

CHURCHFIELD AND PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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25 February 2020

Mr Chairman and Gentlemen

Meeting of the Board
9th March 2020

I enclose the Agenda for the Meeting of the Board to be held at the Crown Lodge Hotel, Downham Road, Outwell at 7.00 pm on Monday the 9th March 2020.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS AGENDA INCLUDES CONFIDENTIAL PAPERS. APART FROM THE COPY RETAINED WITH THE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES THEY WILL BE DESTROYED FOLLOWING THE MEETING AND MEMBERS ARE REMINDED THAT THEY MUST NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH ANYONE OTHER THAN A BOARD MEMBER.

AFTER THE MEETING PLEASE DESTROY YOUR COPY OF THE PAPERS OR RETURN THEM TO THE OFFICE TO BE DESTROYED.

Please telephone or e-mail to confirm your attendance as soon as possible.

Yours truly

D C THOMAS

Clerk to the Board

To the Chairman and the Members of the Churchfield and Plawfield Internal Drainage Board

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare any interests relating to the agenda.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

To confirm the Minutes of the Meetings of the Board held on the 4th March and 28th June 2019.

(Copy pages 14-27)

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

5. Appointment of Chairman

To appoint the Chairman of the Board
(Present Chairman – S A Calton Esq)

6. Appointment of Vice Chairman

To appoint the Vice Chairman of the Board
(Present Vice Chairman – D J W Boyce Esq)

7. Board Membership

Further to minute B.1044, the Clerk will report that Mr Andrew Robb has accepted the invitation to become a Member of the Board.

8. Election of Board Members

The Clerk will report that as the number of candidates for membership did not exceed the number of persons to be elected (eight), the following candidates were elected as Members of the Board for a period of three years from 1st November 2019, viz:-

ALLEN, Paul
BOYCE, Dale J W
BOYCE, Glenn D
COWLING, David

CUTTING, Peter B
LUNN, David J
ROBB, Andrew

The Clerk will also report that Mr R Secker did not seek re-election to the Board and that a letter of thanks, on behalf of the Board, had been sent to him.

9. Vacancy in Membership

To consider the filling of the vacancy in the membership of the Board caused by the resignation of Mr Secker.

10. Land Drainage Act 1991
Board Membership – Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk

The Clerk will report that the Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk have re-appointed Councillors S A Calton, C J Crofts and K Harrison and appointed Councillors D J W Boyce, J Kirk, R Melton and C Rose to be Members of the Board under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

The Clerk will also report that Councillor Pope had resigned from the Council.

11. Water Transfer Licencing

Further to minute B.1004, the Clerk will report that the relevant licences have been applied for for the MLC and associated Boards. These are in the process of being validated and the EA have 3 further years to determine them. It is worth noting that the EA have confirmed that only MLC system to IDB transfers do not require a separate licence.

12. Contravention of Byelaws
Infilling of Ditch - “Arc Rouge”, Lowside, Outwell

Further to minute B.1047(b), the Clerk to report.

13. Anglian Water – Culvert at Points 35-36

Further to minute B.1054(iii), the District Officer reports:-

“That other than a small amount of spade work nothing has been done at this location. There is slight flow at the moment but I expect mechanical intervention to be required VERY shortly”.

14. Access Strip – Points 29-30

Further to minute B.1054(iv), the District Officer reports:-

“That overhanging trees have been pruned but NO levelling has been undertaken as yet”.

15. Access Strip – Points 48-49

Further to minute B.1054(v), the Clerk to report.

16. Clerk's Report

The Clerk advises:-

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.

(Copy pages 28-30)

That a fourth Chair's Meeting was held on the 26th November 2019.

The meeting commenced with a presentation with slides covering the lottery funded 'Fens Biosphere' bid. This UNESCO designation would have no statutory backing but instead aims to draw attention to the unique nature of the area. Good practice sharing would be facilitated and a framework of support for positive action developed. The idea is to frame the application around the Cambridgeshire peat lands and the IDB districts which provide a network of interconnecting watercourses. As this designation would not lead to a set of actions which would be enforced but could have a positive impact on the area the Board are asked (at this stage) to consider giving its approval in principle to the bid. A summary document detailing the vision is appended.

(Copy pages 31-34)

The Board's approval in principle is sought.

Health and Safety discussions followed and it was agreed that the new arrangement with Cope Safety Management was working well.

The future vision for the MLC and IDBs was discussed and is covered as a separate agenda item.

On member training, after discussion, it was agreed that members would benefit from training on ‘communications and engagement’ as it was felt that Boards generally had challenges in getting messages across to the public.

The only other item covered in any detail was in relation to Board agendas and minutes. It was resolved that the Chairs supported the move to reducing the amount of paper leaving the MLC offices and it was also agreed, for reasons of efficiency, that Chairs be provided with an action points list as soon as practical after the meetings but in advance of issuing draft minutes.

ii) Future Meeting Agendas

That as meeting agendas are getting larger, to include more information to meet legal requirements and ensure members are well informed on issues that might concern them in their role as a Board Member, the Middle Level Commissioners are considering moving close to a paperless arrangement. It is therefore proposed that (for those members that have given email addresses) we will issue the agenda in electronic PDF format. The email will ask for confirmation of receipt of the document but will offer to issue a paper duplicate, but only upon request. The aim of this change is to reduce paper wastage, reduce cost and to reduce the carbon footprint of the office.

The Board are asked to approve this new system for future agendas

iii) Applications for byelaw consent

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

| <u>Name of Applicant</u> | <u>Description of Works</u> | <u>Date Consent Granted</u> |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mr S Smith | Piping and filling of approx. 12m of Board’s District Watercourse between Points 2 & 5, Back Drove, Upwell | 19 th March 2019 |
| Proedge Plant Hire Ltd | Installation of 24.7m long, 2m diameter plastic twinwall culvert between Points 16 and 15 | 10 th June 2019 |

iv) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the 82nd Annual Conference of the Association had been held at the ICE building in Westminster on Wednesday 13th November 2019.

The conference was very well attended and the speakers this year were:-

Stuart Roberts - Vice President National Farmers’ Union – an arable and livestock farmer who has also worked for Defra and Flood Standards Agency – who shared his views on the need for more radical and bold thinking on flood risk management and the supply of water for agriculture.

Bryan Curtis – Chair Coastal Group Network – Chartered Engineer and a member of CIWEM and ICE.

Bryan is Chairman of the Coastal Group Network. This is a network of Councils, Ports, Government bodies who provide a collective voice for the coast and management of the shoreline.

Robin Price – Interim Managing Director – Water Resources East (WRE)

Water Resources East is a partnership from a wide range of industries including water energy, retail, the environment, land management and agriculture who are working in collaboration to manage the number of significant risks to the future supply of water in the East of England. The NFU and ADA (via the David Thomas) have membership on the Board of WRE.

The conference was introduced by Robert Caudwell who asked all present to mark their appreciation of the work being done in the north east of England to respond to and manage the impacts of the floods. He stated his opinion that warnings at previous ADA conferences over the lack of river maintenance had fallen on deaf ears and that the flooding taking place at the time was clear evidence of the need to better balance capital investment with maintenance spending. He then went on to outline ADA's intention to lobby all parties throughout the general election. This included sharing the 7-point plan detailed below;

1. Long term investment horizons in the face of climate change challenges

Flood risk management delivers enduring benefits and authorities involved need to be able to plan ahead financially over multiple years and need to receive a sensible balance of capital and revenue funding, spread across the river catchments, in order to find efficiencies through climate change adaptation and resilience, and attract business investment.

2. Promote co-operation and partnership working to manage the water environment and reduce flood risk

Close cooperation between flood risk management authorities, water companies, communities, business and land managers needs the continued strong support of government to deliver adaptive and resilient flood risk maintenance and similar activities more efficiently and affordably.

3. Total catchment management

Total catchment management is now the widely accepted approach to managing our water and now is the time to increase and empower local professionals and communities to manage and operate these catchments together.

4. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)

The next government needs to fully implement Schedule 3 of the Flood & Water Management Act 2010, to ensure future development can keep pace with the challenges of the changing climate, by ensuring that SuDS are maintained over the lifetime of a development.

5. Support local governance in flood and water level management decision making

In some parts of England there is an appetite for greater local maintenance delivery on watercourses and flood defence assets than that currently afforded from national investment. This can be achieved via the careful transfer of some main river maintenance to local bodies or the expansion of areas maintained by those local

bodies, such as Internal Drainage Boards, where there is local support and transitional funding.

6. Local Government Finances

It is vital that Special and Local Levy funding mechanisms for drainage, water level and flood risk management continue to be part of this funding landscape to maintain the democratic link with local communities affected.

7. Brexit: Ensuring a resilient regulatory framework for the water environment

The next government needs to provide clear policy messages about how they wish to make the delivery of environmental improvements to the water environment easier and more effective as we transition from European legislation such as the Water Framework Directive.

Unfortunately, because the conference was held during the pre-election period sometimes known as Purdah, which restricts certain communications during this time, there were no representatives available from the Environment Agency or Defra which significantly restricted the debate on flood risk management, funding and maintenance issues. However, there was considerable support from the floor of the conference for the view that lack of maintenance had significantly contributed to the recent problems with the River Don and the flooding of Fishlake village.

Officers of the Association were re-elected, including Lord De Ramsey as President and Robert Caudwell as Chairman.

Subscriptions to ADA would be increased by 2% for the following year.

b) Annual Conference

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities will be held in London on Wednesday the 11th November 2020.

c) Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse Branch

That the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association will be held on Tuesday the 3rd March 2020 at Prickwillow Village Hall. The format will be as per the 2019 Conference with a workshop in the morning and the Conference in the afternoon.

d) Good Governance Guide for Internal Drainage Board Members

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 on these is included.

(Copy pages 35-37)

f) Emergency Financial Assistance for Internal Drainage Boards

That whilst in East Anglia we have not had the unprecedented levels of rainfall which have occurred further north and in the west of the county in recent years this by no means equates to there being no risk of it occurring here. ADA have written to DEFRA (Copy pages 38-39) seeking to formalise a mechanism for IDBs providing support to the EA in a major event to recover costs. An update will be given should there be any substantive movement from DEFRA on this matter as a result of this request.

v) 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.

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

That a consultation took 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) and was submitted and approved by the Government. These authorities will come into existence on the 1 April 2020.

In Buckinghamshire the decision to create a single unitary authority replacing the existing five councils has been made by the Government, subject to Parliamentary approval. Again this will 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 included representation from one or both county councils. To reflect the changes, membership of all three RFCCs have been varied.

