

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Upwell Internal Drainage Board
held at the Lamb and Flag Public House, Welney on Monday the 20th May 2019

PRESENT

K Goodger Esq (Chairman)	S Hartley Esq
P Clabon Esq (Vice Chairman)	R S Means Esq
H G Bliss Esq	D J Pope Esq
C J Crofts Esq	J Quail Esq
R B Gott Esq	N R Russell Esq
G W Gowler Esq	B Scott Esq
C F Hartley Esq	D Scott Esq
J E Hartley Esq	P M Tegerdine Esq
N V M Walker Esq	

Miss Samantha Ablett (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Carl Nunn (District Officer) were in attendance.

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

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from R D Gladwin Esq, A Quail Esq and P Russell Esq.

B.1788 Declarations of Interest

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

Mr Means declared an interest in minute B.1791.

Mr C Hartley declared an interest in minute B.1791 and (as a Member of the Middle Level Board) in any matters relating to the Middle Level Commissioners.

B.1789 Confirmation of Minutes

It was noted that Mr Gladwin had tendered his apologies for the meeting held on the 21st January 2019 and therefore could not have declared an interest.

RESOLVED

That, subject to the amendment, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 21st January 2019 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1790 Amendments to the Constitution

Further to minute B.1763, Miss Ablett reported that the Assistant Clerk had recently contacted the Environment Agency to advise of the Boards wishes to amend their constitution so as to reduce the number of members by 3 and that she would be writing to the RFCC for their formal consideration, before consulting with Defra. However, the Assistant Clerk had also advised that, in view of Brexit, she did not anticipate the matter being concluded until March 2020.

Members expressed disappointment that the amendments to their constitution had not been commenced until recently.

B.1791 Worlds End Farm, Nordelph

Further to minute B.1767, Miss Ablett advised that due to the confidential nature of the issues concerning this item, it was necessary to pass a formal resolution to exclude the public.

RESOLVED

That in pursuance of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting when the above matters are being considered by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

B.1792 Hales Drove, Old Croft River

Further to minute B.1768, Miss Ablett reminded the Board of their decision to sheet pile the section along the frontage of the properties at Hales Drove, due to concerns regarding the stability of the bank, which would enable maintenance works to be carried out to the channel.

Miss Ablett advised that a letter had subsequently been received from one of the residents who was concerned that the piling works may result in subsidence to her property and garden and that the Assistant Clerk and Jonathan Fenn, Middle Level Commissioners' Operations Engineer, had visited the site to inspect the position. Mr Fenn had advised that, in view of the complainant having confirmed that there were already issues with the house and garden, in his opinion, piling may not be the best option.

The Chairman stated that if any work was to be carried out he considered a structural/civil engineers report and advice were required.

Miss Ablett reported that the Clerk had advised that if any structural engineer prepared a report/design for the use of a contractor it may well be there would be a clause in both the report and the contractors' quotation that both would not be accepting any risk involved with the work. An alternative would be to request a contractor to carry out the work and to take ownership of any risk involved, however this could be very costly.

The Chairman advised that the letter from the resident did state that she was concerned with who was responsible for the slippage now and he assumed that the Board was not as they have not done any work. However, he considered that some sort of appraisal should be obtained to see what options were available to the Board. The Chairman reported that Mr Lakey, Middle Level Commissioners' Assistant Operations Engineer, had suggested that the Board may be able to pipe that section or use an alternative piling option. The Chairman reported that another piped section had

cost in the region of £24,000 and as no member was qualified to decide on the necessary works the Board needed to seek professional advice from a structural/civil engineer on the options available and then a decision could be made when all information was to hand.

Members discussed the matter further.

RESOLVED

That the Consulting Engineer obtain quotations for a structural survey of the cottages at Hales Drove and for a quotation to be obtained from a civil engineer to report on the options available to the Board for cleansing the Old Croft river without risk to the properties.

B.1793 Site of Former Shrub House, 46 Church Road, Christchurch – Planning Application F/YR15/0104/F

Further to minute B.1769, Miss Ablett reported that the Chairman and Vice Chairman together with the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer had attended a site meeting in March 2019 with Chris Barnes, the new developer, and his agent, MTC Engineering, in order to progress the application.

She advised that an amicable position had been reached and revised consent applications had been submitted to the Board for processing.

