street, Wimblington
864	F/YR19/0012/F	Matthew Homes Ltd	Temporary access road	March Road, Wimblington
865	F/YR19/0035/F	Mr & Mrs J Jupp	Residence	Upwell Road, March
866	F/YR19/0086/F	Mr & Mrs R Pedley	Residence (Extension)	Wimblington Road, March
867	F/YR19/0130/F	Mr & Mrs Beech	Residence	Bridge Lane, Wimblington
868	F/YR19/0146/O	Mr M Topping	Residential (3 plots)	Mill Hill Lane, March
869	F/YR19/0218/F	Ms S Fink	Residence	Mill Hill Lane, March

Planning applications ending 'COND' relate to the discharge of relevant planning conditions
Planning applications ending 'PNH' relate to household permitted regulations notification
Planning applications ending 'RM', 'REM' or 'RMM' relate to reserved matters

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.

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

- a. *F M Martin Ltd - Erection of a canteen and extension to a cold store at Upwell Road, March (MLC Ref No 837)*
- b. *Mr & Mrs R Jones - Residence at March Road, Wimblington (MLC Ref No 843)*
- c. *Mr & Mrs T Bester - Residence at Jobs Lane , March (MLC Ref No 856)*
- d. *Mr & Mrs R Pedley – Residence (extension) at Wimblington Road, March (MLC Ref No 866)*

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

- *Proposed development to the southeast of Barkers Lane – Cannon Kirk Developments (MLC Ref 385) & Cannon Kirk Homes (MLC Ref No 509), Mr & Mrs Hopkins & Mrs Mitcham (MLC Ref No 585) & Cannon Kirk (UK) Ltd (MLC Ref No 742)*
- *Erection of 22 dwellings involving demolition of 2 no existing dwellings on land south east of 93-113 Grounds Avenue (Cygnet Crescent), March - Fenland District Council (MLC Ref No 552), Client of URS Scott Wilson (MLC Ref No 576) & Lovell Partnership (MLC Ref Nos 579 & 629)*
- *Redevelopment of and extension to poultry farm at Hooks Drove, Wimblington – Client of the Derek Salisbury Practice (MLC Ref No 545) & St Lawrence Hall Farms (MLC Ref Nos 563, 594, 595, 600, 603, 606 & 720)*

- *Erection of three properties on land to the south and west of 4-5 Mill Hill Lane, March – Mrs S Duncan (MLC Ref Nos 574, 592 & 640), Mr & Mrs Topping (MLC Ref No 704) & Mr S Simon (MLC Ref No 704)*
- *Development at land east of 20 Eastwood Industrial Estate, Eastwood End, Wimblington – Law Fertilisers (MLC Ref Nos 588, 608 & 739)*
- *Erection of 10 no single storey affordable dwellings comprising of 5 x 1-bed and 5 x 2-bed and 2.1 metre high fencing with associated parking involving demolition of 27 no garages – Roddons Housing Association (MLC Ref No 618) & Details reserved by conditions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, of planning permission F/YR13/0010/F (Erection of 5 x single-storey 1-bed dwellings with associated parking involving demolition of 30 garages) at land south-east of 13 Smiths Drive, March – Foster Property Maintenance Ltd (MLC Ref No 651)*
- *Erection of 7 dwellings involving demolition of existing stables and outbuildings on land east of 54-62 March Road, Wimblington – Mr & Mrs P Salter (MLC Ref Nos 655, 677 & 810)*
- *Proposed extension to Cavalry Primary School, Cavalry Drive, March - Client of Pick Everard (MLC Ref No 659) & Cambridgeshire County Council (MLC Ref No 673)*
- *Residential development at 2A Bridge Lane, Wimblington - Ms K Grange (MLC Ref Nos 663, 691 & 818)*
- *Anaerobic Digestion Facility on land east of Fengrain, Hook Lane, Wimblington – G P Planning Ltd (MLC Ref No 676) & Fengrain Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 681, 684, 686 & 711)*
- *Erection of a 2-storey extension to existing building and additional parking area including temporary portacabin during works - Fengrain Ltd (MLC Ref No 780)*

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

Erection of 3 x 2-storey 3-bed dwellings with detached single garages, 6 x 2-storey 4-bed dwellings with detached double garages and 1 x 2-storey 4-bed dwelling with attached double garage at land south east of Orchard Lodge, Jobs Lane, March – Mr H Fisher (MLC Ref Nos 558 & 587) & James Development Co Ltd (MLC Ref No 703 & 767 & 842)

Further amendments have been made to the design however the soakaway approval that was given in 2015 remains unaffected.