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

vii) Tactical Plans for the Fens Agreement

That the Environment Agency have set up a multi-partner group (FRM for the Fens) to steer work on developing strategic plans for managing flood risk in the lower Great Ouse catchment. This work is considered necessary to address the impacts of population growth and climate change, which are particularly relevant in this area (Copy pages 40-41). The EA is requesting approval to the approach being taken in principle and follows the letter sent in January 2019. The perceived value of this work is that it pre-apportions the benefits (land and property which would flood if not defended) so that applying for grant should be more straight forward and the amount of grant possible clearer. This should give increased certainty and clarity and resolves the issue of double counting benefits where for example a property is protected from flooding by both EA and IDB assets. Work on developing the strategy could take up to 15 years though and the proposal also therefore includes a mechanism for allowing grant-in-aided works to progress during this time on a hold-the-line basis.

The Board's approval in principle is sought.

viii) Water Resources East (WRE)

That the Middle Level Commissioners' Chief Executive has been appointed as ADA's area representative on the Board of WRE. He will act as spokesman for IDBs who have an interest in the future management and provision of water in the East of England. This is particularly important as government consider plans to make the area more resilient and as the impacts of climate change start to bite in an area of rapid housing growth.

ix) Vision for the Future of Boards administered by the MLC

That Members will be aware that the Chair's meetings hosted by the MLC has had an item on the agenda for the last few meetings on future planning of administration and delivery of operations for the Board's collectively. As part of this process it has been agreed that members thoughts should be sought on what they envisage the collective future can and should look like to ensure the most resilient, delivery focused approach that can be achieved. Members should when developing their vision of water management in the fens in 2030 consider the challenges of maintaining representation, improving financial resilience, reducing duplication of work, the potential for cost savings, advantages and disadvantages of the various options available, the impacts of technology and sharing of resources and knowledge.

The information gathered from individual meetings will be collated and presented to the autumn 2020 Chairs meeting for their consideration.

17. Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

To consider the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

(Copy pages 42-60)

18. Capital Improvement Programme

To review and approve the Board's future capital improvement programme.

(Copy page 61)

19. District Officer's Report

To consider the Report of the District Officer.

(Copy page 62)

20. Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

The Clerk to refer to the Conservation Officer's newsletter previously circulated to members, and to consider the most recent BAP Report.

(Copy pages 63-75)

21. District Officer's Expenses

To give consideration to the appropriate reimbursement of the out of pocket expenses of the District Officer for 2020/2021. [The sum of £2,381.55 had been submitted for 2019/2020].

22. State-aided Schemes

To consider whether to undertake further State-aided Schemes and whether any future proposals should be included in the forward capital forecasts provided to the Environment Agency.

Update on the EA grant-in-aid position

The Clerk will report 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.

23. Environment Agency – Precept

The Clerk will report that the precept for the financial year 2020/2021 has been fixed at £2,838.00 representing a rate (including special levies) of 0.597p.

The precept for 2019/2020 was £2,769.14.

24. Association of Drainage Authorities Subscriptions

The Clerk will report that it is proposed by ADA to increase subscriptions by approximately 2% for 2020, viz:- from £553 to £565.

25. Determination of annual values for rating purposes

The Clerk will submit the recommendations for the determination of annual values for rating purposes.

(See Confidential Papers – Page 1)

26. Rate arrears

To consider writing off rate arrears.

(See Confidential Papers – Page 1)

27. Contribution from Developers

With reference to minute B.185(iii), the Clerk will report that a contribution towards the cost of dealing with the increased flow or volume of surface water run-off and treated effluent volume has been received.

(See Confidential Papers – Page 2)

28. Health and Safety

a) Further to minute B.1060(b), quotes were sought and a letter sent to the Chairman on the 25th April 2019 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, the cost to the Board would be £200 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.

The Clerk advises that the Chairman had confirmed that the Board wished to be included in the arrangement with Cope Safety Management.

b) Further to minute B.1060(a), the Chairman will report and will refer to the report received from Cope Safety Management following their visit to the District on the 7th February 2020.

(Copy pages 76-78)

c) The Clerk will refer to the ADA Internal Drainage Boards' Health, Safety & Welfare Survey 2018.

(Copy pages 79-84)

29. Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2018/2019

a) The Clerk will report that in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations all members received a copy of the Annual Accounts for the year ended the 31st March 2019 before the 30th June of that year and approved the Accounts for the purposes of the Regulations.

b) To consider the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2019.

(Copy pages 85-90)

c) To consider the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2019.

(Copy pages 91-97)

30. Annual Accounts of the Board - 2019/2020

The Clerk will report that in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations Internal Drainage Boards' accounts are required to be approved by resolution on or before the 30th June of that year.

31. Defra IDB1 Returns

The Clerk will refer to the completed IDB1 form for 2018/19 and to the letter from the Minister and Annual report summary and analysis received from Defra dated August 2019.

(Copy pages 98-121)

32. Review of Internal Controls

To consider the system of Internal Controls.

33. Risk Management Assessment

To give consideration to the Board's Risk Register.

(Copy page 122-133)

34. Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

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

35. Exercise of Public Rights

The Clerk to refer 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.

36. Payments

The Clerk to report on payments made:-

- a) 2018/2019 (1st February – 31st March 2019)
- b) 2019/2020 (1st April 2019 – 31st January 2020)

(Schedule page 134)

37. Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2020/2021

To consider estimates of revenue expenditure and levy and rate requirements in respect of the financial year 2020/2021.

(Copy pages 135-136)

38. Date of next Meeting

39. Any other business

CHURCHFIELD AND PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Churchfield and Plawfield Internal Drainage Board held at the Crown Lodge Hotel, Outwell on Monday the 4th March 2019

PRESENT

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| D J W Boyce Esq (Vice Chairman) | P B Cutting Esq |
| P Allen Esq | K Harrison Esq |
| D Cowling Esq | R Secker Esq |

Miss Samantha Ablett (representing the Clerk to the Board) was in attendance.

Miss Ablett reported that the Chairman had given his apologies for this meeting

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman took the Chair.

The Vice 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 G D Boyce Esq, S A Calton Esq, Councillor C J Crofts, P W Dorling Esq, D J Lunn Esq and D J Pope Esq.

B.1039 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 D Boyce declared an interest as District Officer in minute no. B.1056.

B.1040 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 5th March and 29th June 2018 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1041 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2017/2018

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

RESOLVED

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

B.1042 Election of Board Members

Miss Ablett reported that the term of Office of the elected Members of the Board would expire on the 31st October 2019 and submitted the proposed Register of Electors applicable to the 2019 election.

RESOLVED

That the Register be approved.

B.1043 Resignation of Board Member

Miss Ablett reported that having given his apologies for this meeting, Peter Dorling had also advised the Chairman that, following a double heart bypass, he felt that it was time for him to step down. She advised that Mr Dorling had been a member of the Board since 1977.

RESOLVED

That the decision of Mr Dorling be received with regret and that the Board's appreciation of his services to the District be recorded in the minutes and conveyed to him together with their best wishes for the future.

B.1044 Vacancy in Membership

Consideration was given to the filling of the vacancy on the Board caused by the resignation of Mr Dorling.

Mr Allen reported that Mr Dorling had advised that Mr Andrew Robb may be interested in becoming a member.

RESOLVED

That Mr Andrew Robb be invited to become a Member of the Board if he is prepared to do so.

B.1045 Presentation to Mr Scott

Further to minute B.1002, Miss Ablett reported that an engraved whiskey decanter had been presented to Mr Scott in recognition of his services to the District as Chairman.

B.1046 Fountain Frozen Foods

Further to minute B.1005, Miss Ablett reported that the Assistant Clerk had confirmed that the maintenance specification did not appear to have been sent to Mr Lawrence. However, having recently emailed the specification to Mr Lawrence, the Assistant Clerk had then tried to speak with him, but it appears that he no longer works solely from the Upwell site. The Assistant Clerk had subsequently spoken with Clive Himsworth, the Commercial Director at Fountain Frozen Foods, who has confirmed that he will look into the matter.

RESOLVED

That the Assistant Clerk update the Chairman/Vice Chairman when a response is received from Mr Himsworth.

B.1047 Contraventions of Byelaws

a) Planted Conifers – Orchard Barns, Small Lode, Upwell

Further to minute B.1017(a), Miss Ablett reported that in December 2017 Mr Fitzpatrick had agreed to remove the conifers but advised that he could not comply within 14 days. Following the initial contact with Mr Fitzpatrick, an email together with photographs had been received from Mrs Fitzpatrick on 10th March 2018 asking why the conifers had to be moved.

Miss Ablett reported that this email had not been responded to and enquired what action the Board wished to take.

The Vice Chairman advised that as the conifers were within the 9 metre byelaw strip they must be removed, especially in view of this being an important stretch of drain.

RESOLVED

That Mr & Mrs Fitzpatrick be written to again advising that the conifers must be removed from the access strip within 2 months or further action would be taken by the Board.

[Post meeting note – The District Officer telephoned the Middle Level offices on 5th March to advise that the conifers have been moved; therefore no further action is required]

b) Infilling of Ditch – “Arc Rouge”, Lowside, Outwell

Further to minute B.1017(c), Miss Ablett reported that Councillor Crofts first submitted the original consent application, together with the appropriate fee, on the 12th February 2018. On the 21st February he had been advised that he needed to supply further information within 28 days but when nothing further was received consent was refused.

The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the Clerk to the Board met Councillor Crofts on site on the 12th December 2018 to discuss the works that would be needed to satisfy the Board requirements.

Miss Ablett reported that she was unaware whether the works had been completed and the Vice Chairman and Members were also unable to clarify the situation.

Miss Ablett advised that in order for consent to be granted another application, including all the necessary information and the appropriate fee, is required to be submitted. If the Board is

able to confirm that all works have been completed to their satisfaction then consent could be granted.

The Vice Chairman felt that the Board must be seen to be consistent and therefore the necessary works must be carried out and the consent application made.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Crofts be informed that the works agreed to at the site meeting must be actioned and that a new application for consent must be made to the Board.

[Post meeting note – The Chairman emailed the Middle Level offices on 5th March to advise that, in an email to him dated 27th February, Councillor Crofts had enclosed photographic evidence showing that the work has been carried out. The Chairman confirmed that the work has been carried out to the Board's satisfaction and a new application for retrospective consent should be requested from Mr Crofts].

B.1048 Updating IDB Byelaws

Further to minute B.1016(e), Miss Ablett reported that as this matter affects all Boards, and to ensure efficiency and to minimise costs, work on revising the Byelaws has been held until all Boards administered by the Middle Level Commissioners have determined their wishes. Now that this objective has been achieved work is commencing and a bulk submission of revised Byelaws will be submitted for consideration by Defra accordingly.

Miss Ablett advised that this agenda item was incorrect as the Board had resolved to consider the draft Byelaws for approval at this meeting.

