

NORDELPH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Nordelph Internal Drainage Board
held at New Farm House, Oaks Farm, Outwell on Wednesday the 20th March 2019

PRESENT

R S Means Esq (Chairman)

D H Boyce Esq

C J Crofts Esq

D J W Boyce Esq

J D Clifton Esq

Mr Robert Hill (representing the Clerk to the Board) was in attendance.

Apology for absence

An apology for absence was received from G D Boyce Esq.

B.884 Declarations of Interest

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

B.885 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Board held on the 21st March and 29th June 2018 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.886 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.

RESOLVED

- i) That in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations the minutes record that approval of the accounts was given on 29th June 2018.
- ii) That the Chairman was authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2018.

B.887 Roadway to Pumping Station

Further to minute B.849, Mr Hill reported that there had been no further communications concerning this matter since the last meeting. Mr Clifton reported that there had been an advance notice of works advertised in the local press approximately 5-6 weeks ago and that there were now road closure signs at the top of the road indicating that works would commence on Monday the 25th March 2019.

RESOLVED

That the Board continue to monitor the situation.

B.888 Pollution at Poplar Row Farm, Nordelph

Further to minute B.851, Mr Hill reported that following last year's meeting, the District Officer had been in contact with Miss Ablett at the Middle Level offices and that she had contacted the Environment Agency who had confirmed that enforcement action was being taken against the polluter. Following this, a witness statement was prepared by the Clerk to support the prosecution by the Environment Agency.

Mr D J W Boyce reported that, as detailed in the District Officer's report, although the prosecution has now been successful, the slurry pits at Poplar Row still remain, which could in a reasonable rainfall event cause polluted matter to run into the adjacent watercourses. He confirmed that the Environment Agency representative had indicated that it was their intention to proceed with removal enforcement but to date the position remains unchanged.

The Board expressed concerns that although there had been a successful prosecution the polluted matter remained in place to potentially cause future problems.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to the Environment Agency to express the concerns of the Board that the polluted matter could cause a significant pollution problem following a rainfall event and that they should proceed with enforcement action to ensure its' removal.

B.889 Updating IDB Byelaws

Further to minute B.860(e), Mr Hill reported that as this matter affects all Boards, and to ensure efficiency and to minimise costs, work on revising the Byelaws has been held until all Boards administered by the Middle Level Commissioners have determined their wishes. Now that this objective has been achieved work is commencing and a bulk submission of revised Byelaws will be submitted for consideration by Defra accordingly.

Mr Hill reported that it was originally the Board's intention to approve the revised Byelaws prior to submitting them to Defra.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk be requested to draft new Byelaws to include compliance with the environment regulations for consideration by the Board at their next meeting.

B.890 Policy Statement

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.891 Requirements for a Biosecurity Policy

Further to minute B.866, the Board considered their Biosecurity Policy.

RESOLVED

That the Biosecurity Policy be adopted.

B.892 Clerk's Report

Mr Hill 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 health and safety support services provision, options for the future arrangements for the administration of IDBs/DDCs and the MLC and member training.

ii) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

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

Sue Hayman Affairs spoke about her first-hand experience of flooding in Cumbria, the impact of flooding on mental health, building on flood plains and river management without environmental change and funding.

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

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

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

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

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

b) Annual Conference

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

RESOLVED

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

c) Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse Branch

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

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

d) Good Governance Guide for Internal Drainage Board Members

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

That in March and April 2019, ADA will be running a series of free workshops in relation to Good Governance at which ADA hope to see as many Board Members as possible. The nearest workshops for this area are:-

- Marriott's Warehouse, Kings Lynn (19th March)
- Deafblind UK Conference Centre, Peterborough (28th March)

That there is also a workshop in London at the CIWEM Venue Farringdon (3rd April) for those who cannot attend a local workshop.

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

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.

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.869, Mr Hill advised that the running of the remainder of the Anglia Farmers electricity contract has been monitored and is pleased to report that the service provided has improved.

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

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

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

Mr Hill 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.

B.893 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

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

Nordelph I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers' Report – March 2019

Pumping Station

Only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant is mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition.

Pumping Hours

Hours Run January 2018 – January 2019 = 278

Hours Run January 2017 – January 2018 = 210

Hours Run January 2016 – January 2017 = 148

Hours Run January 2015 – January 2016 = 138

Hours Run February 2014 - January 2015 = 512

Planning Applications

No issues concerning previous applications have been dealt with and no further applications have been received and dealt with since the last meeting.

King's Lynn & West Norfolk Local Plan

No further correspondence has been received from the Borough Council concerning the Local Plan.