Residential development involving the demolition of 5 Bridge Lane and existing commercial buildings at land north of 3A-9 Bridge Lane, Wimblington – Messrs K & D Clark (MLC Ref Nos 705 & 723)

Further to the Board's 2017 Meeting Report an outline planning application was submitted to the District Council in April 2018 for seven plots. Originally permission was being sought for ten plots.

The unreferenced Drainage and Flood Risk Assessment dated April 2018 produced by D.A. Sluce & Partners advises that:

“Surface water drainage has been proposed with fully sustainable discharge via agreed Suds principles, taking advantage of the free draining nature of the existing sub-soils and utilising infiltration and soakaway drainage design.”

However, no suitable evidence was provided to support the statement being made.

Planning permission was granted in July 2018 subject to the imposition of conditions including those related to surface water disposal and ecology.

To date, the applicant, its agent, Les Stephan Planning Ltd, and its engineering consultant, D A Sluce & Partners, have not contacted the Board to enquire whether this approach is acceptable or would be approved should the proposal proceed. An application for discharge consent, has not been received.

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

Two storey office building and associated parking including packaged sewage treatment plant at land north of Mill Hill Garage, Wimblington Road, March – Whiting & Partners (MLC Ref No 717, 721 & 726) & Client of MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd (MLC Ref No 861)

The applicant originally applied to the LLFA for consent to pipe and fill a watercourse, however as it is in the rateable area of the Board, we will have to process the application.

The applicant was advised that a new application and fee were required as we cannot accept the application for the LLFA, since giving this advice we have not received any correspondence or an application.

Erection of 80 dwellings (max) at land east of 38 March Road, Wimblington – G Scarborough Ltd (MLC Ref No 665) & Matthew Homes Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 743, 775, 776, 808, 817, 832 & 864)

Further to last year's report, following the receipt of the outstanding information the byelaw application for the formation of the access culvert under the main estate access road was recommended for approval.

Further to the 2017 Meeting Report a discharge of conditions application for the erection of 13, 2-storey dwellings (MLC Ref No 775), which forms part of the larger development site that is the subject of a post-application consultation, has been submitted to the District Council.

Subsequent to this, a planning application was submitted for the same part of the development for a temporary access road which included the formation of a culvert in an open watercourse. An application for byelaw consent has not been received.

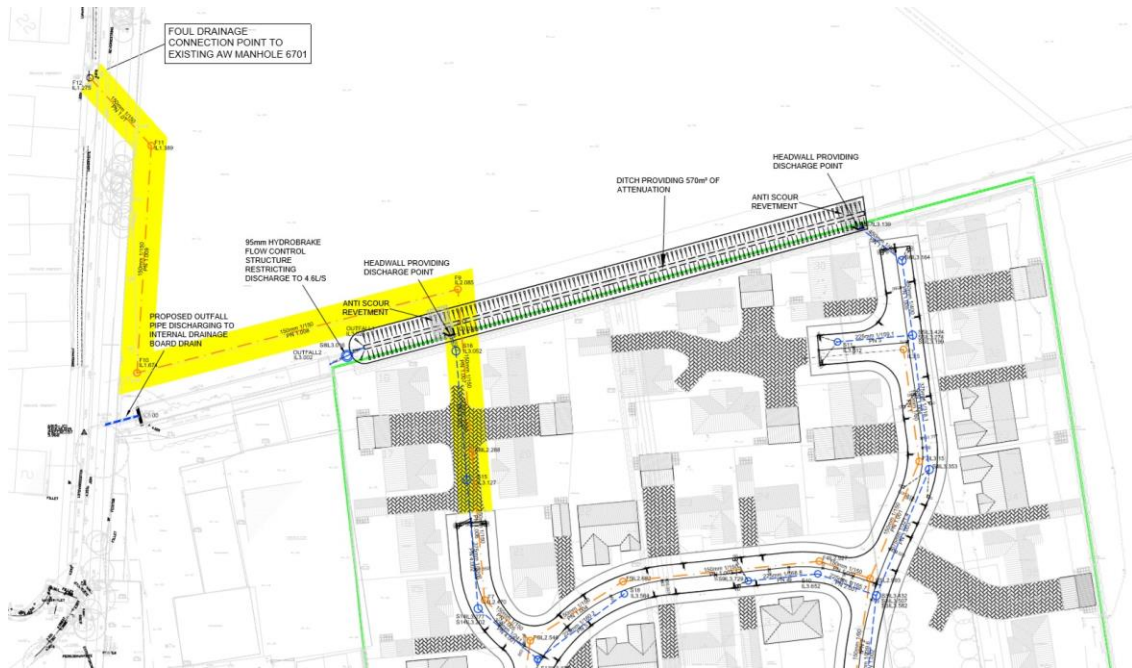
Erection of 4no dwellings comprising of 2 x 2-storey 4-bed with integral double garages; 1 x 2-storey 4-bed with 1-bed annexe and detached double garage and 1 x 2-storey 4-bed with detached garage and workshop involving demolition of outbuildings at land north and south of 35 King Street, Wimblington – Mr J Wilson (MLC Ref Nos 766 & 823)