B.1794 Roadway to Nordelph Pumping Station

Further to minute B.1770, Miss Ablett apologised to Members as a letter had not yet been sent to Duncan Slaid of Norfolk County Council, County Farms Division, to ask that the roadway be repaired under the joint maintenance arrangements, as requested by the Board at their last meeting, but the Assistant Clerk has assured her this was in hand.

Members enquired whether the road was a public right of way and the District Foreman advised it was from the main road up to the bank, where it turned towards the bungalow.

Mr Means reported that the Nordelph IDB had had a similar problem with the roadway down to their pumping station and after correspondence with Kings Lynn Borough Council, the Council had agreed to repair it.

Miss Ablett enquired whether the status of this road was the same as that reported within Nordelph IDB and the District Foreman confirmed it was. Mr Means suggested contacting the Middle Level Commissioners who dealt with the problem on behalf of the Nordelph IDB.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Clerk write to Duncan Slaid of Norfolk County Council Farms Division regarding repairs to the roadway under the joint maintenance arrangements.
- ii) That the Clerk write to Kings Lynn Borough Council regarding the repairs to the road being completed, on the basis they had already repaired a similar road for another IDB and had therefore set a precedent.

B.1795 Updating IDB Byelaws

Further to minute B.1771, the Board considered their updated Byelaws.

Miss Ablett reminded the Board they had previously requested that an additional Byelaw be added to the updated Byelaws to the effect that any material in an IDB drain obstructing the watercourse and any foreign matter deposited on the banks by a Contractor was the responsibility of the Landowner and not the Board. She reported, however, that having investigated the matter further she had advised the Chairman that the Board were unable to make a Byelaw to this effect as it did not refer to any offence having taken place.

Miss Ablett outlined the options available to the Board and reminded Members that, due to their flood risk responsibilities, the Board was responsible for removing any items blocking a culvert, for example. She further advised that the Board was responsible for the disposal of any debris it removes from the drains.

RESOLVED

That the updated Byelaws be adopted.

B.1796 Collection of Fly Tipped Rubbish

Further to minute B.1772, Miss Ablett apologised as a letter had not yet been sent to the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk to get confirmation that they would collect fly tipped material that the Board removes and places on the public highway. However, she had been assured by the Assistant Clerk that this was in hand.

Miss Ablett advised that Mr Partridge had again been in contact regarding fly tipping and she confirmed that the Assistant Clerk had responded to him advising that this was not a matter for the Board or their responsibility.

Councillor Crofts advised that any individual could request for fly tipping to be removed via the Borough Council's website. The Chairman suggested all ratepayers should be made aware of this.

RESOLVED

- i) That a separate note be sent to all ratepayers with the rate notices and also with any notice of entry being sent to a land owner/occupier, advising that it is the land owner/occupier's responsibility to remove any fly tipping/debris from drains and not that of the Board.
- ii) That details from the Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk's website regarding fly tipping also be sent with the above note.

B.1797 Clerk's Report

Miss Ablett advised:-

i) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That a third Chair's Meeting was held on the 11th March 2019 and that discussions at this centred around:-

- 1) The provision of increased support to IDBs on Health and Safety management and control.
- 2) The Future investment planning for the Lower River Great Ouse catchment.
- 3) Future planning for IDBs and DDCs administered by the Middle Level Commissioners.
- 4) Member training.

One option for future Board arrangements discussed at the second and third meetings was the subject of a briefing paper.

Miss Ablett referred to the briefing paper and reported that there were concerns within a lot of Boards regarding membership; some Boards found it difficult to attract new Members, some struggled to obtain a sufficient number of Members to be in quorate, and there were not many of the younger generation coming forward and the numbers of farms was reducing.

She confirmed that sub-committees could be formed to discuss any necessary drainworks so that local knowledge was retained and differential rating could be used to allow for any significant differences in rates. She also advised one of the aims was to reduce administration and save money.

The Chairman advised this was not something being forced upon the Board and reported that at the Chairs' meeting he had suggested that an arrangement along the lines of that operated by the Kings Lynn Consortium or Ely Consortium would be an idea.

The Chairman further advised there would be lots of discussions regarding this option and any decision to proceed was a long way off but he was aware there were already several Boards that did not wish to amalgamate.

ii) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) 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.

b) Good Governance Guide for Internal Drainage Board Members

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

with knowledge to help expand their grasp of the role, and how best to execute their responsibilities on the Board.