Joint Norfolk Authorities Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

Note. *SFRAs are high level strategic documents and, as such, do not go into detail on an individual site-specific basis and are developed using the best available information at the time of preparation.*

It is understood that the Borough Council adopted its latest Level 1 SFRA during November. It can be viewed at the following link:

https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/downloads/download/82/flood_risk_assessment

Flood Risk Management (FRM) for the Fens Technical Group

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 in February, to progress Phase 1 of the project.

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

Consulting Engineer

1 March 2019

Nordelph(321)\Reports\March 2019

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

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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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Paul Burrows", written over a faint horizontal line.

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

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

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

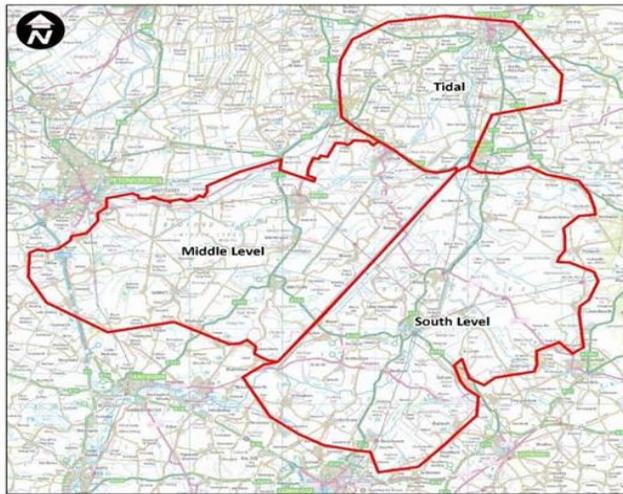
It is understood that there is a significant variation in the types of schemes which may be eligible for FCERM GiA funding. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that the attention given to investigating a strategic approach should be proportional to the size of the scheme. Therefore, for smaller schemes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

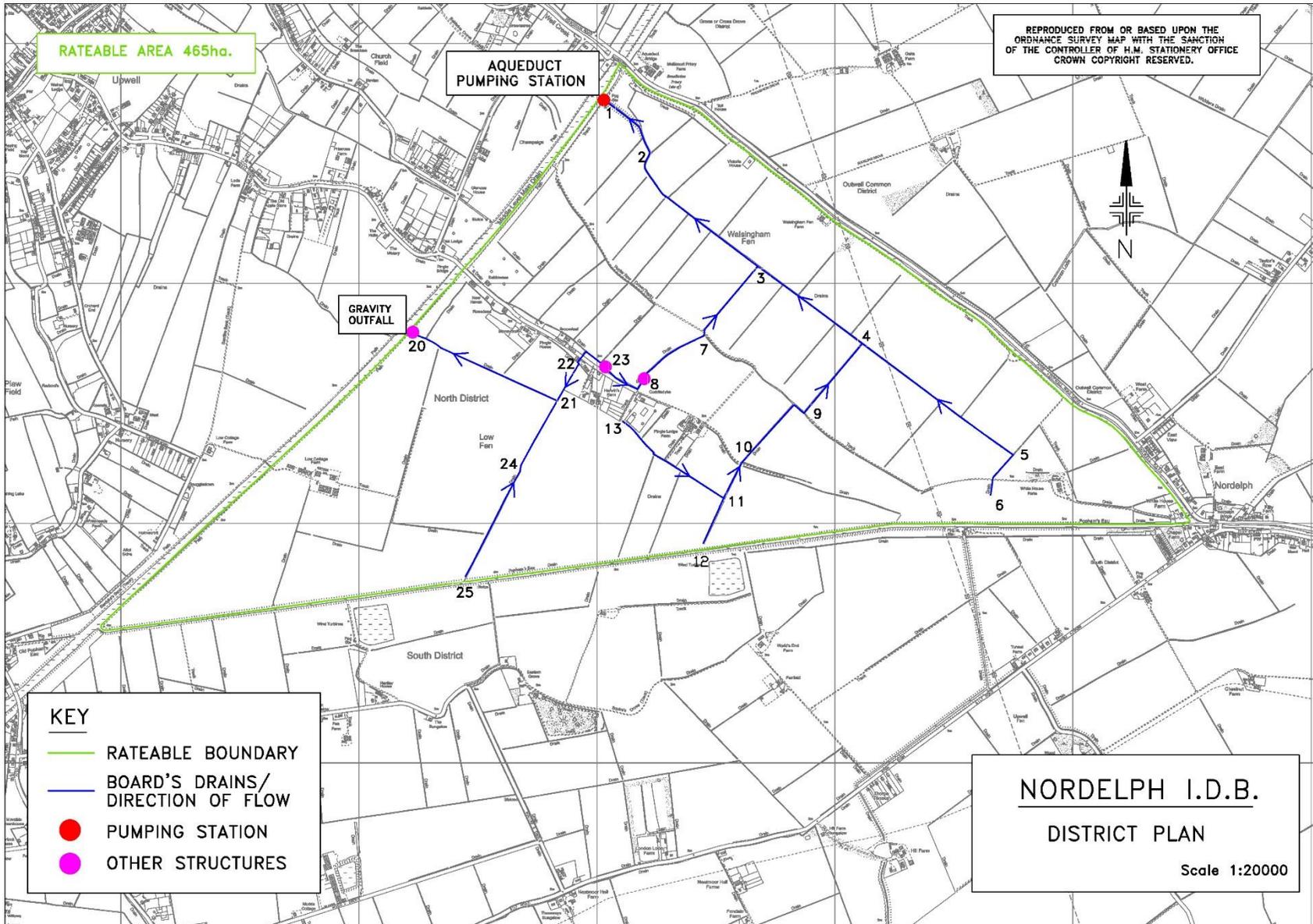
The TG will work closely with the Environment Agency's Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire Partnerships and Strategic Overview Team who are progressing a similar project for the Lincolnshire Fens, but at different timescales.