A review of the supporting information in respect of surface water disposal is currently being undertaken.

Proposed residential development at Kings Street, Wimblington – Construct Reason Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 716 & 797)

Further to the last meeting a discharge of conditions application, which included surface water disposal, has been submitted to and subsequently partially discharged by the District Council.

The County Council, in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), originally objected to the proposal but, upon the receipt of further information recommended the discharge of the relevant condition.



Extract from MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd Drawing No. 1901-09 Rev. –

It is understood that the applicant has advised that Construct Reason Ltd will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the swale to the north of the development. However, no evidence has been provided as to who owns the device concerned and, given the close proximity to the residences and that access to the northern side may not be possible, it is not certain whether this solution is viable and it is suggested that it does not meet the Board's requirements as suitable evidence has not been supplied to confirm that the device can be constructed and arrangements have been established for the whole life funding, management and maintenance of the proposals.

This not the first occasion that it is considered that the LLFA has given poor consideration to these long-term aspects which ultimately the Board may have to resolve.

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

Development Contributions

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

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA)

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

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

Issues considered relevant to our interests include the following:

General

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

Flood Risk and Water Level Management

- a) The area has not been subject to dramatic flooding events in recent years, which can mean the issue is paid little attention.
- b) Flood risk infrastructure should be considered enabling infrastructure, in that it allows a great deal of economic activity to happen in the first place (land being the most fundamental of all the economic factors of production).
- c) In the fens, water has an especially significant effect on the local economy with much of the area classified by the EA as being in flood zone 3 and this presents challenges to local economic development. Finding solutions to this problem is likely to have to happen little by little, with the finer points of detail being worked through with the EA, Anglian Water, and others. Wisbech should be seen as a UK testbed for new flood-resistant approaches to development, and levels of investment in flood defence infrastructure should be substantially increased.

- d) It is estimated that during a serious drought scenario, England could face £1.3billion of lost economic activity every day.
- e) A requirement of 110l per person per day should be enforced in water stressed areas, and that in future councils should have the power to enforce 80l per person per day requirements for new developments where appropriate.

The Environment

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

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

Economic Growth

- a) The Commission reached the conclusion that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area is not one, but three economies, the Greater Cambridge area, which includes Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire, and parts of Huntingdonshire and East Cambridgeshire; the Greater Peterborough area, the area around Peterborough; and the fens but should function significantly more as a single area than it does at present. This ought to be feasible whilst being compatible with each part of the Combined Authority area retaining its distinctive sense of place.
- b) A distinguishing feature of the whole area is how strongly it continues to grow outpacing both the East of England and UK over the last decade. This has been driven primarily, but not entirely, by rapid business creation and growth in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, where knowledge-intensive sectors are strongly clustered, densifying and highly dependent on their location.

- c) Evidence from the review identifies that both employment and turnover growth have been picking up right across the area. Employment growth has seen strong growth numbers in all districts but has been highest in East Cambridgeshire. Looking at growth rates in the global turnover of companies based in the area between 2010/11-2016/17 all six districts have seen turnover growth of over 2% per annum. In South Cambridgeshire this rises to over 10% per annum, which shows impressive company growth.
- d) Many very large firms, such as McCain and Del Monte, have plants in the north-east of the county and export from here around the world. Figures show that primary sectors constitute 24% of East Cambridgeshire's turnover, and 17% of Fenland's with Wholesale and Retail Distribution making up 33% of Fenland's turnover, and 28% of South Cambridgeshire's.
- e) The Netherlands, which has similar prevailing conditions to the fens but produces much higher-value agricultural goods, should be seen as an exemplar.
- f) Laws governing planning permission may impede business growth.
- g) It is very important to support the growth of market towns.
- h) There is a need for companies to invest in their employees.
- i) There is potential for greater commercial office development, particularly in Peterborough.

