

RAMSEY FOURTH (MIDDLEMOOR) INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Ramsey Fourth (Middlemoor) Internal Drainage Board
held at Ramsey Golf Club on Thursday the 20th June 2019

PRESENT

A C Roberts Esq (Chairman)	J M Palmer Esq
M J Smith Esq (Vice Chairman)	D C Roberts Esq
T A W Berry Esq	Miss A C Swales
J R Clarke Esq	M Swales Esq
T Corney Esq	S W Whittome Esq

Mr Robert Hill (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Jason Edwards (District Officer) were in attendance.

The Chairman welcomed Miss A C Swales and Mr T Corney who were both attending their first meeting of the Board.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from T G Few Esq and R H Lambert Esq.

B.784 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.

The Chairman and Messrs Corney and Swales declared interests in minute no. 807.

The Chairman and Mr D Roberts declared interests in the payments made to D C Roberts & Son.

Messrs Clarke and Whittome declared interests (as Members of the Middle Level Board) and took no part in discussions relating to the Middle Level Commissioners.

B.785 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

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

B.786 Fencing along Paddock Area – Rorkes Drift Farm

Further to minute B. 762, Mr Hill reported that when the drain maintenance works were being carried out the owner of Rorkes Drift Farm had been in contact as she had not received any notice. Following a visit by the Chairman to explain the position, he had requested the office look into the matter to ascertain the reason why a notice had not been sent. Mr Hill informed Members that from the information he was able to find and following discussions with the Chairman, it appeared

that the area of land had been transferred from agricultural to special levy at the time it was sold by the local authority. He confirmed that ways of ensuring that this could not happen in the future were being looked into and that a letter had been sent to the owner explaining the position.

In response to Mr Whittome, Mr Hill was unable to state how many other such areas there were within the Board but he did not consider there to be many.

In response to Mr Berry, Mr Hill outlined the circumstances in which the Board could give consideration to paying compensation in relation to drain maintenance works.

The District Officer reported that this section was not a main arterial drain and therefore the maintenance cycle could be extended to assist, if required.

B.787 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED

That A C Roberts Esq be appointed Chairman of the Board.

B.788 Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED

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

B.789 Appointment of Clerk

RESOLVED

That the Middle Level Commissioners be appointed Clerk to the Board for the ensuing year.

(NB) – Messrs Clarke and Whittome declared an interest (as Members of the Middle Level Board) when this item was discussed.

B.790 Clerk's fee

The Board gave consideration to the Clerk's fee for 2019/2020.

Mr Hill reported that it was not intended to increase the administration fee for 2019/2020.

RESOLVED

That there be no increase in the fee paid to the Clerk for the year 2019/2020.

B.791 Board Membership

(a) Further to minute B.744, Mr Hill reported that Miss A Swales and Mr T Corney had accepted the invitation to join the Board.

- (b) Consideration was given to the filling of the vacancy on the Board.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman approach Linden Croft to ascertain if he would be willing to become a Member of the Board and instruct the Clerk further on the outcome of this.

B.792 Land Drainage Act 1991
Board Membership – Huntingdonshire District Council

Mr Hill reported that Huntingdonshire District Council had re-appointed Councillor J M Palmer to be a Member of the Board under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

B.793 Appointment of District Officer

The Chairman reported that the District Officer carried out a good job for the Board

RESOLVED

That J Edwards Esq be appointed District Officer to the Board during the ensuing year on a self-employed basis.

B.794 District Officer's Fee

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

RESOLVED

That the Board agree that the sum of £6,278.00 be allowed for the services of the District Officer for 2019/2020.

B.795 Property – Riverview - Middlemoor Pumping Station Bungalow

Further to minute B.750, the Chairman reported that he had been advised that, having given notice, the tenant would be vacating the property on Sunday the 30th June 2019.

The Chairman reported that kitchen flooring and a carpet had been replaced, a window replaced along with some other minor repairs at the bungalow had been carried out during the year.

Mr Whittome considered it appropriate for the letting agency to give a valuation on the bungalow and that it was important to have a tenant.

RESOLVED

- i) That the actions taken by the Chairman in arranging the works at the Board's property be approved.
- ii) That Thomas Morris Property Management be requested to provide a valuation for the property and be authorised to find a new tenant.

B.796 Purchase of land adjacent to the Board's holdings – Drapers Delph, Ramsey St Mary's

Further to minute B.751, Mr Hill apologised that new agreements had not currently been drawn up despite assurance that this was in hand last year.