The Assistant Clerk had subsequently advised that the draft Byelaws, to include compliance with the environmental regulations, would be included for the Board's consideration and approval in the agenda for the next meeting in March 2020.

RESOLVED

That the draft Byelaws be presented to the Board, prior to their submission to Defra.

B.1049 Policy Statement

The Board reviewed and approved their Policy Statement which had been updated following the publication of the National Audit Office (NAO) report on IDBs in March 2017.

RESOLVED

That the revised Policy Statement be adopted.

B.1050 Requirements for a Biosecurity Policy

Further to minute B.1022, the Board considered their Biosecurity Policy.

RESOLVED

That the Biosecurity Policy be adopted.

B.1051 Clerk's Report

Miss Ablett advised:-

i) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That a meeting of the Chairmen of all of the Middle Level Commissioners' administered Boards met on the 8th March 2018 to discuss the challenges facing Boards. Innes Thomson, Chief Executive of ADA, spoke on the arrangements adopted by other Boards around the country.

Matters raised included:-

- 1) Advantages, disadvantages and barriers to amalgamation.
- 2) Future meetings and the opportunity for Boards to request items be added to the agenda.
- 3) Reviewing Board membership numbers.
- 4) Frequency of Board meetings.

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.

ii) Applications for byelaw consent

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

| <u>Name of Applicant</u> | <u>Description of Works</u> | <u>Date consent granted</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mr J Hubbard | Piping and filling of 6 metres of private watercourse - Church Drove, Outwell | 14 th March 2018 |
| Mrs A Woodhouse | Piping and filling of 12 metres of Board's watercourse between Points 2 and 5 along Back Drove, Upwell | 24 th April 2018 |
| Mr R Clutterham | Piping and filling of approximately 9 metres of Board's district watercourse between Points 7 and 8 Stonehouse Lane, Upwell | 9 th July 2018 |

RESOLVED

That the action taken in granting consent be approved.

iii) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

b) Annual Conference

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

RESOLVED

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

c) Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse Branch

That the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association will be held on Tuesday the 12th March 2019 and the fact that the administration of this branch has now passed to the Middle Level Commissioners.

d) Good Governance Guide for Internal Drainage Board Members

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

That in March and April 2019, ADA will be running a series of free workshops in relation to Good Governance at which ADA hope to see as many Board Members as possible.

The nearest workshops for this area are:-

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

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

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

iv) External Bodies Conservation Initiatives

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

i) 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.

ii) The Cambridgeshire Fens Biosphere, Heritage Lottery have provided £10,000 of funding to research what would be necessary to bring Biosphere Reserve status to the Fens. This project is being led by the Wildlife Trust with support from Cambs ACRE. If successful, this would lead to a new UNESCO designation. This would be a non-statutory designation which records the unique nature of the area.

v) Catchment Strategy

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

vi) Water Resources East Group Meeting

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

B.1052 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

The Board considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

Residential development consisting of 26 properties, site access and internal road on land to the south of 21-42 St Peters Road, Upwell – Various developers (MLC Ref Nos. 479,516,529,538,541,542,548,553,555,558,559,562,564,565,571,572,573,576,578,582 & 584)

The Board noted that entries on the Local Land Charges Register had been requested to cover all those sites where individual planning applications had been sought and the response by the Consulting Engineer, to a developer, advising that the design of the infiltration devices did not meet either national or the Board's requirements.

Members agreed that surface water disposal using infiltration was not being designed correctly and was unlikely to operate efficiently in the long term.

The Consulting Engineer had suggested that a meeting with the Borough Council, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman may be the next step to try and resolve the issues, however this would be at a cost to the Board.

Residential development on land north west of Townley Close – Mr & Mrs M Starr (MLC Ref. No. 523) and Starr Developments (MLC Ref. No. 540)

The Board noted the Consulting Engineers comments regarding infiltration devices not being viable on this site and that no response had been received from the Borough Council in relation to the comments made.

Miss Ablett enquired whether, in view of the problems experienced elsewhere within the Board's catchment and the precedent previously set, the Board consider that an entry on the Local Land Charges Register should be requested.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) Residential development consisting of 26 properties, site access and internal road on land to the south of 21-42 St Peters Road, Upwell – Various developers (MLC Ref Nos.479,516,529,538,541,542,548,553,555,558,559,562,564,565,571,572,573,576,578,582 & 584)

That the Consulting Engineer be requested to arrange a meeting with the Borough Council, Chairman and Vice Chairman to discuss the issues further.

- iii) Residential development on land north west of Townley Close – Mr & Mrs M Starr (MLC Ref. No. 523) and Starr Developments (MLC Ref. No. 540)

That an entry on the Local Land Charges Register be requested and matters discussed further at the meeting to be arranged with the Borough Council.

B.1053 Capital Improvement Programme

Members considered the Board's future capital improvement programme and noted the inclusion of the refurbishment of Sullivans Dam. Members agreed to continue to monitor and keep under review the possible refurbishment of the culvert at Small Lode at Point 26.

RESOLVED

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

B.1054 District Officer's Report

The Board considered the Report of the District Officer.

The District Officer advised that, as a result of Anglian Water repairing the leaking sewer pipe at Points 35-36, the culvert had become blocked which would need to be rectified.

Following gradual deterioration of the embankment, the District Officer reported that it was now too dangerous for machines to travel along the access strip between Points 29-30, adjacent to Mr Wagner's embankment, to carry out maintenance works. He advised that levelling by some means was essential.

The District Officer reported that some nursery stock had been planted on the access strip between Points 48-49 and although not causing a problem at the moment he considered it may do so in the future.

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 necessary drainworks notices be sent and the District Officer be authorised to obtain quotations and organise the maintenance works for 2019/2020.
- iii) That a letter be sent to Anglian Water requesting that the culvert at Points 35-36 be unblocked.
- iv) That a letter be sent to Mr Wagner requesting that, following the slippage of the embankment, the access strip between points 29-30 adjacent to his embankment be levelled and that he be given 3 months to carry out the work or the Board will arrange for the work to be completed at his expense and seek to recover costs in Court.
- v) That a letter to be sent to John Clifton drawing to his attention that should the nursery stock planted within the access strip between points 48-49 prevent drain maintenance works from being carried out in future years, it may be necessary for them to be removed at that time.

B.1055 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

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

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report, together with the information sheet about Asian Hornet.

B.1056 District Officer Expenses

The Board gave consideration to the appropriate reimbursement of the out of pocket expenses for 2019/2020 incurred by the District Officer on the Board's behalf.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Board agree that reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred by the District Officer for 2019/2020 be allowed, if substantiated by an invoice and that the Chairman be authorised to agree the final amount.
- ii) That the Board agree that a sum of up to £1,600.00 be allowed for the services of the District Officer for 2019/2020.
- iii) That the payment submitted for 2018/2019 in the sum of £2,268.55 be approved.

(NB) – Mr D J W Boyce declared a financial interest when this item was discussed.

B.1057 State-aided Schemes

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

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

B.1058 Environment Agency – Precepts

Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2019/2020 in the sum of £2,769.14 (the precept for 2017/2018 being £2,637).

B.1059 Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Subscriptions

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

RESOLVED

That the increased ADA subscription be paid for 2019

b) Future ADA Communications

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

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

B.1060 Health and Safety

a) Further to minute B.1020, the District Officer advised that there was nothing to report except to put on record that there have been no incidents or near misses since the last meeting.

b) Miss Ablett reported that at the autumn Middle Level and Associated Drainage Board's Chairs meeting, a request was made to seek to either take on an additional employee or employ a contractor to specifically support the Drainage Board's to help them meet their legal Health and Safety requirements and also deliver the specified requirements of the Board's insurers who are calling for evidence that appropriate measures are in place to manage Health and Safety. Quotes are being sought but at this time costs are not available and of course the cost per Board is likely to be reflected by take up of any offer made.

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

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to take any necessary action.

B.1061 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2018/2019

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

B.1062 Defra IDB1 Returns

Further to minute B.1021, Miss Ablett referred to a letter received from Defra dated 24th April 2018 and to the completed IDB1 form for 2017/2018.

B.1063 Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England

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

B.1064 Review of Internal Controls

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

B.1065 Risk Management Assessment

The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with their current Risk Management Policy.

B.1066 Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

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

RESOLVED

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

B.1067 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.1068 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £8,015.58 which had been made during the financial year 2017/2018 (1st February to 31st March 2018) and £15,879.46 made during the financial year 2018/2019 (1st April 2018 to 31st January 2019).

(NB) – The District Officer declared an interest in the payment made to him.

B.1069 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 18.43% and 81.57%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £21,926 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 £4,040 and £17,886 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 4.65p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v) That a Special levy of £17,886 be made and issued to the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk 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.1070 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.1071 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Monday the 9th March 2020 at the Crown Lodge Hotel, Outwell.

CHURCHFIELD AND PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Members of the Churchfield and Plawfield Internal Drainage Board
held at Outwell on Friday the 28th June 2019

B.1072 Annual Governance Statement – 2018/2019

Members 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.1073 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2018/2019

Members 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.1074 Updating IDB Byelaws

Further to minute B.1048, the Board considered their updated Byelaws.

RESOLVED

That the updated Byelaws be adopted.

B.1075 Date of next Meeting

The Chairman reminded Members that the next Meeting of the Board would be held on Monday the 9th March 2020 at the Crown Lodge Hotel, Downham Road, Outwell at 7.00pm.

IDB/DDC/Middle Level Commissioners Amalgamated Boards Option Paper

At the November 2018 MLC and Associated Boards meeting it was requested that a briefing paper be prepared which would outline a model where amalgamations could take place without the risk of losing local knowledge, input and control at a system management level.

The Board's chairmen felt that there was a considerable amount of duplication and mirroring in regard to policy, byelaws, administration and audit. It was generally agreed that this duplication was not a good use of staff and member's time, but at the same time there was significant concern that with amalgamations there was a risk that costs of delivery could potentially increase whilst the level of service diminished. This could arise from the potential loss of the significant value gained by Boards which stems from the zero or low-cost input linked with, monitoring, delivering and managing maintenance and capital works. A model that removes the duplication whilst retaining these valuable elements would therefore be seen as ideal.

The option under consideration within this paper is one in which all Boards are amalgamated into a single Board but local control at an operational level is retained.

How the new Board could be structured;

A new Middle Level Internal Drainage Board could be created. This Board would employ all staff, including district officers. The Board would deal with all policy, finance, administration and legal matters. In addition, Operations Committees would be set up, one for each current Board area. These committees would plan and review maintenance and capital investment for each sub-catchment. They would, with the assistance of the Works Department, prepare annual estimates for maintenance and define refurbishment and replacement of assets. These costs would be used to calculate the annual area rate, each area having its own individual differential rate, reflecting the costs for delivery in that area with admin overheads added.