Housing

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

example. Eddington reuses surface level water, reducing wastage and minimising flood risk.

Infrastructure

- a) Utilities underpin all economic activity, and there are areas of concern, particularly regarding electricity capacity. The government has committed to banning new diesel and petrol vehicles from 2040, but if it is envisioned that these will be replaced by electric vehicles, substantial levels of investment into upgrading the grid will be needed.
- b) The importance that flood defence infrastructure and the equally clear stresses upon water in one of the UK's driest counties are recognised.
- c) The level of the infrastructure of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has been inadequate for too long. The growth seen in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire seems very unlikely to be sustained in the future without further and significant investment in infrastructure.
- d) A package of transport and other infrastructure projects to alleviate the growing pains of Greater Cambridge should be considered the single most important infrastructure priority facing the Combined Authority in the short to medium term. These should include the use of better digital technology to enable more efficient use of current transport resources.

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

- e) There should be greater awareness of potential supply chains and scope for collaboration within the region.
- f) It was suggested that several elements were needed to underpin the approach to financing infrastructure:

- An Investment Fund should be created to execute priorities which leverages third party resources, meaning a sustainable momentum can be achieved by the prudent use of public resources (from both local and central government)
- An Investment Pipeline should be established showing what is feasible to be delivered over a three, five, and ten-year period
- A Mayoral Development Platform (such as a development corporation) is needed to facilitate and support development in collaboration with the private sector (investors and developers) and wherever practicable the community in which development takes place.
- Relevant RMAs possibly including the Commissioners and associated Boards may be asked to contribute to these.

Fenland District Council (FDC)

FDC Liaison Meeting

A follow up meeting was held on 28 March.

Planning Committee Decision at Estover Road, March

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

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

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

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

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

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

"F/YR15/0668/O

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

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

Middle Level Commissioners strongly object to the application.

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

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

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

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

- Councillor Mrs Laws stated that it is a windfall site but the drainage issue is an area of concern. With regard to viability, the site does not deliver what it should and although the Section 106 Officer has looked into this. The development is therefore less sustainable than it should be.*
- Councillor Sutton stated that he believes the development is sustainable. It is in flood zone 1 and the Lead Local Flood Authority who is a Statutory Consultee has no objection to the proposal. The issues concerning the discharge raised by Middle Level Commissioners and the IDB can be reviewed at a later stage and do not need to be considered today. Planning Committee Members have to make decisions on material planning reasons. The proposal does not go against the Neighbourhood Plan; if it did then Officers would not be recommending it for approval.*

- *Councillor Sutton stated he can see no material planning reason to refuse the application.*
- *Nick Harding stated that in terms of the surface water issues which have been raised. The IDB have recognised that the LLFA is the authority that we should be going to in consideration of these matters and if the NPPF is referred to it does state that major development should incorporate sustainable drainage systems and should take account of the advice of the LLFA. The advice from the LLFA is that this development proposal with conditions is acceptable.*
- *Nick Harding stated that he is very supportive of the IDB's they have a separate legal process which has to be complied with by persons who wish to discharge their surface water and just because planning permission is granted for a development it does not mean they are automatically going to get consent from the IDB's. The Developer still has to apply to the IDB and the detail for the scheme has to be agreed.*
- *Nick Harding stated that with regard to Anglian Water, they have raised no objection to this application. They have indicated that they will make necessary improvements to their network to ensure they can deal with the water and therefore as we do not have an objection from Anglian Water, and members should consider on what basis would we be able to defend a reason for refusal based on foul water capacity.*

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

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

Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)

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

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

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

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

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

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

Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership (CFRMP)