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.





Mr D J W Boyce referred to the problems with local planning applications on another Board and that a meeting was being organised between officers of the Board, Middle Level staff and Local Authority officers.

RESOLVED

That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.

B.894 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.895 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Mr Hill referred to the Environmental Officer's Newsletter, dated December 208, previously circulated to Members.

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.896 District Officer's Report

The Board considered the Report of the District Officer.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Reports and the actions referred to therein be approved and that the Officer be thanked for his services over the preceding year.
- ii) That the District Officer be authorised to make arrangements for necessary drainworks and for flail mowing the District system in 2019/2020.
- iii) That the District Officer be authorised to make arrangements to ensure that debris is removed from the watercourse, without disturbing the badger setts, in order to keep water flowing.

B.897 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, plus expenses, for 2019/2020.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Board agree that the sum of £1,585.00 (plus an additional payment of £100.00) be allowed for the services of the District Officer for 2019/2020.
- ii) That the Board agree that the sum of £460.00 (plus an additional payment of £25.00 for expenses) be allowed for the provision of pumping station duties for 2019/2020.

(NB) – Messrs D H and D J W Boyce agreed to go along with the decision of other members in this matter.

B.898 State-aided Schemes

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

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

B.899 Environment Agency – Precepts

Mr Hill reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2019/2020 in the sum of £1,666.25 (the precept for 2018/2019 being £1,587).

B.900 Association of Drainage Authorities Subscriptions

Mr Hill referred to minute B.860(c), and reported that the Board last paid a subscription of £510 in 2015 and that he has been advised that the subscription for 2019 will be £553.

The Board raised concerns that the subscription is over 3% of their rate requirement and requested ADA look at other less disproportionate methods to calculate subscription fees in the future.

RESOLVED

That the Board do not join ADA for 2019 and review the position in 2020.

B.901 Health and Safety

Mr Hill 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. Quotes are being sought but at this time costs are not available and of course the cost per Board is likely to be reflected by take up of any offer made.

The Board was asked to consider if it was interested in this service offer and if the decision to finally commit can be delegated to a member or members of the Board.

Mr Hill reported on the meeting of IDB Chairmen with representatives from Cope Safety Management Ltd scheduled for the 2nd April 2019 to discuss proposals for Cope Safety Management Ltd to provide health and safety support to IDBs. He reported that, if the service was to be accepted, there would be a direct cost to the Board but at this time no figures were available.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to attend the meeting on the 2nd April 2019 to discuss future health and safety support and to take any further action he considers appropriate.

B.902 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2018/2019

Mr Hill reported that in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, Internal Drainage Boards' accounts were required to be approved by resolution on or before 30th June.

B.903 Defra IDB1 Returns

Further to minute B.865, Mr Hill referred to a letter received from Defra dated 24th April 2018 and to the completed IDB1 form for 2017/2018.

B.904 Review of Internal Controls

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

B.905 Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England

Mr Hill referred to the recently issued Practitioners' guide to proper practices to be applied in the preparation of statutory Annual Accounts and Governance Statements which will apply to Annual Returns commencing on or after 1st April 2018.

B.906 Risk Management Assessment

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

B.907 Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

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

RESOLVED

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

B.908 Exercise of Public Rights

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

B.909 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £3,813.72 which had been made during the financial year 2017/2018 (1st to 31st March 2018) and £10,668.47 made during the financial year 2018/2019 (1st April 2018 to 28th February 2019).

B.910 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 Mr Hill that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by special levy on local billing authorities would be respectively 93.19% and 6.81%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved, subject to the allowance made for the ADA subscription being removed.
- ii) That a total sum of £16,300 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 £15,190 and £1,100 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 22.00p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- vi) That a Special levy of £1,100 be made and issued to the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vii) That the seal of the Board be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levy referred to in resolution (v).
- viii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levy by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.911 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.912 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Wednesday the 18th March 2020.