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

That ADAs workshops were well attended and are helping to deal with the questions being raised by Defra following the Audit Commission Report which criticized aspects of IDB governance. At least one member of this Board attended one of the two local workshops in the area and hence the Board will be able to record in the IDB1 Defra return that training has been provided on Governance. In addition to governance Defra appear to expect over time that training will be given for the following; Finance, Environment, Health, safety and welfare and Communications and engagement. The Board may wish to consider an order of priority for future training and a timetable for delivery.

e) Workstreams

That ADA annually review their workstreams and an update is included.

iii) 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.

iv) 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.1798 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

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

Upwell I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – May 2019

Pumping Stations

Other than the matters previously reported at the January 19 meeting and that described below, only routine maintenance has been carried out.

Upwell Fen

The meter tails insulation has been damaged by mice who have eaten through to the copper and hence this requires replacement. These were the original tails, therefore will not be covered by any warranty on the new control equipment. The vermin should be controlled to avoid further damage.

It appears that the pump is running in the day on normal rate electricity, the control equipment supplier has been asked to rectify this.

Automatic Weedscreen Cleaning Equipment

Fen Fencing attended site to install the new palisade fencing earlier in the year but could not access the site due to the poor condition of the track down to the station, they were requested to carry out the work as soon as conditions improved sufficiently and at the time of repairing the report the fence is currently being installed.

Cock Fen and Upwell Fen

New hand railing has been completed at Cock Fen and new handrailing and flooring around the Upwell Fen pump discharge are currently being completed.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 5 new development related matters have been received and, where appropriate, dealt with since the last meeting:

MLC Ref.	Council Ref.	Applicant	Type of Development	Location
479	18/01977/F	Mr Clark	Residence (Garage)	Green Lane, Christchurch
480	F/YR18/1067/F	Mr & Mrs Almond	Residence (Extension)	Padgetts Road, Christchurch
481	18/01781/DISC_A	Mr D Russell	Residential (2 plots)	Silt Road, Nordelph
482	F/YR19/0149/F	Mr J Towler	Residence	Crown Road, Christchurch
483	F/YR19/0185/F	Ms J Kennedy & Mr Smith	Equine (Paddock & manège)	Upwell Road, Christchurch

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

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

Some of the above are likely to discharge treated foul water effluent into the Board's system either via private treatment plants or Christchurch Water Recycling Centre (WRC).

No further correspondence has been received from the applicants or the applicants' agent(s) or Board decision/instructions are required concerning the following development and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

Erection of 6 dwellings at land south west of Syringa House, Upwell Road, Christchurch - Mr J Stittle & Miss R Watson (MLC Ref No 437) & Mr B Dawson (MLC Ref No 437)

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

Erection of 4 dwellings with detached garages, comprising of 2 x 2-storey 4-bed dwellings and 2 x 3-storey 5-bed dwellings at the site of the former Shrub House, 46 Church Road, Christchurch – P J Farms Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 409, 412 & 414)

Further to item ii) of minute B.1777 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters, a meeting attended by the developer, his engineering consultant, the Board's Chairman and Vice-Chairman together with the Commissioners' Planning Engineer was held in March.

An amicable position was reached and revised consent applications were subsequently submitted to the Board for processing.

Proposed residential development of 17 units to the north west of The Grange and south east of North Road, Welney – Loyd Homes (Client of JPP Consulting) (MLC Ref No 462)

Further to the last meeting report an on-site meeting was held with the applicant's engineering consultant, JPP Consulting, to clarify various issues.

Revised drawings have been supplied. These are being considered and responses are being prepared.

Proposed residential development (4 dwellings) at former Three Tunns Public House, Main Street/Bedford Bank (East) Welney – Elgood & Sons Ltd (MLC Ref No 475)

Further to the last meeting correspondence has been received from the applicant's water level management consultant, the Geoff Beel Consultancy (GBC), concerning surface water disposal.

As the application was not the subject of a detailed pre-application consultation procedure the Chairman gave special dispensation to respond to the enquiry at the Board's expense.

GBC was advised that, the Board would accept "in principle" an unregulated direct discharge into its system subject to the provision of a viable scheme for appropriate water level and flood risk management that meets current design standards and the Board's requirements.