The 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

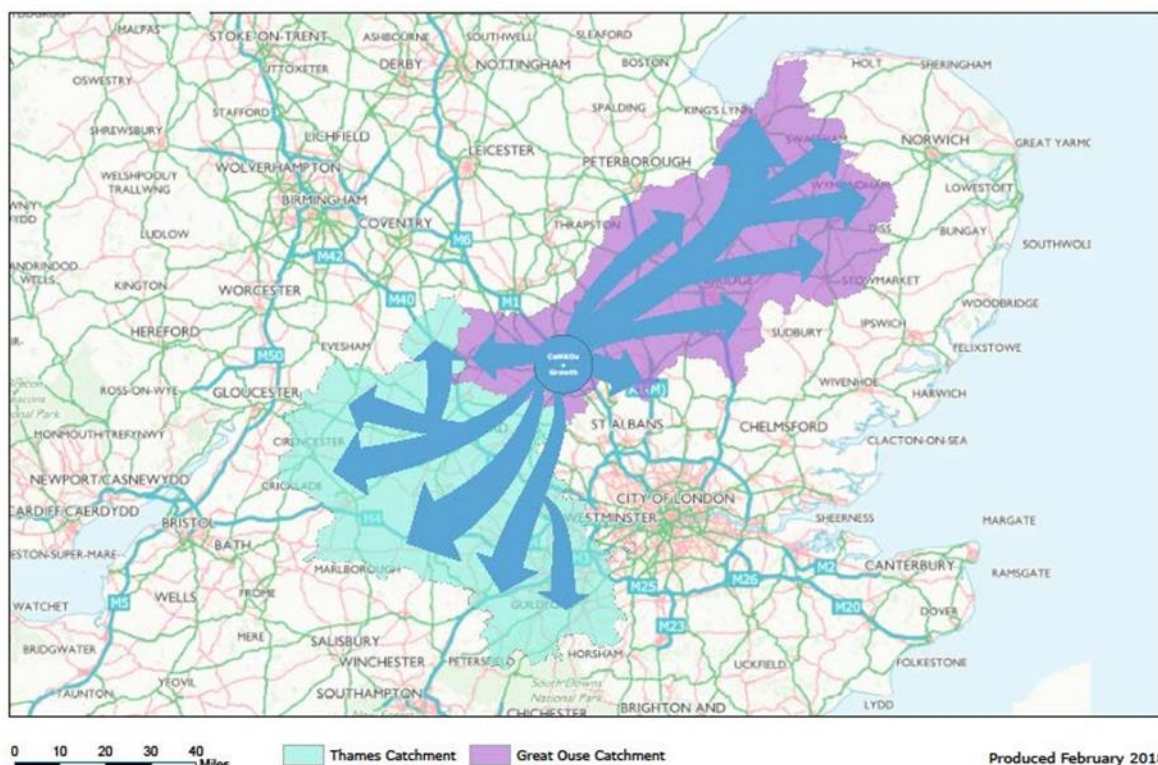
The Rain Gauge Network Project is progressing with the installation of gauges being undertaken in the next financial year.

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).

Cambridge - Milton Keynes - Oxford (CaMKOx) : Growth Corridor
Catchment of River Thames and River Great Ouse



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

Flood Risk Management Trainees

As part of closer partnership working, training has been given to junior members of Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council staff and an undergraduate studying for a FRM degree under the EA foundation scheme. The main purpose of the training was

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to give the candidates a better and broader understanding of water level and flood risk management and also how the Middle Level Commissioners and associated Boards/Commissioners operate.

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

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

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

IDB Good Governance Guide/East Ridings of Yorkshire Council Guide

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

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

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

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

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

The EA's 2018 Flood Action Campaign

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

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

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

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

The potential environmental funding is available for the following areas noise, water, carbon, landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage and, therefore, could include flooding, pollution, water

framework directive and biodiversity projects associated with the Strategic Road Network – A1, A14, A47 etc. Further information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/highways-england-designated-funds>

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

(a) Environment Agency

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

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

(b) Cambridgeshire County Council

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

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

Fenland Flooding Issues Sub-group

With the exception of trying to resolve the longstanding problems in the vicinity of Morton Avenue, March which is partly within the Board's rateable area but not a direct issue for it, and the discharge outfall serving Grounds Avenue, March, see below, a report of garden flooding was reported at Norfolk Street, Wimblington. The matter was reported to the LLFA who is responsible for investigating such matters. It is believed that the issue is related to concerns about riparian ownership and maintenance responsibilities.

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

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

Surface Water Discharge Outfall for the Grounds Avenue Area/Ordinary Watercourse at the south of Rose Cottage, Silt Road, March

Further to item vi) of Minute B.1226 Consulting Engineers' Report letters were subsequently issued to those parties concerned on 30 October 2018. The letter suggested that the Board was willing to

arrange and undertake the works and suggested that the landowners pay a contribution of £750.00 each. This was for completing the works and did not incur any costs as engineering fees.