RESOLVED

That, as a matter of urgency, the Solicitor/Assistant Clerk arrange for tenancy agreements for the Board's purchase of land at Drapers Delph and the change of tenancy from Mrs Pickard be drawn up and the Vice Chairman be authorised to deal with any matters on behalf of the Board.

B.797 Updating IDB Byelaws

Further to minute B.761(e), the Board considered their updated Byelaws.

RESOLVED

That the updated Byelaws be adopted.

B.798 Policy Statement

Further to minute B.761(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.799 Requirements for a Biosecurity Policy

Further to minute B.767, the Board considered their Biosecurity Policy.

RESOLVED

That the Biosecurity Policy be adopted.

B.800 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 :-

- 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 Swales considered that the current localised representation arrangements were better as they kept local knowledge and input and raised concerns of possible future control of assets in a single Board. She further considered there to be a fundamental issue with who would be appointed to a single Board and how local areas would be able to ensure that their individual issues were able to be addressed.

Mr Berry queried the potential of cost savings and considered overall it was likely that costs could increase.

Mr Whittome referred to previous proposals for single catchment Boards which, at the time, had been rejected and that a consultant had been engaged to look at the proposals and put forward the possibility of 3 separate 'area Boards' within the Middle Level.

Mr Clarke considered that each drainage board had their own problems and that an amalgamation to a single Board would be detrimental to the ability to deal with these matters locally. The Chairman considered that the current arrangements were working very well and that any proposals to make changes should be resisted.

RESOLVED

That the Board did not consider it appropriate for them to become involved in a single board and did not wish to be part of any future discussions.

- ii) Association of Drainage Authorities
- a) Annual Conference

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

b) Annual Conference

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

RESOLVED

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

c) Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse Branch

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

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

d) Good Governance Guide for Internal Drainage Board Members

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

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

That ADAs workshops were well attended and are helping to deal with the questions being raised by Defra following the Audit Commission Report which criticized aspects of IDB governance. 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.

iii) External Bodies Conservation Initiatives

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

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

b) The Cambridgeshire Fens Biosphere, Heritage Lottery have provided £10,000 of funding to research what would be necessary to bring Biosphere Reserve status to the Fens. This project is being led by the Wildlife Trust with support from Cambs ACRE. If successful, this would lead to a new UNESCO designation. This would be a non-statutory designation which records the unique nature of the area. Most recently, the project received £1m for field scale alternative farming trial works in the Great Fen area and to assist with the Biosphere bid.

iv) Catchment Strategy

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

v) Water Resources East Group Meeting

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

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

vi) Anglia Farmers

Further to minute B.7795, Mr Hill 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.

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.

vii) The New Rivers Authorities & Land Drainage Bill

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

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

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

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

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 coming 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.801 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

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

Ramsey Fourth (Middlemoor) I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – June 2019

Pumping Stations

Other than any matters described below or previously reported to the Board, only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant is mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition.

Daintree

The winding resistance to earth on drive motor No 1 has remained at a satisfactory level.

Pump Breakdown 2017

The insurance claim for the breakdown was refused by AXA/HSB.

Middlemoor

The low insulation resistance of both submersible pump drive motor winding/cables to earth continues to be monitored and currently remains at a satisfactory level.

As can be seen below the weedscreen is badly corroded and will soon require replacement.



Pumping Hours

Daintree Pumping Station

Total Hours Run	April 12- April 13	April 13- April 14	April 14- April 15	April 15- April 16	April 16- April 17	April 17- April 18	April 18 – April 19
No 1	697	115*	330*	65	171	158*	66
No 2	251	250*	250*	182	61	183*	31

Middlemoor Pumping Station

Total Hours Run	April 12- April 13	April 13- April 14	April 14- April 15	April 15- April 16	April 16- April 17	April 17- April 18	April 18 – April 19
No 1	366	175	170*	92	52	136*	56
No 2	376	196	150*	156	77	126*	60

Planning Committee Decision at Estover Road, March

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

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

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

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

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

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

**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."

It is presumed that in similar circumstances Huntingdonshire District Council would have a similar view.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 14 new applications have been received and dealt with since the last meeting:

MLC Ref.	Council Ref.	Applicant	Type of Development	Location
216	H/18/00713/FUL	Mr J Scotchford	Residence	Daintree Road, Ramey St Marys
217	H/18/00830/HHFUL	Mr Coombes & Mrs Hartley	Residence (Extension)	Herne Road, Ramsey St Marys
218	H/18/00957/HHFUL	Ms C Harris	Residence (Extension)	Herne Road, Ramsey St Marys
219	H/18/00990/FUL	Ramsey St Marys Village Trust	Leisure (Recreation ground)	Harebell Close/Holme Road, Ramsey St Marys
220	H/18/01416/FUL	Mr J Scotchford	Residence	Daintree Road, Ramsey St Marys
221	H/18/01652/HHFUL	Mr & Mrs Langley	Residence (Granny annexe)	Oilmills Road, Ramsey Mereside
222	H/18/02300/OUT	Mr D Simpson	Residence	Herne Road, Ramsey
223	H/18/02445/FUL	Mr P Mossman	Residential (8 plots)	Oilmills Road, Ramsey Mereside
224	H/18/02737/FUL	Mr R Steele	Residence	Herne Road, Ramsey St Marys
225	H/19/00050/OUT	Legrant Building Services	Residential (3 plots)	Herne Road, Ramsey St Marys
226	H/19/00424/HHFUL	Mr King	Residence (Extension)	Herne Road, Ramsey St Marys
227	H/19/00383/FUL	Mr R Steele	Residential (3 plots)	Ashbeach Drove, Ramsey St Marys
228	H/19/00538/FUL	Mr & Mrs Oswald	Residence	Oilmills Road, Ramsey Mereside
229	H/19/00574/FUL	Mr S Bowens	Residence	Daintree Road, Ramsey St Marys

Planning applications ending 'HHFUL' relate to Householder applications for Full Planning Permission

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

Mr & Mrs Langley chose to use the Infiltration device self-certification process for the granny annexe extension at their existing residence at Oilmills Road, Ramsey (MLC Ref No 221) and, in doing so, agreed that if the device was to fail in the future they would be liable for discharge consent.

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

- *Retrospective planning on an all-weather equestrian exercise area at land west of 131 to 135 Herne Road, Ramsey St Marys – Mrs A Colbert* (MLC Ref No 195)
- *Demolition of existing bungalow, erection of dwellings and alterations to access at 161 Herne Road, Ramsey St Mary - Mr P Stratton* (MLC Ref Nos 176 & 188)
- *Proposed solar arrays to the north of 18 Herne Road, Ramsey St Mary's – Client of Envirep* (MLC Ref No 184) & *Mr S Jarvis* (MLC Ref No 187)

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.

Proposed Residential Development off Middlemoor Road, Ramsey St Mary – Solas Development Services/V E Parrott (Oakley) Ltd (MLC Ref No 180) & *Luminus Homes* (MLC Ref No 207)

Further to the Board's last meeting there was a brief interchange of correspondence with Parrott Construction in early October 2018 but no further correspondence has been received.

According to the District Council's Public Access web page a decision remains pending.

Proposed erection of open storage shed for ice cream vans and proposed erection of portal framed building for the manufacture and repair of ice cream vans for owner's use only (retrospective) including sanitary accommodation, deep bore hole water supply and drainage to septic tank at land far west Of Romany Cottage Bucks Drove Ramsey St Marys - Mr F Cannata (MLC Ref Nos 192 & 193)

According the District Council's Public Access web page for planning application 15/02318/FUL, (erection of an open storage shed), a decision by the District Council remains "In progress".

Erection of up to 3 dwellings, with associated access and car parking, including parking provision for nos. 238-244 Oilmills Road, following demolition of existing outbuildings at land adjacent 233 Oilmills Road, Ramsey, Mereside - Mr P Mossman (MLC Ref Nos 197, 200 & 223)

Further to the Board's June 2017 meeting a full planning application for eight dwellings was submitted to the District Council for consideration. The previous planning application had been for three dwellings.

A detailed assessment has not been undertaken but it is understood that surface water disposal will be to soakaways.

According to the District Council's Public Access web page a decision is pending.

To date, neither the applicant nor his agent, distinct DESIGNS UK Ltd have contacted the Board to enquire whether this approach is acceptable or would be approved should the proposal proceed.

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.

Proposed replacement dwelling at Rorkes Drift Farm, Oilmills Drove, Ramsey Mereside, – Miss J Freeman (MLC Ref No 203)

It is understood that gates and a temporary fence have been erected, however, no record of a byelaw application being submitted can be found. As a result, the aforementioned structures are likely to contravene the Board's byelaws and are illegal.