Any new model will have challenges to be overcome to deliver it and the list below is an early attempt to define some of the most obvious ones. The text in italics gives possible solutions to address the particular challenge;

1. How many members would there be on the new Board? *It would seem logical to have a member for each Board area, so around 30 members may seem appropriate. Some members would have to be council appointed members of course and the Board could be larger or smaller if wished for.*
2. How would the Operational Committees be formed, by volunteer, election or appointment? *It may not be possible to have an elected committee due to the practical challenges of setting up and maintaining such an arrangement. The committee could easily be made up of appointed members drawn from those who have expressed an interest and who have the best skills on offer. A protocol could be set up to define what criteria might be used and how often the committee makeup should be reviewed. For example, members could be given a three-year tenure and at the end of this replacements invited to apply, should the existing member wish to continue and remains the most suitable candidate he/she could then be appointed for a further three years. If there was a fear that rotation of representation was of value and might fail to occur there could be a long stop of say a maximum of three terms.*
3. How would an arm's length relationship between the Board and the Committees be set up and maintained? *This would be most effective if clear roles for the committees are defined and as*

appropriate powers delegated. This might include delegating the defining of the annual maintenance plan, planning replacement and refurbishment and defining any area related special needs, ie plant. There may also be encouragement to feedback to the board on any areas where service provision was considered to be below expectation. The Board would be required to respond to such concerns.

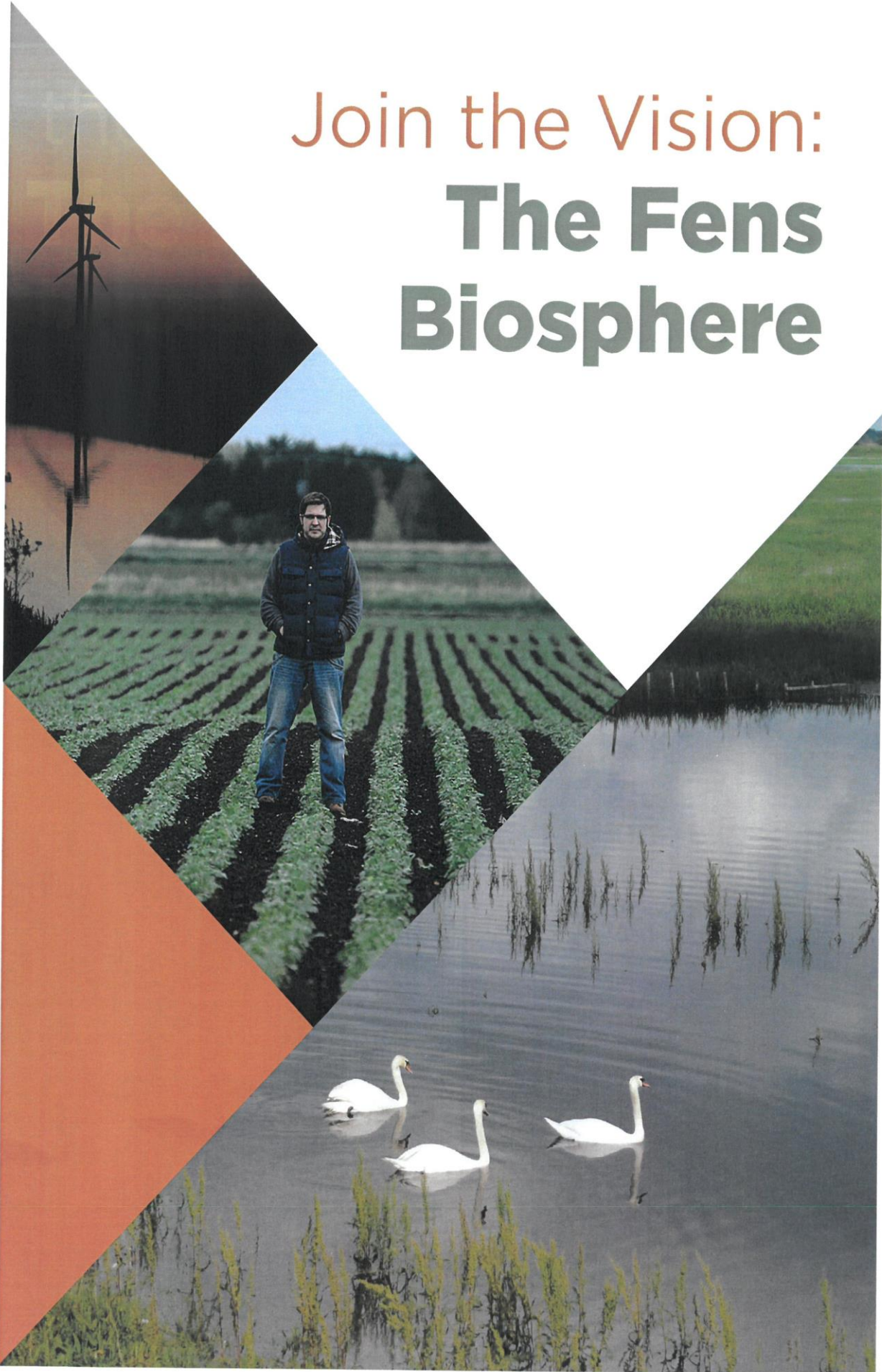
4. *What would happen if the Board and a Committee failed to agree? A dispute procedure could be produced to assist in occasions where the committee and Board do not agree. This could include a number of stages which would include facility for independent assistance via mediation if necessary.*
5. *What would happen if a Committee entered into an internal dispute? If a committee could not reach agreement then a vote could ensue, with the chair having the casting vote.*
6. *What if two Committees wished to amalgamate? a bespoke protocol could be the answer for the amalgamation of committees. This would set out the steps that would need to be taken and how all issues relating to the matters of the two (or more) sub-districts would be met.*
7. *What would happen to the MLC, who have a navigation interest as well as well as ones relating to land drainage and water resources, if it could not realistically become an IDB? If it was found that the MLC could not be part of the newly created Board then it would be logical that a consortium be set up of the new Board and MLC. A lead Board would need to be defined and that Board would employ all staff and own the plant and assets, contracting to the other entity.*
8. *How would the finances be controlled and the differential rates finally settled? Some Boards already operate differential rating. It might be assumed that the differential rating would be designed in the first instance such that each ratepayer pays what they do currently and that the rate in the pound is adjusted area by area to meet this criterion. As time passes these rates could be adjusted as they are now to reflect the maintenance, admin and investment needs of each area.*
9. *How would admin costs be shared across the new district. The starting point could be as it is now, but equally a review could be undertaken to see if the existing area (Board District) charges would still be appropriate.*
10. *How would plant be dealt with? All plant could be owned by the new Board and then charged out based upon usage, the aim would then be to create a self-sustaining plant account, allowing for repair, routine maintenance and replacement of plant.*
11. *How would buildings owned by boards be dealt with? In a similar way to plant the building assets could be owned by the new Board and any investment in them be charged to an area. There could as well be an agreement in place to cater for a scenario where ratepayers in an area wished to leave the Board and recreate their previous Board. In this instance the building might automatically be transferred back to the new entity.*
12. *How long would the process take? If there was a consensus the next step might be to set up a sub-committee to further develop the proposal, this may require external assistance, including legal advice on questions that may arise through the process. It could take a year to reach conclusion and a further two years to implement.*

13. How would admin and engineering costs be shared? *It would be for the new Board to determine if it would be best to define a single annual figure or area by area recharging. It would certainly reduce administrative burden if a single annual fee was chosen. The negative aspect of this would be that in any one year, one area may require more engineering input that is the norm, eg when a pumping station requires refurbishment or replacement.*
14. If some Boards did not wish to join the new arrangements, what options would be available to them? *The most obvious options would be to become entirely independent or to retain the Board's existing structure and buy in services, much as they already do, from the newly formed Board or other third party.*
15. What would the timing of meetings be? Both for the new board and the committees? *The new Board may wish to meet three or four times a year. The area committees, perhaps once or at the most twice per year. Logic would suggest that committee's meet before the rate setting Board meeting to allow them to feed the needs of the area into the Board to allow them to determine an appropriate rate.*

It may be seen from the above that whilst challenges would exist they can be overcome. Members may of course have other questions they would wish addressed and may want other matters and options considered before taking any further steps. This paper is designed simply to inform on one of a number of possible options and to stimulate discussion on how members see the Boards evolving in the coming decades.

David Thomas
Chief Executive
MLC

Join the Vision: **The Fens** **Biosphere**



A sustainable living fens landscape, supporting more and better spaces for nature and a better place for people to live, work and enjoy



Becoming a Biosphere

A Biosphere is a globally recognised accolade awarded by UNESCO to a region which has a strong cultural and landscape identity and can demonstrate excellence in sustainable development.

There are 7 Biospheres in the UK but none in the East of England. The Fens Biosphere will confer international recognition and status to a unique and valuable area.

The Vision is to:

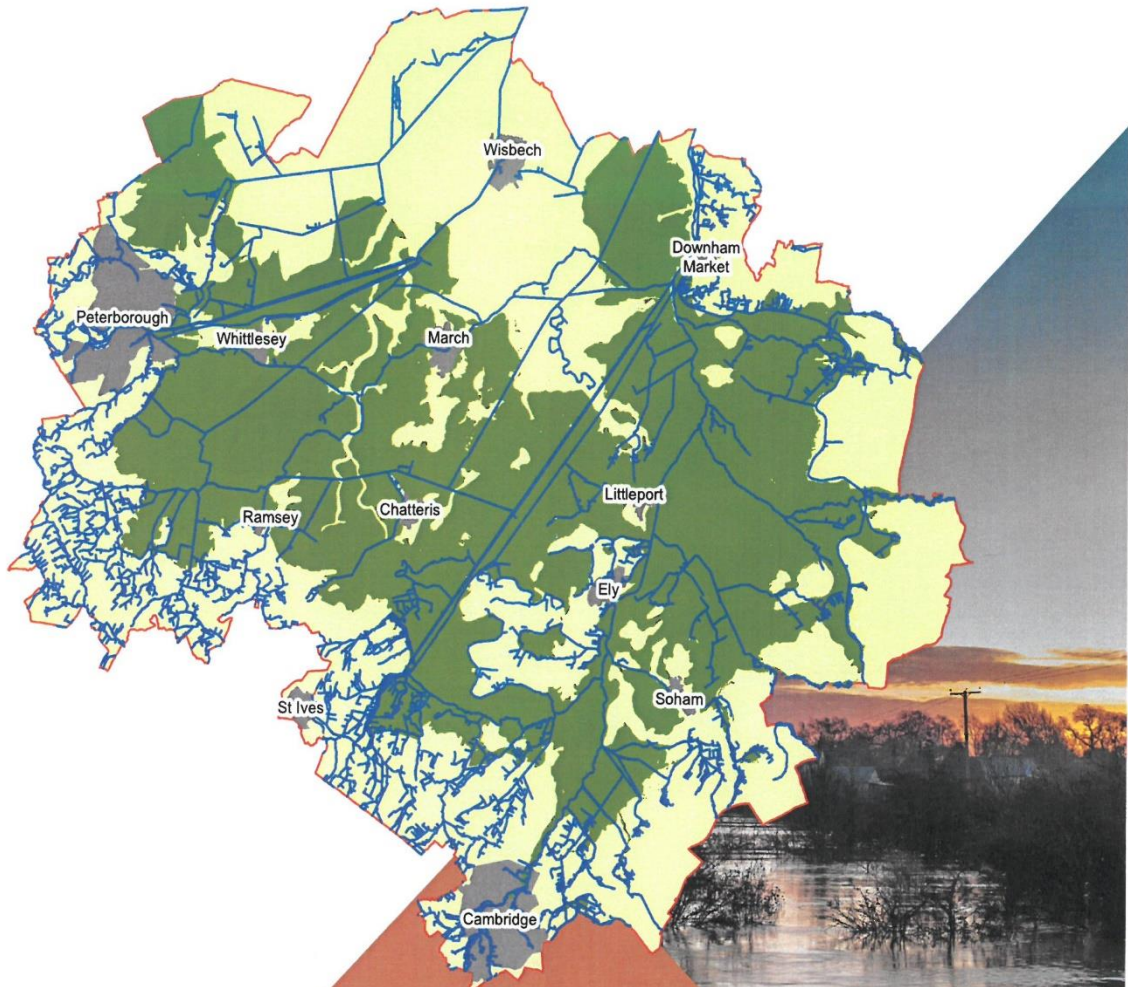
- **Achieve Biosphere status for the Fens by 2022**
- **Join the exclusive global network of 701 Biosphere in 124 countries**

For everyone in the Fens Biosphere area, whether living or working there, running businesses or farms, or investing in infrastructure and development, Biosphere status will be a benefit not a hindrance; Biospheres are confirmed by UNESCO but are not statutory designations. Biospheres cannot prohibit any activity.



The Fens Biosphere area

The proposed boundary of the Fens Biosphere is based on those special landscape features that make the Fens unique and which define the area: peat soils (in green) the water drainage network (in blue) and the height of the low-lying land.



**Join us in
delivering the
Fens Biosphere
Vision!**

After Biosphere status has been achieved we will:

- 1. Promote new ideas** about farming and water management which can help deal with the effects of climate change
- 2. Provide new opportunities** for these new ideas to be trialled in the fens, making more links between research and farming and boosting our local economy
- 3. Support conservation organisations** with the development of more and better areas for nature across the fens landscape which will benefit wildlife and people
- 4. Provide opportunities for communities** to create and manage local spaces for nature which will improve environments, access to nature and well-being
- 5. Promote a strong fenland identity** based around a landscape internationally recognised for its wildlife, food production and heritage which can be used to promote the area and its products.

Want to know more?



A multi sector partnership, co-ordinated by Cambridgeshire ACRE and drawn from all sectors of life is working together to achieve UNESCO Biosphere status for the Fens.

To get in touch with the Fens Biosphere team at Cambridgeshire ACRE, find out more information and receive invitations to Biosphere events please contact:

- **Mark Nokkert** at mark.nokkert@camsacre.org.uk 01353 865030 or
- **Rachael Brown** at rachael.brown@camsacre.org.uk 01353 865037.
- Visit: www.fenlandbiosphere.wordpress.com
- Social media: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram: [@fensbiosphere](https://www.instagram.com/fensbiosphere)

The Fens Biosphere Partnership is supported by funding from the People's Postcode Lottery Dream Fund as part of the Water Works project awarded to the Wildlife Trust BCN.

www.postcodelottery.org.uk www.postcodecommunitytrust.org.uk



Cambridgeshire ACRE is registered in England as a charity (no.1074032) and a company limited by guarantee (no.3690881). Photos with thanks to: Fraser Chappell, Richard Humphrey & Andrew Sharpe.



Each year ADA focuses on five or six key topics that have been identified as important to the flood and water level management work of our members.

These projects are delivered with the support of ADA's two committees who meet throughout the year to discuss subjects affecting our members. In 2019 the delivery of these projects will be coordinated by ADA's Senior Technical Officer, David Sisson (david.sisson@ada.org.uk).

The following work stream topics have been chosen for delivery throughout 2019.

Educational Resources

Primary objective: To raise awareness in schools of the work to manage water levels within lowland England. The project aims to incorporate relevant flood and land drainage topics into the Key Stage 2 (KS2) curriculum; ultimately to attract interest in future careers in the industry.

This project was introduced in 2018 as part of a collaboration with the ADA Lincolnshire Branch's Events Committee. ADA has commissioned LEAF Education to help develop the school resources and activities, to be published on LEAF Education's Countryside Classroom website (www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk).

LEAF Education is part of Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF), which is a charity registered in England and Wales that is working to enable more sustainable farming. LEAF Education has many years' experience of supporting businesses to tell their story in a way that is appropriate for a school audience.

To assist this work a small sub-group has been formed including ADA staff and Lincolnshire Branch Event Committee members who together will assist, advise and oversee the development of the resources and activities.

Delivering biodiversity

Primary objective: To rewrite and update the existing Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) guidance that is used by IDBs for their own BAPs.

IDBs are required as risk management authorities to carry out their functions within a policy framework that sets goals for biodiversity and environmental performance. IDB BAPs focus in detail on those habitats and species that are relevant to each IDB's area of operation and identify specific actions that the IDB intends to implement.

In 2018 the Government published its 25 Year Environment Plan, entitled “A Green Future to Improve the Environment”. The focus of the new Government Plan is to deliver improved environment through targeted policies, some of which including “Thriving Plants and Wildlife” and “Enhancing Biosecurity” have much relevance for IDB operational delivery. The concept of biodiversity “Net Gain” is also introduced via the new plan.

All of an IDB’s network of drainage channels has the potential to be valuable for biodiversity. It is therefore proposed that the updated BAP guidance will be focussed on incorporating contributions that IDBs could make towards these new objectives.

A second strand, and a significant requirement, of the work will be to identify a method for recording IDB successes or targets achieved in delivering biodiversity gains. This follows the demise of the BARS recording system previously used to collect biodiversity data. This requirement will potentially involve the design and delivery of a new recording, data storage and analysis system for IDBs and other risk management authorities.

Byelaw and supervisory role enforcement

Primary objective: To produce reliable and consistent guidance for IDBs when considering how to carry out a legally correct byelaw or consenting enforcement procedure.

The project team will collate existing industry advice and assess their value to the national guidance, prior to drafting new guidance, or amending any of the existing available resources. ADA will seek legal support in order to scrutinise and sign-off the guidance prior to its launch.

ADA is seeking existing advice examples from the industry including: Pre-planning Advice Notes, Consenting Process Statements, Guidance Notes, and Enforcement Procedures, such as the Lincolnshire LDA Enforcement and Consent (Concordat).

Data and evidence

Primary objective: To establish a methodology to collect, collate and interpret data from IDBs that can be used to better explain their value and purpose to decision makers and the wider public.

A workgroup formed in 2018 started to formulate a set of metrics that IDBs will be encouraged to complete and update periodically. This work will be continued in 2019 and a questionnaire to gather the data distributed to IDBs.

Emergency Response and Recovery

Primary objective: To investigate utilising Public Sector Cooperation Agreements to facilitate IDBs assisting the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authorities during, and in recovery from, emergency circumstances.

There are already local arrangements in place where IDBs provide support to other risk management authorities during and following flood events. It is hoped that this guidance when published will help other regions to set up similar mutual support arrangements at the local level.

Developer contributions

Primary objective: Develop guidance on appropriate legal use of contributions from developers towards the management and maintenance of water level management control structures and systems and charging by risk management authorities for advice.

When an IDB considers how a development might impact on the efficient flow of water through their systems, and mitigate any increased flows, the Developer should be required to contribute financially to necessary works. This principle was established some time ago, but needs a consistent approach by authorities.

The project aims to:

- Provide IDBs with a consistent approach for development control policies.
- Provide a standard template for establishing if a surface water development contribution is appropriate for a development.
- Provide a standard set of surface water development contribution rates, which can be modified to allow for local drainage district conditions, such as extra pumping or urban maintenance costs.
- Assist in the calculation of long-term maintenance and asset replacement costs if the IDB wishes to enter into a legal agreement with the developer for the adoption of flood risk assets.
- Provide a mechanism to allow for IDBs to carry out works that resulted in water environment biodiversity gains required of developers, a process known as “offsetting”, and enable developers to contribute to net-gain.
- Comply with the new environmental requirements being introduced.

In addition to the planned guidance, it is proposed that a series of best practice exemplars will be developed to cover Pre-planning advice, calculation of commuted sums and charging developers for Biodiversity Off-setting services where appropriate.

A legal opinion will be sought prior to launch.



Representing Drainage Water Level & Flood Risk Management Authorities

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Hazel Durant
Head of Water & Flood Integration
Defra
2 Marsham Street
Westminster
LONDON
SW1P 4DF

by e-mail: hazel.durrant@defra.gov.uk

Friday 29 November 2019

Dear Hazel,

Emergency Financial Assistance for Internal Drainage Boards

I am writing to you following my conversation with you yesterday.

We consider that the acuteness of the current situation being felt by Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs), particularly in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, and Nottinghamshire, warrants the creation of proportionate emergency financial assistance for IDBs that could be made available following both recent and future incidents.

It is becoming apparent that a number of our IDB members are facing considerable financial challenges as a result of the various flood events that have taken place this year, largely since the start of June 2019. Overtopping, seepages, and bank failures from embanked and engineered lowland Main Rivers have imputed substantially larger volumes of water into adjacent internal drainage districts than their systems have been designed for. Consequently, IDB pumping stations have pumped for more hours and far greater volumes of water than they are designed to accommodate. IDB staff have worked a significant number of hours in order to assist with the emergency response and recovery, and have undertaken emergency repairs. IDBs have worked in partnership to provide mutual aid and support to other Risk Management Authorities.

As a result of their emergency response, IDBs are facing significantly increased pumping costs (electricity and fuel), and labour costs. The costs being faced are well beyond those that would normally be expected by an IDB when evacuating water following a largescale rainfall event, and are the direct result of receiving additional volumes from embanked Main Rivers. In the case of at least one IDB the electricity costs for additional pumping are almost an entire year's electricity budget in just one month and electricity invoices for November are yet to be received.