Both landowners responded to the letter. One was prepared to pay the contribution whilst the other was silent on the matter but advised on a discussion that he had had with Fenland District Council concerning pipes. We are currently uncertain about the purpose of this response but will clarify the position.

Whilst legally the two landowners ultimately have responsibility for the maintenance of their watercourse, we are not aware of any flooding of their land as a result. However, the problem with this watercourse was highlighted by flooding that has occurred for several years because the Anglian Water sewer serving this urban area of March cannot discharge efficiently due to the condition of the watercourse concerned. Therefore, in view of this, it is considered that, in addition to the landowners, Anglian Water, a profit-making organisation, should, as the main beneficiary, also contribute to any works that are undertaken.

Therefore, in an effort to maximise the potential benefits available and with the Board's agreement the following is suggested in order to move the matter further:

- (i) Assuming that it is considered appropriate, any costs should at least be split as follows:

Anglian Water 50%

Landowners 25% each

Given that one of the landowners did not advise whether they would be willing to contribute the Board may have to be prepared to either absorb or take suitable action to recover this cost.

- (ii) That the Board approach Anglian Water to enquire whether it would:

- (a) Contribute to or pay for the entire channel improvements.

- (b) Share the costs of the future maintenance of the channel.

It may be possible to enter into a joint arrangement perhaps in a similar manner to that it has with the Environment Agency and South Cambridgeshire District Council in respect of the watercourses serving the Uttons Drove WRC near Swavesey.

In this respect an initial e-mail has been sent to Anglian Water requesting contact details of the appropriate contact but a response has yet to be received.

- (iii) The Board contact the landowners concerned advising of the current position to ensure that they are still engaged and remain willing to participate.
- (iv) That the Board facilitates and undertakes the channel improvement works following this year's harvest.
- (v) Upon completion of the channel to a satisfactory standard the Board adopts the length of watercourse concerned.

The matter has been discussed with the Commissioners' Works Department who are content to prepare a more detailed and accurate cost/estimate.

In an effort to deal with this matter in an efficient manner a request for an instruction was submitted to both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman at the beginning of March for approval of the proposal to be progressed but a response has not been received.

Therefore, in order to resolve this matter and guide further discussions it would be beneficial to receive the Board's opinion, further instruction and approval of the proposal thereby enabling further discussion to occur to ensure a successful outcome and a resolution to this ongoing issue.

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.

31 May 2019

March East (312)\Reports\May 2019

Consulting Engineer

creating a better place
for people and wildlife



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.

customer service line 03708 506 506
gov.uk/environment-agency

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



PAUL BURROWS

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

Mobile: 07824 431597

paul.burrows@environment-agency.gov.uk

January 2019

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

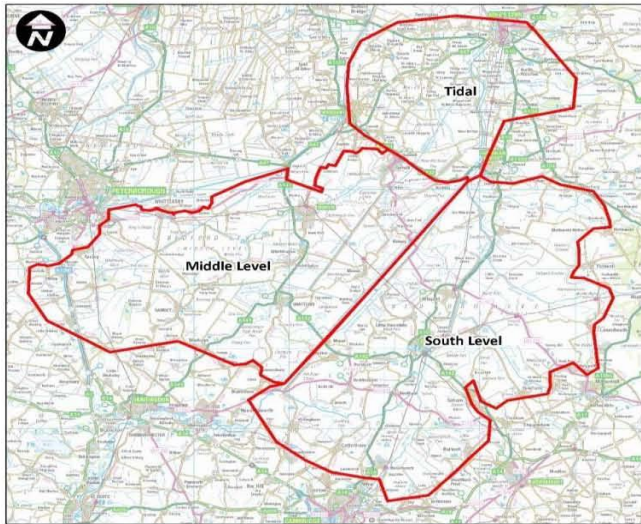
It is understood that there is a significant variation in the types of schemes which may be eligible for FCERM GiA funding. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that the attention given to investigating a strategic approach should be proportional to the size of the scheme. Therefore, for smaller schemes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



Miss Ablett referred Members to a number of applications where, following the Consulting Engineer's initial response, no further correspondence had been received from the applicants and enquired whether the Board wished the Planning Engineer to contact the applicant and their agents.