Development Contributions

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

King's Lynn & West Norfolk Local Plan

Local Plan review

In delivering development that supports the economy and housing for current and future generations, the Borough Council needs to balance this with the need to protect and enhance the environment.

The Local Plan for the borough currently consists of the Core Strategy (adopted in 2011) and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (adopted 2016).

These two documents have been internally reviewed and combined to create a new draft document which identifies a strategy and detail for delivering growth in the borough, identifying where development should be located and how it should be delivered up to 2036.

The draft Local Plan review was published for an eight week public consultation period from 4 March to 29 April 2019.

A response was submitted to the Borough Council on behalf of both the Middle Level Commissioners and our associated Boards for whom we provide a planning consultancy service within West Norfolk.

Fenland District Council (FDC)

FDC Liaison Meeting

A follow up meeting was held on 28 March.

Planning Committee Decision at Estover Road, March

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

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

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

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

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

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

"F/YR15/0668/O

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

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

Middle Level Commissioners strongly object to the application.

Members received a presentation in accordance with the public participation from Mr Graham Moore (Middle Level commissioners), who was speaking on behalf of Middle

Level Commissioners and March Fifth Internal Drainage Board [sic] and Mrs Liz Whitehouse, who were both speaking in objection to the Application.

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

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

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

- Councillor Mrs Laws stated that it is a windfall site but the drainage issue is an area of concern. With regard to viability, the site does not deliver what it should and although the Section 106 Officer has looked into this. The development is therefore less sustainable than it should be.*
- Councillor Sutton stated that he believes the development is sustainable. It is in flood zone 1 and the Lead Local Flood Authority who is a Statutory Consultee has no objection to the proposal. The issues concerning the discharge raised by Middle Level Commissioners and the IDB can be reviewed at a later stage and do not need to be considered today. Planning Committee Members have to make decisions on material planning reasons. The proposal does not go against the Neighbourhood Plan; if it did then Officers would not be recommending it for approval.*
- Councillor Sutton stated he can see no material planning reason to refuse the application.*
- Nick Harding stated that in terms of the surface water issues which have been raised. The IDB have recognised that the LLFA is the authority that we should be going to in consideration of these matters and if the NPPF is referred to it does state that major development should incorporate sustainable drainage systems and should take account of the advice of the LLFA. The advice from the LLFA is that this development proposal with conditions is acceptable.*
- Nick Harding stated that he is very supportive of the IDB's they have a separate legal process which has to be complied with by persons who wish to discharge their surface water and just because planning permission is granted for a development it does not mean they are automatically going to get consent from the IDB's. The Developer still has to apply to the IDB and the detail for the scheme has to be agreed.*
- Nick Harding stated that with regard to Anglian Water, they have raised no objection to this application. They have indicated that they will make necessary improvements to their network to ensure they can deal with the water and therefore as we do not have an objection from Anglian Water, and members*

should consider on what basis would we be able to defend a reason for refusal based on foul water capacity.

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

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

There has been no significant involvement with the LLFA within Norfolk as they have a different response threshold to Cambridgeshire but it is presumed that in similar circumstances Huntingdonshire District Council would have a similar view.

NB. Within Cambridgeshire the LLFA responds to “Major” developments i.e.

- a) The provision of dwelling houses where the number of dwelling houses to be provided is 10 or more; or the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more;
- b) The provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more; or
- c) Development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more;

but within Norfolk it only responds to residential developments in excess of 100 dwellings.

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.

County Council Public Sector Services

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 of the Flood & Water Team possibly extending its service to another County Council.

Flood Risk Management Trainees

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

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/>

RMA support & the Delivery of projects

Following concerns raised by IDBs and other RMAs the EA has engaged RMA support to assist in the delivery of projects. Funded by the Local Levy and based at Ely it is understood that they will be the Commissioners'/Boards' point of contact.

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.