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.

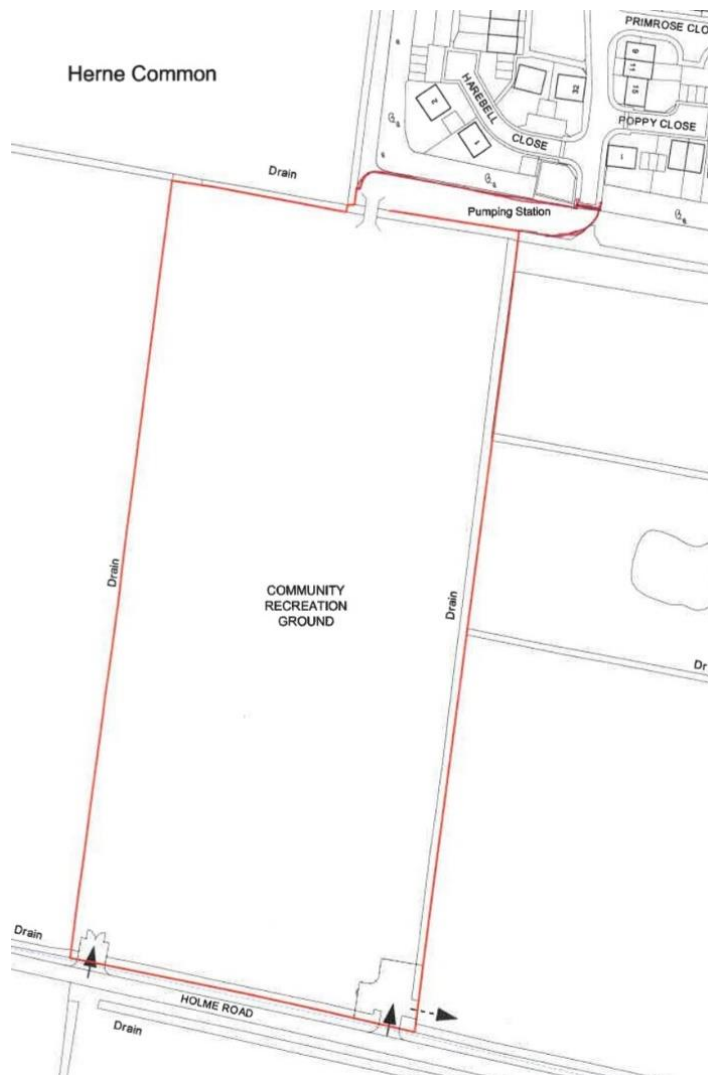
Change of use of agricultural land to create a Community Recreation Ground at land between Harebell Close and Holme Road, Ramsey St Marys – Ramsey St Marys Village Trust (MLC Ref No 219)

Members of the Board will be aware that the applicant, the Ramsey St Marys Village Trust (RSMVT), has been seeking to deliver a recreation ground for the benefit of the village since 2011 however it has proven difficult to find an appropriate site. After ongoing discussion, the owners of the application site agreed to sell the land to the RSMVT subject to securing the required planning permission.

The site totals 7.2 acres and is currently in agricultural use and is worked by a tenant farmer. The site has two points of vehicular access off the B660 Holme Road and is bounded by open watercourses, two of which (northern and western) are Board's maintained watercourses.

Both the existing points of vehicle access will be securely gated and locked, only to be used for access for cutting the grass or if vehicle access is required for an event and presumably to provide access for the Board's maintenance equipment. An agricultural right of way will be retained from Holme Road to allow access in the adjoining field to the east.

There is no footpath along the busy B660 Holme Road and the Trust only wants pedestrian access to the fields to be taken from the proposed footbridge over the northern drain to provide direct the single point of access to the land.



Extract from Johnson Designs Drawing No 011 001

The Planning Statement that supported the planning application advises that:

- o This bridge has already been agreed in principle by the IDB
- o The community recreation ground will be open for the use of the whole community and initially will be levelled and seeded to deliver green open space.
- o The applicants will establish a committee to manage the ongoing maintenance of the fields.
- o The applicant will approach both Ramsey Town Council and Huntingdonshire DC to establish if funds are available to deliver additional facilities onto the field such as fencing, play equipment, substantial planting and landscaping and other associated items to enhance the appearance over the coming years.
- o It is not the applicants intention to put any buildings on the site but suggests that it could potentially be the site of a new village hall if funds were available in the future. “

Planning Permission was granted by the District Council in October.