Miss Ablett referred to planning application (MLC Ref. Nos. 705 & 723) and enquired whether the Board wished for all parties concerned to be written to, as they had failed to contact the Board to ascertain whether the proposals put forward would be acceptable to the Board and had not submitted an application for discharge consent.

Miss Ablett reported that in relation to planning application (MLC Ref. Nos. 743,775,776,808,817,832 & 864) an application for byelaw consent had not been received and enquired whether the Board wished for all parties concerned to be written to.

Miss Ablett referred to planning application (MLC Ref. Nos. 716 & 797) and that the County Council, as LLFA, had originally objected to the proposal, but upon receipt of further information, had recommended the discharge of conditions, including surface water disposal. She advised it was considered that this was not the first occasion the LLFA had given poor consideration to long term aspects which, ultimately the Board are likely to have to deal with, and she enquired whether, in order to resolve this potential issue, the Board wished for all parties concerned to be written to.

Councillor Cornwell suggested that the Clerk write to the County Council making it clear that, as LLFA, they should listen to the IDBs as it was the Boards that had to be satisfied that any planning permissions granted would not have an adverse effect on their District in relation to the disposal of surface water.

Councillor Yeulett advised that it may be helpful if local Councillors also asked some questions of the County Council so it could be seen that the matter was of concern to both local councils and IDBs.

Members agreed that the Middle Level Commissioners' solicitor, should write to the LLFA to make a formal complaint, on behalf of all IDBs, as this was not only a matter of concern for March East IDB.

The Vice Chairman raised the point that the £50 fee levied for processing a byelaw consent application was insufficient to cover the costs charged to the Board by the Middle Level Commissioners for dealing with the consent on the Board's behalf.

Miss Ablett advised that, unfortunately, this was a cost set out in statute and the Board therefore had little option other than to accept it as they were responsible for managing flood risk/land drainage within the District. She further reported on the Board's and the Middle Level Commissioners' ability to charge for these services.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) Weed control and drain maintenance

That the maintenance works contained in the Report be undertaken.

- iii) That the Planning Engineer write a further letter to all applicants and their agents identified as not having responded to the Board's initial correspondence.

iv) MLC Ref Nos 705 & 723 and MLC Ref Nos 716 & 797

That the Planning Engineer write to all parties concerned to resolve issues relating to these applications.

v) MLC Ref Nos 743, 775, 776, 808, 817, 832 & 864

That the Planning Engineer write to all parties concerned advising that an application for byelaw consent is required.

vi) That the Middle Level Commissioners' Solicitor lodge an official complaint on behalf of all IDBs to the County Council, as the LLFA, advising that, when approving planning matters, the Board's views, concerns and recommendations were not being taken into account and also that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the Board's Byelaws must be taken into account.

(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest in the planning application (MLC Ref No 837) received for M F Martin Ltd.

B.1271 Capital Improvement Programme

Members considered the Board's future capital improvement programme.

RESOLVED

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

B.1272 District Officer's Report

The District Officer reported that all three pumping stations were running well and the pump attendants, who he considered were doing a very good job, had confirmed that they were happy to continue in their roles. He added that due to the dry weather it had been a quiet year with no major problems, the water levels were being controlled and these were dealt with as necessary during the summer and winter months.

RESOLVED

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

B.1273 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.1274 District Officer's Fee and Pumping Station duties

a) The Board gave consideration to the District Officer's fee for 2019/2020.

- b) 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%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Board agree that the sum of £919.00 be allowed for the services of the District Officer for 2018/2019.
- ii) That the Board agree that the sum of £2,014.00 be allowed for the provision of pumping station duties for 2018/2019.

(NB) – The Chairman declared a financial interest and the Vice Chairman took the Chair when this item was discussed.

The Chairman resumed the Chair

B.1275 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

- i) That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

- ii) That the Consulting Engineers be requested to undertake an asset survey.

B.1276 Environment Agency – Precepts

Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2019/2020 in the sum of £11,754 63 (the precept for 2018/2019 being £11,195).

B.1277 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

- a) Miss Ablett reported that the sum of £667.00 (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency (£721.62 representing 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2018/2019 less £54.62 overpaid in respect of the financial year 2017/2018.
- b) Further to minute B.1235(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.1278 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 £686 to £700.

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.1279 Maintenance Strip – Drain at Wimblington (Matthew Homes)

Miss Ablett reported that a local land agent, Mr Bruce Smith, had contacted the Board advising of his concerns regarding the Board's 4 metre maintenance strip as if conveyed to the plot purchasers by Matthew Homes, the new house owners may encroach across the maintenance strip, as had occurred at other developments.