The costs are therefore beyond those that have been budgeted for by the IDBs. For some IDBs that have been most acutely affected, these costs are substantially depleting their financial reserves, much of which are earmarked for specific capital projects or plant machinery replacement. In one case there is a real risk of the IDB running out of money before year end if recent rainfall patterns were to continue throughout the winter and additional volumes continue to be received from Main River bank breaches, seepages and overtopping.

We are aware that other Risk Management Authorities that have been affected by the recent flood incidents will be seeking emergency financial assistance, namely the triggering of the Bellwin Scheme for local authorities. However, in some of the rural areas recently affected, local authorities have confirmed that they have not directly incurred excessive costs to the thresholds to trigger Bellwin. Nonetheless, IDBs in those areas have accrued substantial costs and have no mechanism through which to recover them.

[ADA – representing drainage, water level and flood risk management authorities](#)

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Representing Drainage Water Level & Flood Risk Management Authorities

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Additional to their costs incurred tackling the immediate impacts of the floods, as IDBs move into the incident recovery phase they are faced with a need to repair and replacement critical infrastructure that they operate. Such assets include pumps, electrical controls, culverts, syphons, embankments and watercourses damaged owing to the scale, depth, and duration of inundation.

The purpose of this letter is therefore to formally request that Defra make available a suitable process through which affected IDBs can seek financial assistance following this emergency event. We also request that it is designed to be easily replicated in future flood events, much in the same way as the Bellwin Scheme or the Farming Recovery Fund are triggered by Government following significant flood events. We recognise that this would need to be on the basis of the appropriate evidence of additional costs being submitted by IDBs and we are willing to work with Defra and Environment Agency colleagues to draft proportionate criteria.

Given the high likelihood of further possible flood events in the coming months with the ground being as saturated as it is, our IDBs remain fully committed to supporting all the Category 1 responders at times of flood incident and recovery. They will continue to manage their own systems and assets for the benefit of the local communities they represent. I therefore very much hope that Defra will be able to consider special provision to financially assist those IDBs facing excessive, direct costs arising from circumstances above and beyond those incurred when dealing with the impact of high rainfall events on their own catchments and assets.

Yours sincerely,

J. Innes Thomson BSc CEng FICE
Chief Executive

Cc: R Caudwell (ADA), D Cooper (Defra), J Curtin (EA), M Garrett (EA), C Wright (EA), R Hill (EA)

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Tactical Plans for the Fens

Seeking Agreement in Principle and support from each Risk Management Authority for the approach taken.

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).

With climate change projections and many of our assets in the Great Ouse Fens 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.

The current approach to flood risk management in the Great Ouse Fens area is one which generally has considered flood risk projects on a case by case basis, when assets require repair or are coming to the end of their life. Evidence and learning from the initial years of the FCERM six year programme, shows that each individual Risk Management Authority (RMA) has tended to consider its programme of work in isolation, not taking in to account the plans and programmes, and importantly the benefits being claimed, of other Risk Management Authorities.

In January 2019 all IDB Chairs and LLFA Chief Executives, in the Fens area were sent a letter, explaining the Fens project and how it fitted with the Strategic Approach as set out in the Partnership Funding Policy.

The approach we have followed is the same benefits apportionment approach as that used for the Isle of Axholme and a recommended method by the National Flood Risk Assessment and Investment team. We have been working with the relevant RMAs over the last year, to produce a plan for each of the South Level, Middle Level, and Tidal areas. For each sub catchment the relevant RMAs have identified the assets, which provide a flood risk benefit. These have then have been ranked depending on the benefit they provide in terms of flood risk and then using this ranking to apportion benefits, Present Value Benefit (PVb) and Outcome Measures, for the area. The rankings and related benefits have been agreed for all the sub catchment areas and we have also ensured this work has linked in with the latest 6 year programme refresh. This approach also ensures there will not be duplication of benefit claiming in the future.

The headlines from this work show there is a £217.6M investment need for the Fens over the next 15 years, of which £125M would be funded by FCERM GiA and £92.6M partnership funding. This is based on a raw Partnership funding score of 54%, for the Fens area under current Partnership Funding rules.

We are seeking agreement in principle to the approach by RMAs, so that future investment and the use of FCERM GiA on assets in the Fens can be more easily facilitated and collectively understood.

The agreement to the plans is on the basis that any work in the Fens area will be to maintain the current Standard of Service (SoS)* for the area, until the Flood Risk Management for the Fens project has set out the preferred direction and options for managing flood risk in the Fens. If RMAs are not able to agree the plans, then the maximum grant rate allowable would be reduced to 45% for any projects in their area, which are requesting FCERM GiA.

The apportionment allocated to assets will be subject to all standard funding and business case rules, when future works on those assets are undertaken using FCERM GiA.

The outputs from the work show those assets which are affordable and cost-beneficial and sets out how many benefits each asset is able to draw upon as each asset business case will need to be assessed at the time of the works.

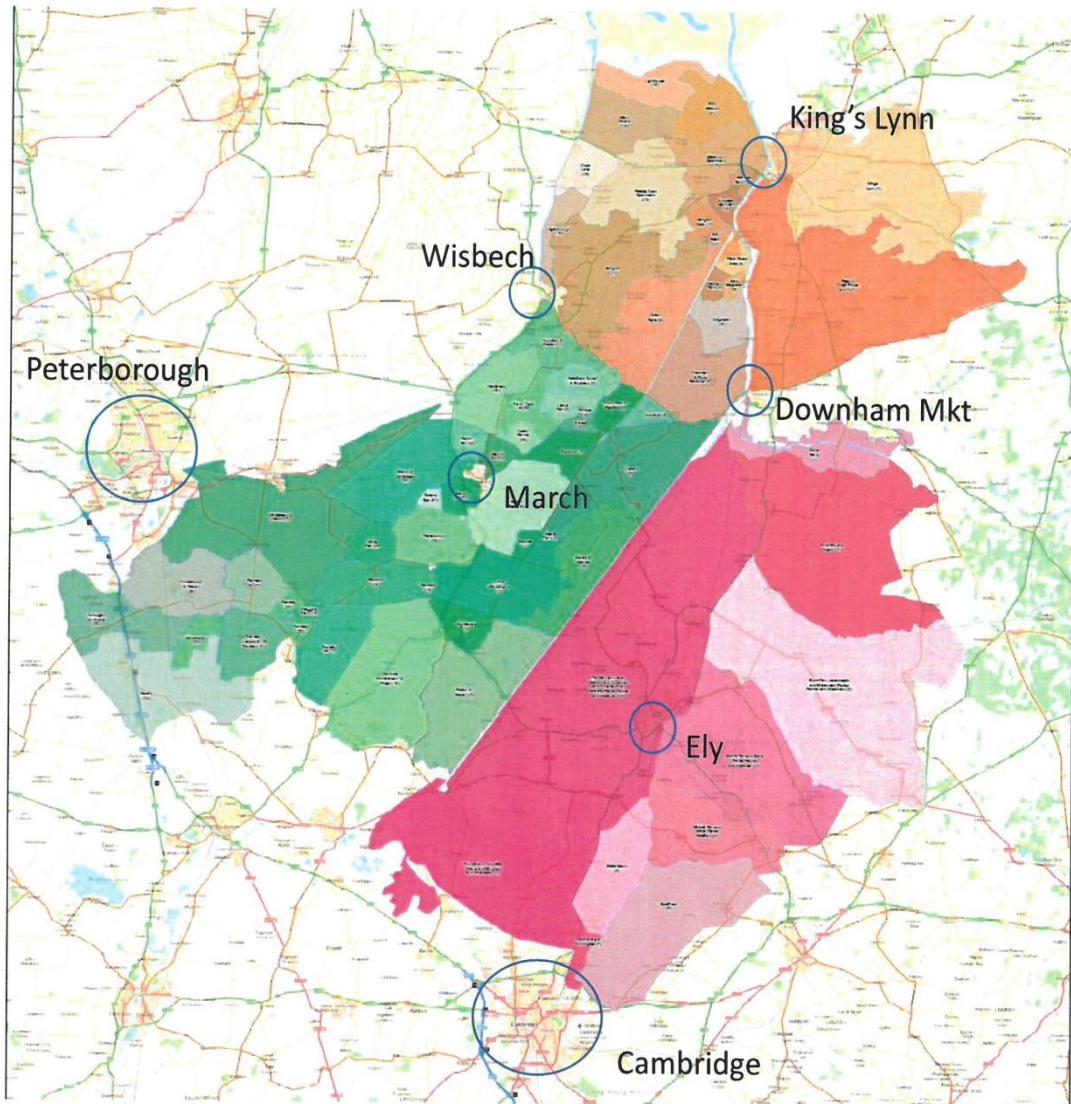
It is essential therefore that each RMA confirms support for the Tactical Plans and the principles of the benefit apportionment for the Great Ouse Fens. Please could you send an email or letter confirming your support to this approach, to Paul Burrows Area Flood and Coastal Risk Manager, Environment Agency, Brampton Office, Bromholme Lane, Huntingdon PE28 4NE. paul.burrows@environment-agency.gov.uk

***Definition of Standard of Service (SoS)**

The measurable and objective description of an asset such as the crest level of a wall or pumping capacity and a minimum condition grade.

Definition of Standard of Protection (SoP)

The design standard, measured by Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) that an existing asset or proposed scheme provides, based on the current assessment of risk. The SoP changes over time due to climate change impacts and asset deterioration.