An application for byelaw consent was received in July from Lattenbury Services, the bridge supplier, who are acting as the applicant's agent on this aspect of the project. The application was the subject of an internal consultation and whilst the proposal for a footbridge received positive responses the change of use from agricultural to community/leisure does create problems for the Board. The field concerned is currently in agricultural use and following the removal of crops the Board gains access, undertakes the work and deposits the dredgings on the field which is then ploughed into the land.

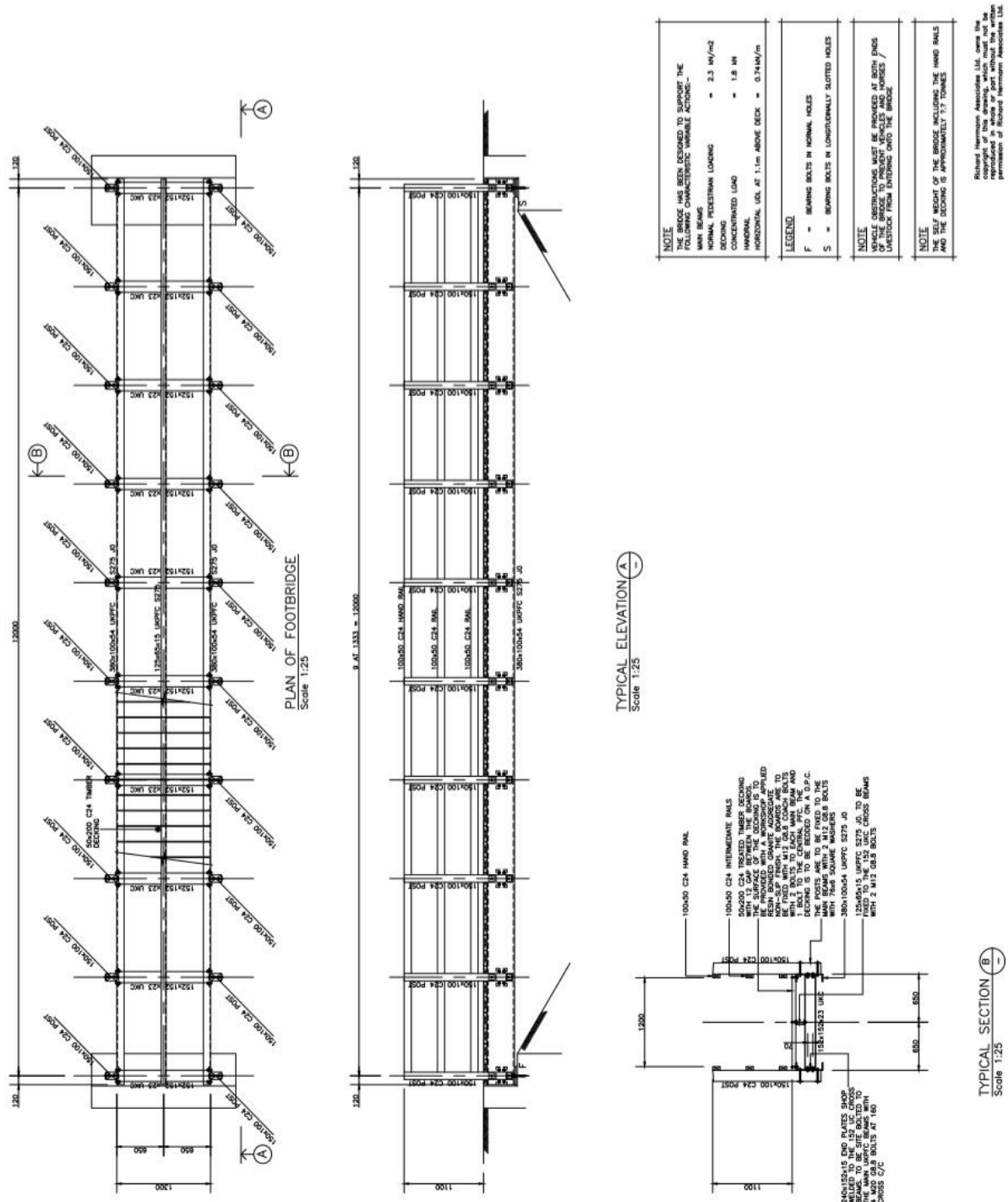
Changing its use to a Recreation Ground has many adverse implications for the Board including the method by which it accesses the land; the potential conflict between the Board's machinery/contractors and the users of the field; the provision of health & safety measures etc.