The Chairman advised that Matthew Homes were aware of the importance of the access strip being retained. He added that it had been one of the conditions set down when consent for the

development was granted as it was essential to enable the drain maintenance works to be carried out.

Miss Ablett advised that she was not aware that any contravention of the Board's byelaw had actually occurred at this stage.

Members discussed the matter further.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to Matthew Homes stating that the Board's 4 metre maintenance strip must be retained and that, if the Board's Byelaws were contravened, the Board would take such action as may be necessary and Mr Smith be sent a copy of the letter.

B.1280 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.1281 Rate arrears

Consideration was given to writing off rate arrears amounting to £3.32.

RESOLVED

That the arrears be written off.

B.1282 Contributions from Developers

With reference to minute B.294(ii), Miss Ablett reported that contributions towards the cost of dealing with the increased flow or volume of surface water run-off and treated effluent volume have been received.

B.1283 Health and Safety

- a) Further to minute B.1241, Miss Ablett reported she had not been advised by the Clerk of any Health & Safety issues over the past 12 months.

The Chairman reported that a list of Do's and Don'ts had been sent to each pump attendant; they had signed and returned one copy to the office and displayed one copy in each

of the pumping stations, as requested. Entry logs had also been put in each pumping station, which the Chairman confirmed were being completed.

b) Miss Ablett reported that at the autumn Middle Level and Associated Drainage Board's Chairs meeting, a request was made to seek to either take on an additional employee or employ a contractor to specifically support the Drainage Board's to help them meet their legal Health and Safety requirements and also deliver the specified requirements of the Board's insurers who are calling for evidence that appropriate measures are in place to manage Health and Safety.

Miss Ablett further reported that a letter had been sent to the Chairman on the 25th April advising that 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. Assuming all Boards joined the arrangement, she advised that the cost to the Board would be £400 per annum. However it was understood that particularly in the first year or so extra support may be needed and this could be provided at a day rate of £500 or at an hourly rate of £85 for part days.

Miss Ablett advised that the Chairman had confirmed that the Board wished to be included in the arrangement with Cope Safety Management.

RESOLVED

That the actions of the Chairman be approved.

B.1284 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.1285 Defra IDB1 Returns

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

B.1286 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.1287 Review of Internal Controls

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

B.1288 Risk Management Assessment

- a) The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with their current Risk Management Policy.
- b) The Board reviewed the insured value of their buildings and considered having a professional revaluation of the Board's real estate assets, for insurance purposes

RESOLVED

- i) That the Consulting Engineers be requested to re-visit the pumping station valuations.
- ii) That a professional revaluation of the Board's real estates was not required.
- iii) That the value of the Board's bungalow be increased to £250,000 for 2019/2020.

B.1289 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.1290 Annual Governance Statement

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.1291 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £147,851.21 which had been made during the financial year 2018/2019.

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

B.1292 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 Annual Return, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2019.

B.1293 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 2019/2020 and were informed by Miss Ablett that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by special levy on local billing authorities would be respectively 52.63% and 47.37%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £84,334 be raised by drainage rates and special levy.
- iii) That the amounts comprised in the sum referred to in ii) above to be raised by drainage rates and to be met by special levy are £44,384 and £39,950 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 10.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v) That a Special levy of £39,950 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vi) That the seal of the Board be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levy referred to in resolution (v).
- vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levy by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.1294 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.1295 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Thursday the 4th June 2020.

B.1296 Irrigation Licences

The Chairman reported that he was receiving various applications to comment on for changes to irrigation licences (from existing licence holders) asking to switch their licences into the March East area.

He advised that immediately irrigation commenced this year, restrictions were introduced which made it difficult to maintain the summer levels and as resources were very limited the

introduction of more abstraction points should not be encouraged. The Chairman advised that if people were already entitled to take water from the District he was fine with that but problems arose when people were trying to gain extra abstraction from the area.

Mr Morris reported that at the last NFU meeting Members were asked to keep an eye out for abuse of water abstraction. He advised that it was largely the big contractors growing potatoes who were abstracting illegally, which made it difficult for other people who had valid licences.

The Chairman advised that he tried to be fair and apply the same policy to whoever applied, but thought that Members should be made aware of the situation.

Members supported the Chairman's actions.