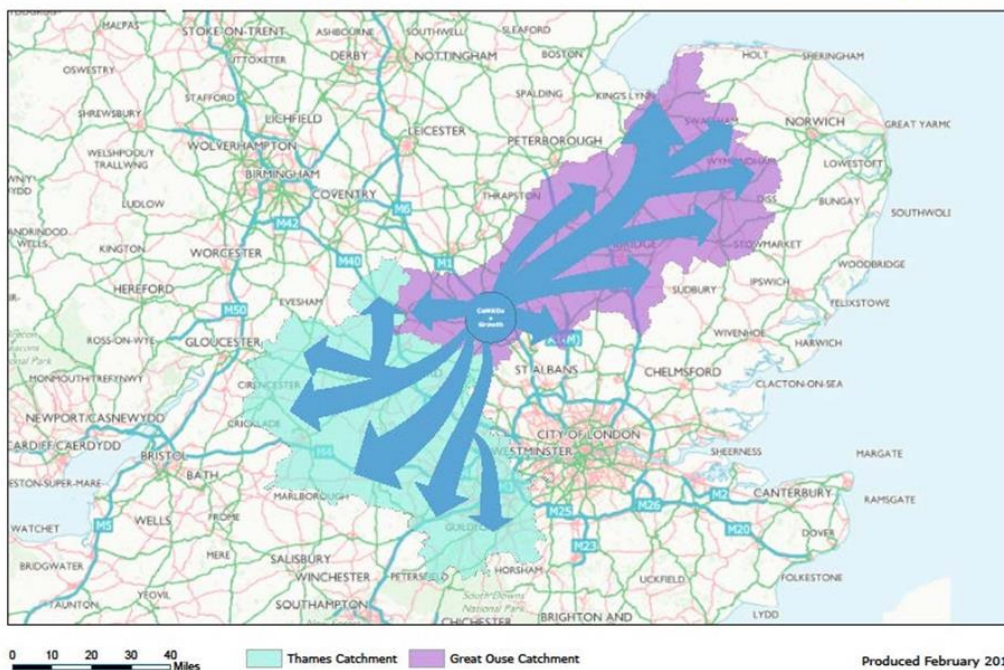
Update on RFCC's Growth Work

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



Produced February 2018

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

The EA's 2018 Flood Action Campaign

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

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

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

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

The potential environmental funding is available for the following areas noise, water, carbon, landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage and, therefore, could include flooding, pollution, water framework directive and biodiversity projects associated with the Strategic Road Network – A1, A14, A47 etc. Further information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/highways-england-designated-funds>

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

(a) Environment Agency

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

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

(b) Cambridgeshire County Council

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

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

Fenland Flooding Issues Sub-group

A meeting was held in early April. There are currently no know issues within the Board's catchment.

Flood Risk Management (FRM) for the Fens Technical Group [Previously reported as the Future Fenland 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.

creating a better place
for people and wildlife



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

Our ref: ENV0000678C
Your ref
Date: 15 January 2019

Dear Chairman

Flood Risk Management for the Fens

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yours sincerely



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

Mobile: 07824 431597

paul.burrows@environment-agency.gov.uk

January 2019

The Strategic Approach for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Projects

Supplementary Local Guidance Version 1

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

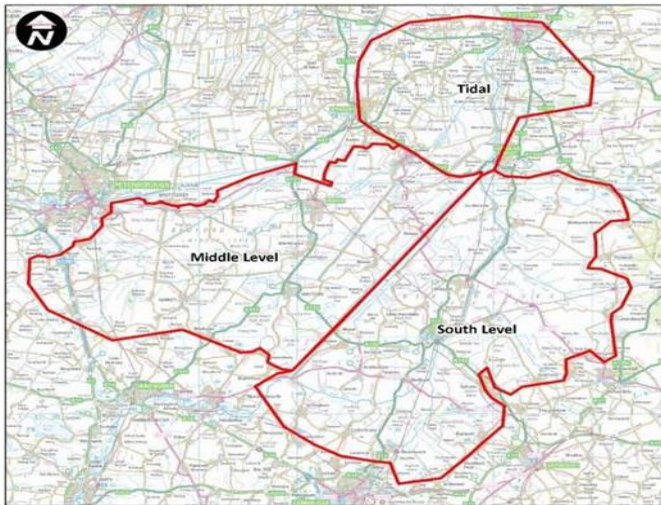
It is understood that there is a significant variation in the types of schemes which may be eligible for FCERM GiA funding. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that the attention given to investigating a strategic approach should be proportional to the size of the scheme. Therefore, for smaller schemes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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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.