"Wet dredgings" are considered a hazardous material under the Waste Management Regulations and whilst the Board does have an exemption to deal with this scenario the deposition of such material on grassed areas has, for other Boards, been problematical in the past, incurring additional costs on the Board who has to cart the spoil off site. If a suitable location is not available within the immediate area then it has to be disposed of at a licenced waste centre, the nearest of which is believed to be near Peterborough, at the rate payers' expense. This would cost about £60-90/tonne of waste.

The byelaw application was the subject of a validation procedure which unfortunately did not meet the Board's minimum validation requirements and therefore has not yet been processed. In accordance with current policy the application should have been recommended for refusal but it was hoped that these issues would be discussed and resolved as part of the larger consultation process.

None of these issues are insurmountable but they do require further discussion and agreement to move the matter forward. The Chairman of the Board has confirmed that any further discussion should be as part of a pre-application consultation, paid by the applicant, and not at the Board's expense.

The provision of a completed pre-application consultation request form is currently awaited from the applicant.



Extract from Richard Herrmann Associates Ltd. Drg No. L24.144/1 Rev. -

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.

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) Local Plan to 2036

Proposed Main Modifications Consultation

[Public examination hearings](#) were held on the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Proposed Submission between 17-20 July and 10-27 September 2018. Following this, proposed main modifications were identified by the Planning Inspector as necessary to make the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 'sound' and 'legally compliant'. Consultation on the proposed main modifications and associated sustainability appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment ran from 10 December 2018 to 29 January 2019.

A generic response to the Planning Inspectorate's Main Modifications was submitted to the District Council on behalf of both the Middle Level Commissioners and our associated Boards, for whom we provide a planning consultancy service.

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

Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership (CFRMP)

The Middle Level Commissioners’ Planning Engineer has represented both the Middle Level Commissioners and their associated Boards since the last Board meeting. The main matters that may be of interest to the Board are as follows:

Quarterly Meetings

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

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

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

Riparian Responsibilities

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

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

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

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

Hedge and Ditch Rule

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

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

Bank Instability - Environment Agency (EA)/IDB approach

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

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

IDB & LLFA Planning Process

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

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

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

Emergency Planning & Response

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

Skills & Apprenticeships

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

It is understood that the EA, together with other partners, is developing a new Apprenticeship Standard for Water Environment Workers in England. This aims to support the training and

development of workers who carry out operational activities in organisations where there is a responsibility to manage the impact of water environments, natural or manmade, on the land and surrounding businesses and homes. The water environment includes rivers, coasts (the sea), lakes, wetlands, canals and reservoirs.

County Council Public Sector Services

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

RMA support & the Delivery of projects

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

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

RMA's Medium Term Programmes (MTP)