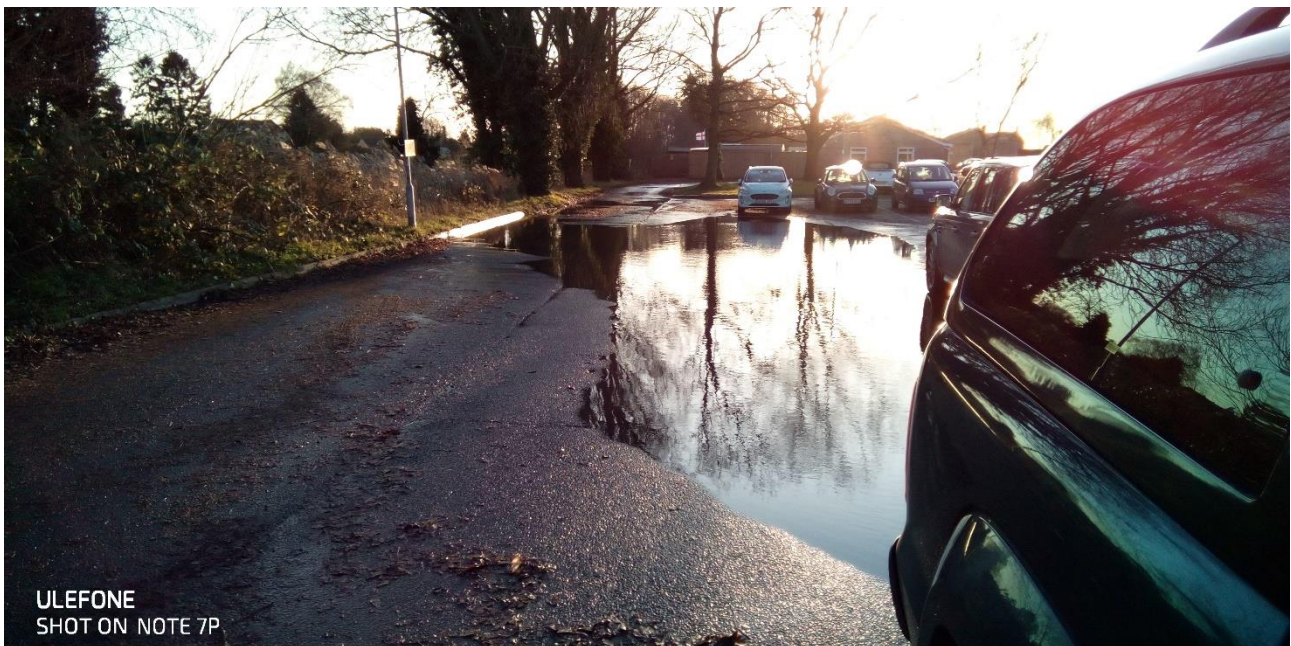
Churchfield & Plawfield I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report - February 2020

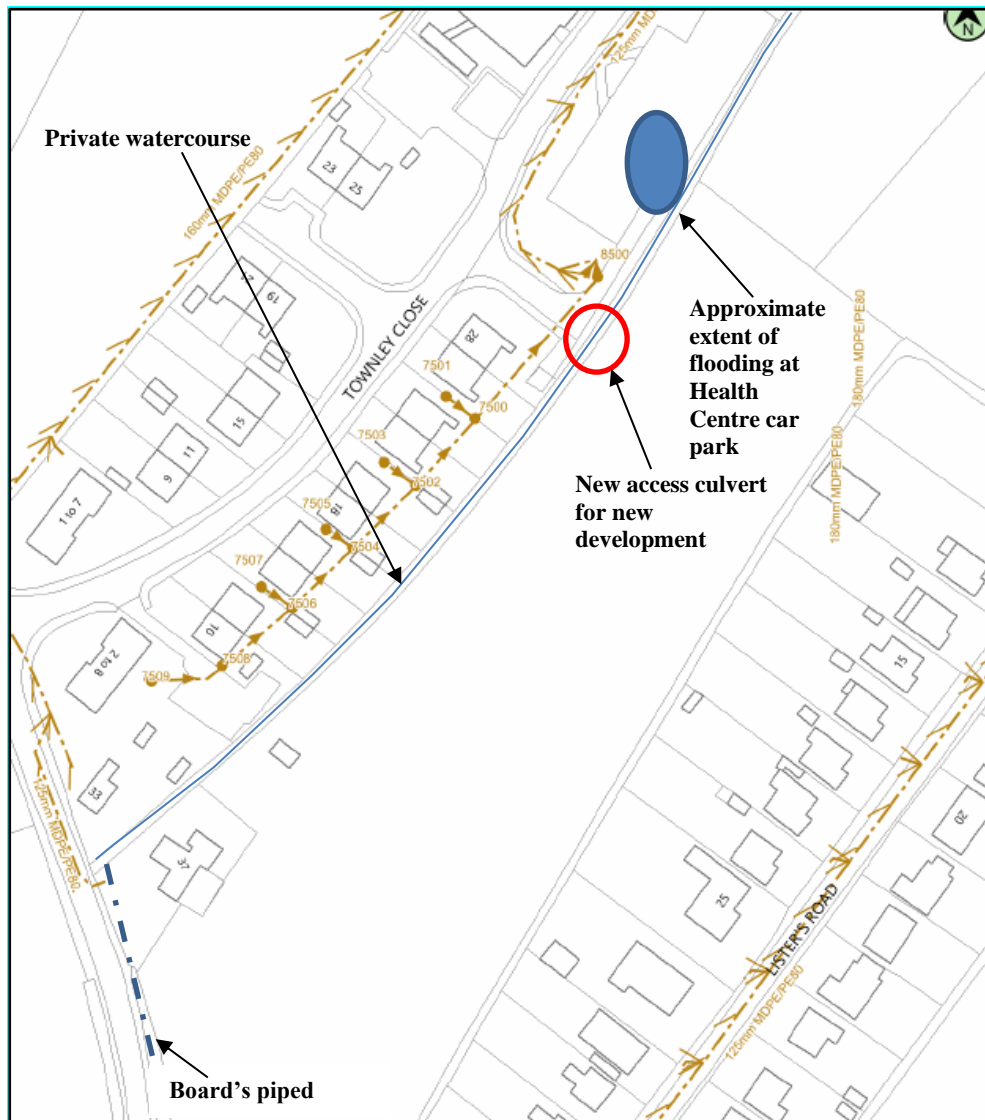
Flooding adjacent to Upwell Health Centre, Townley Close, Upwell

Further flooding of the Health Centre car park occurred in December with water levels in the private watercourse remaining high for prolonged periods of time. It is not known if the flooding has been reported to the County Council who, in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), is responsible under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 to investigate flood incidents that meet certain criteria, that include “..one or more properties rendered inoperable or their functions severely compromised due to the access to the premises being impassable.”

Following discussions and with the agreement of the Board's Chairman and District Officer the Board is investigating the condition of the Board's New Road Drain between Points 21 to 25 with the intention of undertaking a topographical survey in order to determine whether any channel maintenance or improvement works need to be undertaken.



Photograph of flooding at Upwell Health Centre car park, December 2019



The Board's Chairman has agreed to carry out jetting of the piped section between Points 24 and 25 upstream of Listers Road. Two estimates have been sought and received from suitable drainage contractors. The estimated cost being £1000. If clearance of the piped section allows, and time permits, additional work is planned at other known culvert blockages, for example at Point 21. A separate quote of £900 has been received for a CCTV survey although this may be dependent on the clearance of the culvert to enable the CCTV survey to be undertaken.

The Board is asked to consider the estimates and provide instruction on how it would wish us to proceed.

Planning Consultation

Further to the last Board meeting the Clerk to the Board has received invitations and attended meetings held by the Borough Council's Developers Forum and Inter-Agency Flood Group.

The Chief Executive attends Inter-Agency Working on Flood & Water group meetings at the Town Hall in King's Lynn. At the last meeting he raised the issue of minor developments (less than 10 houses) not having adequate safeguards in place where infiltration (soakaway) drainage is proposed, as no authorities are prepared to accept responsibility for checking the adequacy of designs or to police their effective implementation. This matter has now been added to the agenda for future meetings.

Therefore, in order to allow for this arrangement to become settled and able to work efficiently in harmony a specific meeting to discuss development control related issues as requested in item (ii) of Minute B.1052 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters has not yet occurred.

However, a letter written on behalf of the Boards within West Norfolk to arrange this meeting to discuss the current allocations and other emerging locations in the area has recently been sent to the Borough Council. At the time of writing a response was awaited.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 34 new development related matters have been received and, where appropriate, dealt with since the last meeting:

| <i>MLC Ref.</i> | <i>Council Ref.</i> | <i>Applicant</i> | <i>Type of Development</i> | <i>Location</i> |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 584 | 19/00016/RM | Dr N Walters | Residence | Orchard Gardens, Upwell |
| 585 | 19/00130/F | D S R Waite | Residence | Orchard Gardens, Upwell |
| 586 | 19/00181/F | Mr & Mrs A Minas | Residence (Extension) | Small Lode, Upwell |
| 587 | 19/00318/F | Mr M Roberts | Residence (Extension) | St Peters Road, Upwell |
| 588 | 19/00287/F | Mr S Amps | Residence | Dovecote Road, Upwell |
| 589 | 19/00270/RM | Mr S McCurry | Residence | St Peters Road, Upwell |
| 590 | 19/00406/FM | Mr & Mrs Robb | Residence (Agricultural) | Chalk Road, Outwell |
| 591 | 18/02234/F | Mr & Mrs P Singfield | Residence | Small Lode, Upwell |
| 592 | 19/00438/RM | Mr & Mrs T Adcock | Residence | Orchard Gardens, Upwell |
| 593 | 19/00475/O | Stevens & Sharman | Residential (2 plots) | 100 Stonehouse Road, Upwell |
| 594 | 19/00472/RM | Mr Willis | Residential (2 plots) | St Peters Road, Upwell |
| 595 | 19/00451/F | Mr M Stevens | 4 no additional Traveller pitches including 4 no mobile homes, 4 no touring caravans, hardstanding and associated works | Small Lode, Upwell |
| 596 | 19/00394/F | Mr P A Jeffery & Mrs E Estall | Residence (Extension) | Baldwins Drove, Outwell |
| 597 | Enquiry | Client of Anglia Building Consultants | Residential (5 plots) | Townley Close, Upwell |

| | | | | |
|-----|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 598 | Enquiry | Fountain Foods | Residence (Garage) | Lister Road, Upwell |
| 599 | 19/01094/PACU3 | Mr P Dorling | Residential (2 plots) | Baptist Road, Upwell |
| 600 | 19/01037/F | Mr & Mrs J Mills | Residence (Extension) | Well Creek Road, Outwell |
| 601 | 19/01071/F | Mr & Mrs A Minas | Equine [Erection of stables and barn (retrospective)] | Small Lode, Upwell |
| 602 | 19/01062/RM | Woodgate Developments Ltd | Residential (5 plots) | New Road/Townley Close/ Lister Road, Upwell* |
| 603 | Byelaw | Mr & Mrs Lawrence | Residence (Annexe) | Lister Road, Upwell |
| 604 | 19/01231/F | Mr J Vickers | Agricultural (Barn) | Well Creek Road/Baldwins Drove, Outwell |
| 605 | 19/01213/F | Mr S Ripley | Residence | Orchard Gardens, Upwell |
| 606 | 19/01319/F | Mrs E Rigby | Canine (Kennels) | Green Road, Upwell* |
| 607 | 19/01508/F | Mr & Mrs S Howard | Residence | Orchard Gardens, Upwell |
| 608 | 19/01577/F | Mr & Mrs M Wiles | Residence | Orchard Gardens, Upwell |
| 609 | 19/01528/F | Miss E Robinson | Residence (Detached annexe) | New Road, Upwell |
| 610 | 19/01591/PACU3 | Mr J Sculthorpe | Residential (2 plots) | New Road, Upwell |
| 611 | 19/01716/F | Mr & Mrs Taggart | Residence | Small Lode, Upwell |
| 612 | 19/01947/RM | Mr & Mrs A Loveridge | Residential (2 plots) | Stonehouse Road, Upwell* |
| 613 | 19/01810/O | Mr Lawrence | Residential (2 plots) | Baptist Road, Upwell |
| 614 | 19/02020/RM | Mr D Johnson | Residence | New Road, Upwell |
| 615 | 19/02163/F | Mr & Mrs S Hampshire | Residence (Annexe) | School Road, Upwell |
| 616 | 19/02135/F | Mr M Constable | Residence | St Peters Road, Upwell |
| 617 | 19/02131/F | Mr & Mrs I Rawnsley | Residence | Blunt's Orchard Drive, Upwell |

Planning applications ending 'RM', 'REM' or 'RMM' relate to reserved matters

Planning applications ending 'PNH' and 'PACOU' relate to household permitted regulations notification

Developments that are known to propose direct discharge to the Board's system are indicated with an asterisk. The remainder are understood to propose surface water disposal to soakaways/infiltration systems or Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), where applicable. The applicants have been notified of the Board's requirements.