General Advice

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

- (a) Mr and Mrs R J Darville – An application for byelaw consent was received for the piping and filling of a watercourse adjacent to their property in Fen View, Christchurch. Concern was expressed at the length of watercourse to be piped and that it could not be inspected due to excessive weedgrowth. A request was made to have the watercourse cleared. However, before the clearance was undertaken the applicants decided to not proceed with the application and it was, therefore, refused.

Consulting Engineer

10 May 2019

Upwell (331)\Reports\May 2019

The Chairman advised that the fencing, handrails and hardstanding works at Upwell Fen and Cock Fen had commenced and he had been assured that all work would be completed in time for the summer inspection.

Miss Ablett referred to the erection of 6 dwellings at land south west of Syringa House (MLC Ref. No. 437) and advised that no further correspondence had been received from the applicants or their agents concerning the development and enquired whether the Board wished for the Planning Engineer to write to the applicant again.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) That the Planning Engineer writes again to the applicant and agent regarding MLC Ref No. 437 to follow up the application.

B.1799 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.1800 Maintenance Work in the District

- a) District Work Report – January – May 2019

The Board considered the District Work Report.

RESOLVED

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

- b) Drainworks Programme 2019/2020

With reference to minute B.407, the Board gave consideration to maintenance work required in 2019/2020.

The Chairman requested that if any member had or was made aware of any issues within the District they advise either him, the Vice Chairman or the District Foreman so these could be resolved.

He reported that the Board must make it clear to landowners/occupiers that if they drill their crops after a notice of entry has been given this was at their own risk and the Board would not be held responsible and no compensation for loss of crop would be paid.

Mr Means requested that he be copied in to any notices of entry sent for planned works on Mr Partridge's land. The Chairman advised that, if Mr Partridge was in agreement, this could be arranged and requested that Mr Means liaise with the District Foreman when notices are received.

RESOLVED

- i) That the programme be approved and the District Officers be authorised to undertake the necessary maintenance work.
- ii) That any notices of entry relating to works on Mr Partridge's land also be copied to Mr Means.

B.1801 District Labour Board's Employee's Wages

- a) Miss Ablett reported that during the financial year 2018/2019 overtime payments had been made as indicated on the Supplementary Schedule.

Councillor Pope stated that the hourly overtime appeared high and Mr Gowler voiced concerns that if contract work was being charged at £32 per hour this did not leave much to allow for the running costs of the tractor and flail mower.

The Chairman stated that Members must also be aware that the District Foreman may well have had to do extra work out of hours.

- b) NEST Pension Update

Further to minute B.1735(b), Miss Ablett reported that the employer's Nest pension contribution rate had increased to 4% from the 1st April 2019.

B.1802 Chemical Weed Control of District Drains

With reference to minute B.1736, the Chairman reported that there were no plans for chemical treatment works at the present time.

B.1803 District Officers' Fees

- a) The Board gave consideration to the District Officer's fees for 2019/2020.
- c) The Board gave consideration to the expenses payable to Mr Goodger.

RESOLVED

- i) The Board agree that the sum of £3,500.00 be allowed for the services of the District Officers for 2019/2020.
- ii) That the Board agree that a sum of up to £900.00 for expenses be allowed and split between the District Officers as necessary.

(NB) – The Chairman and the Vice Chairman declared interests when these items were discussed.

B.1804 Conservation Officer's BAP Report

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.1805 State-aided Schemes

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

Update on the EA grant-in-aid position

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

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

RESOLVED

- i) That no proposals be formulated at the present time.
- ii) That the Consulting Engineers be requested to undertake an asset survey and to recalculate the pumping station valuations.

B.1806 Charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work

Consideration was given to whether any revisions were necessary in the Board's charges for hiring plant for private work (last reviewed – May 2018).

Flail mower

Present charge - £32 per hour (inclusive of operator's wages)

RESOLVED

That the hire charge be increased to £35 per hour.

B.1807 Environment Agency – Precepts

Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2019/2020 in the sum of £54,563.80 (the precept for 2018/2019 being £51,996).

B.1808 Association of Drainage Authorities Future ADA Communications

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

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

B.1809 Complaint regarding the administration of the Board

Miss Ablett reported that various complaints had been made by an individual concerning the administration of the Board which had been ongoing for several years, with the most recent dated the 15th May 2019.