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

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

Rain Gauges

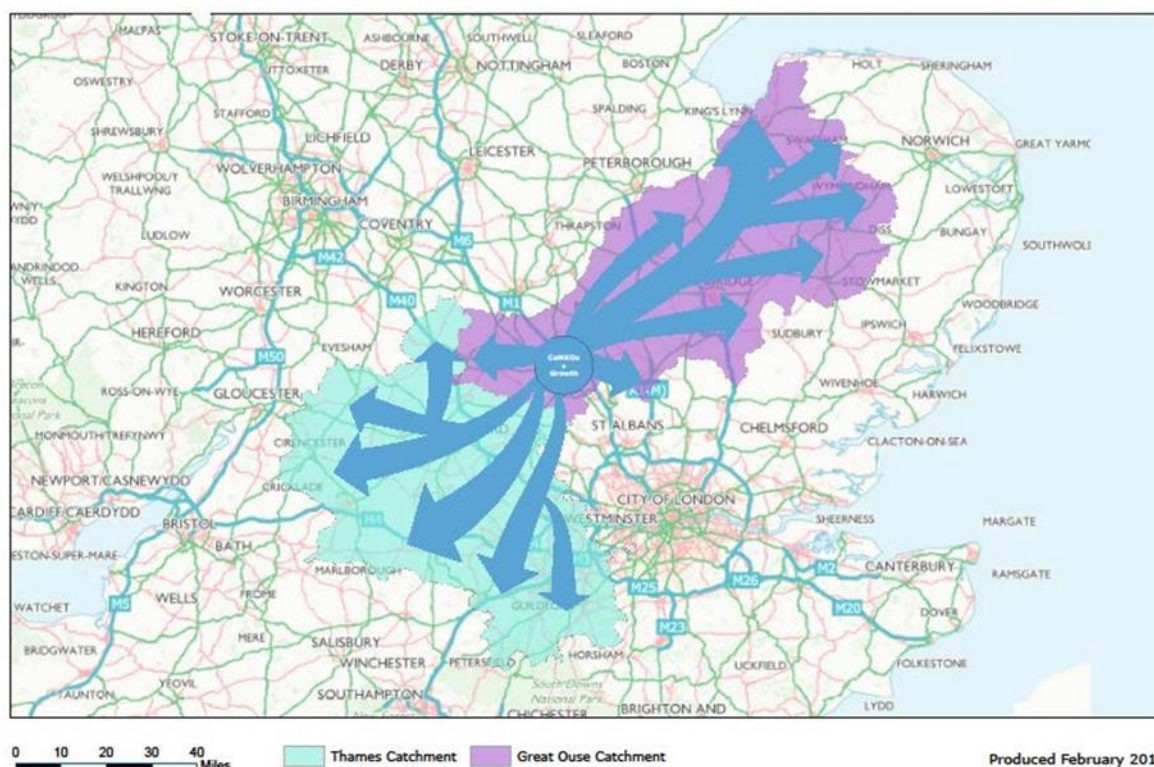
The Rain Gauge Network Project is progressing with the installation of gauges being undertaken in the next financial year.

Update on RFCC's Growth Work

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

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

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 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.

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

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

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

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

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

Consulting Engineer

6 June 2019

Ramsey Fourth (326)\Reports\June 2019

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

Our ref: ENV0000678C
Your ref
Date: 15 January 2019

Dear Chairman

Flood Risk Management for the Fens

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yours sincerely



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

Mobile: 07824 431597

paul.burrows@environment-agency.gov.uk

The Strategic Approach for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Projects

Supplementary Local Guidance Version 1

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

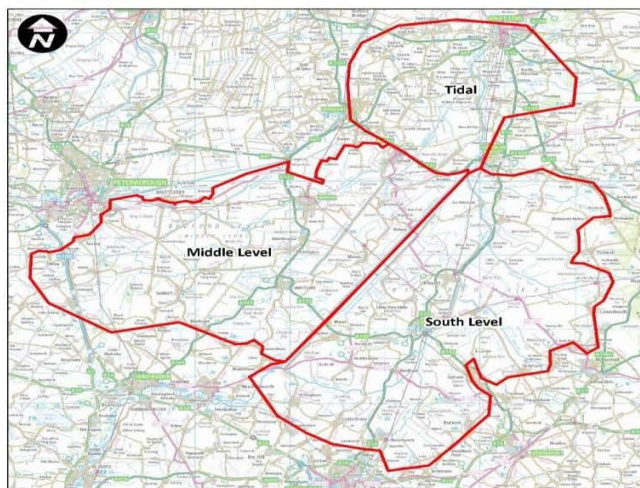
It is understood that there is a significant variation in the types of schemes which may be eligible for FCERM GiA funding. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that the attention given to investigating a strategic approach should be proportional to the size of the scheme. Therefore, for smaller schemes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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Flood risk management for the Fens Project

Phase 1
Data gathering
and collective
ownership

Phase 2
High level
action plan /
strategy

Phase 3
onwards
Phased action
plans



Ely Group of Internal Drainage Boards



middle level
commissioners



The Chairman referred to the condition of the weedscreen at Middlemoor pumping station and that the Board would need to make plans for its replacement in the near future. In response to Mr Whittome, Mr Hill reported on the current position concerning engineering breakdown insurance.

Councillor Palmer referred to the Consulting Engineer's comments concerning the winding resistance on the motors and Members gave consideration to the current conditions of the pumps and their possible future overhaul or replacement. Mr Hill referred to the Clerk's comments concerning a refresh of the asset surveys, which would help to guide the Board to potential future investment required at the pumping stations and also to reassessing the insurance values.