Despite the Assistant Clerk having responded to all the points raised the complainant still insisted his questions had not been answered and was now threatening to report the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman and National Audit Office.

Miss Ablett advised that, having discussed this with both the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk, it had been agreed that the complainant be written to requesting that he supply supporting data and contact the office to arrange a meeting, within 30 days, or the Board would consider the matter closed and await to hear from the Local Government Ombudsman and the National Audit Office. The Assistant Clerk was satisfied that should the complainant pursue this course of action the Board had not acted in an incorrect manner.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to the complainant advising that if supporting data was not supplied and a meeting was not arranged within 30 days, the Board would consider the matter closed and await to hear from the Local Government Ombudsman or the National Audit Office, should he decide to take the matter further.

B.1810 Contribution from Developers

With reference to minute B.272(b), Miss Ablett reported that a contribution towards the cost of dealing with the increased flow or volume of surface water run-off and treated effluent volume had been received.

The question was raised whether the contributions paid by developers covered all the charges invoiced to the Board by the Middle Level Commissioners for dealing with the developers' applications.

The Chairman confirmed that this matter had always been of some concern to the Board and had been raised in the past with the previous Clerk to the Board. He added that as the Board was not a statutory consultee they were unable to charge the developers for the costs in dealing with the application.

Miss Ablett advised that, unfortunately, this was a cost the Board must suffer as they were responsible for flood prevention/land drainage within the district. She further reported on the Boards and the Middle Level Commissioners ability to charge for these services.

Councillor Crofts confirmed that the Board was not a statutory consultee, which he considered absurd as although the Council had to consult with the Environment Agency they did not have to engage with Drainage Boards into where the body handling any water arising from developments went.

The Chairman enquired whether ADA could influence Defra in getting boards to become statutory consultees as other Drainage Boards have the same issues. The Boards should be able to charge as these were developments happening in areas that the Board knows far more about than the Environment Agency.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to ADA and Defra enquiring why the Drainage Boards are not Statutory Consultees and whether there would be any course of action to make them so.

B.1811 Health and Safety

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

Miss Ablett further reported that a letter had been sent to the Chairman on the 25th April advising that it had been agreed at the Chairs meeting to enter into a 3 year contract with Cope Safety Management with the annual payment being split between the Boards. Assuming all Boards joined the arrangement, she advised that the cost to the Board would be £600 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.

RESOLVED

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

B.1812 Budgeting

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

B.1813 Review of Internal Controls

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

B.1814 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 and considered having a professional revaluation of the Board's real estate assets, for insurance purposes.

RESOLVED

That no changes be made to the valuation at this time and for the matter to be reviewed again at the next annual meeting.

B.1815 Exercise of Public Rights

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

B.1816 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.1817 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £395,016.67 which had been made during the financial year 2018/2019.

(NB) – Mr Bliss declared an interest in the payment made to H G Bliss Farms Ltd.

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

B.1818 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 and the completion of Section 2 of the Annual Return as required in the Audit Regulations.

RESOLVED

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

B.1819 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2019/2020

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2019/2020 and were informed by Miss Ablett that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by special levy on local billing authorities would be respectively 75.92% and 24.08%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £187,830 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 £142,601 and £45,229 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 20.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v)
 - a) That a Special levy of £26,970 be made and issued to the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
 - b) That a Special levy of £18,259 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vi) That the seal of the Board be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levies referred to in resolution (v).
- vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levies by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.1820 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.1821 Dates of next Meetings

RESOLVED

That the next Meetings of the Board be held as follows in 2020, viz:-

- i) Monday the 20th January 2020 at 6.00pm
- ii) Monday the 18th May 2020 at 5.30pm
- iii) That an Inspection of the District be held on Monday the 17th June 2019 and that arrangements be made to meet at the Lamb and Flag Public House at 6.00pm.

B.1822 Structure under the road at the Sixteen Foot River

The Chairman referred to the structure under the road at the Sixteen Foot river near the old Bedlam Pumping Station and advised that the Middle Level Commissioners' Operations Engineer, Jonathan Fenn, had suggested depositing heavy clay in the tunnel, which he was satisfied would alleviate the problems as water would not seep through and it would be a far more cost effective option than concrete or foam.

Members considered that this would be a good solution and should be investigated further.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman and Vice Chairman discuss the proposal further with the Middle Level Commissioners' Operations Engineer.