With regards to the erection of 3 dwellings on land adjacent to 233 Oilmills Road, Ramsey Mereside (MLC Ref Nos 197, 200 & 223), the Board approved for the Planning Engineer to initially write to the parties involved in order to resolve potential issues.

Mr Hill referred to the fencing at Rorkes Drift farm which had been reported at the last meeting as being temporary. He advised however that, if this was within the Board's Byelaw distance, it needed to be consented. The District Officer agreed to inspect the site and to instruct the Clerk of any actions that may be required.

With regards to the change of use of agricultural land at Ramsey St Marys (MLC Ref No 219), Mr Clarke reported that the application had been approved in principle but there were some conditions to be attached to the application and that these were being resolved but would not be an issue for the Board.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) That the Consulting Engineers be requested to revisit and update the asset surveys and insured values of property.

(NB) – Mr Clarke declared an interest in the planning application (MLC Ref No 219) received from Ramsey St Marys Village Trust.

B.802 Capital Improvement Programme

Members considered the Board's future capital improvement programme.

RESOLVED

That the Capital Programme be approved in principle and for the programme to be updated following receipt of the updated asset surveys.

B.803 District Officer's Report

The Board considered the Report of the District Officer.

The Chairman recommended that the Board continue with its three year annual phased maintenance programme.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report 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 arrange for drainworks to be carried out for the coming year.

B.804 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Mr Hill referred to the Conservation Officer's Newsletter, dated December 2018, previously circulated to the Board.

The Board considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.805 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

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

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

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

B.806 Environment Agency – Precepts

Mr Hill reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2019/2020 in the sum of £5,742.72 (the precept for 2018/2019 being £5,469).

B.807 Rents for the Slamp

Further to minute B.760, Mr Hill reported that, with the agreement of the Board, the Chairman had taken over the tenancy of the land formerly rented by Mrs Pickard.

The Board considered whether any change was appropriate in the levels of rental being obtained for their land at the Slamp. (Present rental - £100 per acre)

RESOLVED

That no change in the levels of rental be made at the present time, and the matter be considered at the next meeting of the Board.

B.808 Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Subscriptions

Mr Hill reported that it was proposed by ADA to increase subscriptions by approximately 2% in 2019, viz:- from £542 to £553.

RESOLVED

That the increased subscription be paid for 2019.

b) Future ADA Communications

Mr Hill 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.809 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.

The Chairman reported on the discussions at the Chair's meeting and the presentation made by Cope Safety Management and that he had received a letter dated 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 arrangements, he 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.

In response to the Vice Chairman, the Chairman reported that the support provided would be in the production of policies, risk assessments, method statements and should provide benefit to the Board and in view of this he had confirmed that the Board would join the arrangement with Cope Safety Management.

Mr Whittome fully supported the action of the Chairman.

RESOLVED

That the actions of the Chairman be approved.

B.810 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.811 Defra IDB1 Returns

Mr Hill referred to the completed IDB1 form for 2017/2018.

B.812 Budgeting

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

B.813 Review of Internal Controls

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

B.814 Risk Management Assessment

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

B.815 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.816 Annual Governance Statement – 2018/2019

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

RESOLVED

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

B.817 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £36,487.74 which had been made during the financial year 2018/2019.

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

(NB) - The Chairman and Mr D Roberts declared interests in the payments made to D C Roberts & Son.

B.818 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2018/2019

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

RESOLVED

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

B.819 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 60.18% and 39.82%.

The Chairman reminded Members to give consideration to possible future works when setting the rate.

Mr Whittome considered that one view should be that the Board should set a rate to cover the approved budgeted expenditure for the year.

Mr Clarke felt that the Board should consider future likely expenditure and to start increasing the rate now to make provision for this.

Mr D Roberts considered that the Board currently had a very low rate, but that this would need to be increased considerably for future improvement works.

The Chairman proposed and Mr Whittome seconded that the Board set a rate of 9.0p for 2019/2020.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor Clarke and seconded by Mr D Roberts that the Board set a rate of 14.0p for 2019/2020.

Votes were cast:-

	<u>FOR</u>	<u>AGAINST</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Amendment (14.0p)	2	6	2
Proposal (9.0p)	8	2	-

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £31,678 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 £19,063 and £12,615 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 9.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v) That a Special levy of £12,615 be made and issued to Huntingdonshire 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.820 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.821 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Thursday the 18th June 2020 and the Chairman be authorised to make arrangement for an Inspection prior to the meeting.