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

- (a) Mr & Mrs Stanford - Residence, St Peters Road, Upwell (MLC Ref No 508)
see later application for checking service
- (b) Mr & Mrs Mills – Residence, Well Creek Road, Outwell (MLC Ref No 583)
- (c) Mr & Mrs Minas – Residence, Small Lode, Upwell (MLC Ref No 586)
- (d) Miss E Rigby - Residence (extension), Green Road, Upwell (MLC Ref No 606)

The following applicants chose to use the paid infiltration device checking service and certification was subsequently issued:

- (a) LDW Developments – Residence, Plot 1, St Peters Road, Upwell (MLC Ref No 541) see comments later in report
- (b) Mr J Stanford – Residence, St Peters Road, Upwell (MLC Ref No 552)
- (c) Fountain Construction (Anglia) Ltd – Residence, New Road, Upwell (MLC Ref Nos 539 & 540) see comments later in report

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

- *Bungalow, side extension and new garage at 28 Well Creek Road, Upwell – W Buzzard (MLC Ref No 188) & Ms A Alexander (MLC Ref Nos 566, 574 & 575)*
- *Developments at Janis, 176 New Road, Upwell – Mrs J Watts (MLC Ref No 309, 338, 375, 461, 551 & 568)*
- *Residential development of redundant commercial land to provide 4 new dwellings on land south of 31 School Road, Upwell – Mr D Masters (MLC Ref Nos 445 & 536)*
- *Four semi-detached dwellings at 72 Small Lode, Upwell – Colville Construction Ltd (MLC Ref No 446)*
- *Proposed residential development on land to the south of Plawfield, Back Drove, Upwell – Fountain Developments (Anglia) Ltd (MLC Ref No 505)*
- *Re-development of existing bus garages at D Hircock, School Road, Upwell – Messrs W Hircock, L Pears & C Parsons (MLC Ref No 512)*

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.

Developments at Fountain Foods Ltd, New Road, Upwell – Fountain Foods Ltd/Anglia Growers (MLC Ref Nos 405, 421, 436, 472 & 543)

- (a) In the absence of a further instruction concerning the current illegal issues in respect of both surface water and byelaw related consents at this location, no further action has been taken following the Board's resolutions, Item (iii) B.865 Fountain Frozen Foods, made at its 2014 meeting, and Item B.929 Fountain Frozen Foods, made at its 2016 meeting.

These contraventions of the Board's Byelaws continue and have been exacerbated by further development of the site, the Onion Store (MLC Ref No 472) and a storage building (MLC Ref No 543).

The Board is reminded that it is in its interests to resolve these issues and in not doing so there is a reluctant acceptance of the situation. In view of the above, it is proposed that, subject to confirmation from the Clerk to the Board concerning any legal issues, the Board issues consent.

In view of the above, the Board may want to consider how it wishes to resolve these on-going matters and its further instruction is requested on how it would wish us to proceed.

- (b) *Construction of an annexe to a House of Multiple Occupancy at Cranligh House, 48 Listers Road, Upwell, - Mr & Mrs Lawrence (Frozen Foods) (MLC Ref No 603)*

An application for encroachment within the Board's 9.0m wide maintenance access strip was received in July for an annexe to this House of Multiple Occupancy (HMO). The applicants have advised that they would be willing to extend the maintenance agreement with the Board for a section of its New Road Drain, downstream of Point 24 to include this section as well.

Following discussions with the Board's Chairman and District Officer, the applicant was advised that consent would not be granted for this due to the drainage issues and the need to retain full access to maintain the Board's Drain when required. As a result, a recommendation to refuse the application was submitted to the Clerk to the Board in late August.

Residential development consisting of twenty six properties, site access and internal road - Maxey Grounds & Co (MLC Ref No 479); Reserved Matters Applications: plot 1 – Mr L Willis (MLC Ref No 541); plot 2 – Mr Clarke (MLC Ref Nos 559 & 573); plot 3 - Mr & Mrs Wiles (MLC Ref No 542); plot 4 – Mr & Mrs Lunn (MLC Ref No 553); plot 5 – Mr & Mrs Rawnsley (MLC Ref No 562); Affordable housing for plots 6, 7, 10, 11 and 13 – The Hollies (Upwell) Ltd (MLC Ref No 516); plot 8 – Mr P Stead (MLC Ref No 571); plot 9 – Mr G Thomas & Miss Fitzpatrick (MLC Ref Nos 529, 538 & 548); plot 12 – Mr S Waite (MLC Ref No 582); plot 13 – The Hollies (Upwell) Ltd (MLC Ref No 555); plot 15 – M & A Developments (MLC Ref No 578); plot 16 – Mr & Mrs Yeoman (MLC Ref No 564); plot 17 – Mr & Mrs Wiles (MLC Ref No 572); plot 23 – Mrs L Connolly (MLC Ref Nos 558 &

576); *plot 24 – West Norfolk Homes Ltd* (MLC Ref No 565); *plot 25 – Dr N Walters* (MLC Ref No 584) *on land to the south of 21 to 42 St Peters Road Upwell*

The majority of plots have now been assessed and signed off in terms of adequacy of infiltration drainage proposals. Most recently, design details have been submitted and processed for the use of infiltration devices at Plots 21 and 22 Mr L Willis (MLC Ref No 541), these have been checked and it is confirmed they now meet the Board's requirements.

Development at Waterways, 125 Small Lode, Upwell – Mr & Mrs Singfield (MLC Ref No 500) & Mr & Mrs Minas (MLC Ref No 586 & 601)

Two planning applications have been submitted to the Borough Council since the last Board Meeting.

These are for the construction of a front porch, two storey extension to the side and rear and the construction of a double garage (MLC Ref No 586) together with the retrospective erection of stables and a barn (MLC Ref No 601).

It is understood that the former will discharge its surface water to infiltration devices and has been the subject of the Self-Certification process, see above.

The latter is to regularise the erection of a barn and stables. It is not known when the buildings were erected but aerial photographs (see below) submitted with the planning application infer that the stables replaced similar size buildings with the barn erected before 2011.

In planning terms, the site was regularised by the granting of planning permission in August.

Whilst the potential pollution entering the Board's System is not its responsibility and is likely to be small the Board's attention is drawn to the fact that the muck heap should be designed and sited in accordance with relevant technical standards and best practice for such items.

In the absence of definitive drawings, it is difficult to advise further but these buildings appear in close proximity to the Board's Drain and according to our records Byelaw Consent for these structures has not been sought. The means of surface water disposal is not known and may be direct to the Board's System.

In view of the above, the Board may want to consider whether it wishes to regularise the situation and its further instruction is requested on how it wishes to proceed.



Aerial photographs from 2004, left, and 2011, right, showing the location of the stables and barn



An amended extract from Anglia Building Consultants' Drawing No. 19-1879-2 showing the location of the Board's Drain and potential encroachment within the Board's maintenance access strip.

Residential development and new access on land to the east of New Road, south of Townley Close and north of Listers Road, Townley Close, Upwell – Messrs S & J Bradley (MLC Ref No 498, 513) and Woodgate Developments Ltd (MLC Ref No 602)

Members will be aware of the flooding problems experienced in the area (as discussed in previous meeting reports and earlier in this report), and care needs to be taken to ensure that if consent is issued these proposals do not exacerbate the current situation.

An application made under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act (LDA) for the formation of a road culvert to enable access to the site, together with an application for an attenuated discharge into the Board's system via the private watercourse have been submitted. The contents of these applications and the supporting documents are, at the time of writing, being reviewed.

It is proposed that foul water is connected to the existing public sewer located in Townley Close.

Following conversations with the applicant it was agreed that any further discussion and action, beyond the processing of any required consents, would be undertaken as part of a detailed post-application consultation. As a result, the submitted information is currently being reviewed to assess the engineering proposals.

A meeting with the Chairman, District Officer and Gary Roberts was held in December to discuss known problems with the drainage in the area. A subsequent meeting attended by Gary Roberts was held in January at which the known problems, the proposals and potential improvements to the downstream system were discussed. As a result, the applicant has agreed to carry out clearance work to the private watercourse to its junction with the Board's New Road Drain.

A response is currently awaited from the Borough Council who is believed to be one of the riparian owners of the private watercourse beside Townley Close.

Residential development on land north west of Townley Close, New Road, Upwell – Mr & Mrs M Starr (MLC Ref No 523); Starr Developments (MLC Ref Nos 560 & 579) and Mr D Johnson (MLC Ref No 614)

Further to item (iii) of Minute B.1052 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters, a letter was sent to the Borough Council in March concerning MLC Ref Nos 523, 560 & 579 requesting that a note be added to the Local Land Charges Register stating that "In this area the surface water drainage arrangements will also need to be approved of by this Authority to ensure compliance with the Land Drainage Act 1991".

A Reserved Matters planning application has subsequently been submitted to the Borough Council (MLC Ref No 614) for a single dwelling on plot 4. An enquiry has been received from Engineering Support Practice (ESP) Ltd on behalf of its client but no details relating to surface water drainage have been provided.

Members will recall that this site was previously the subject of two Infiltration device checks, the last in May 2018, which proved that such devices would be ineffective.

Construction of a new highway access and associated culvert at 167 New Road, Upwell – Pro Edge Plant Hire (MLC Ref No 537)

Further to the last meeting a byelaw consent application for the installation of a culvert in the Board's Drain between Points 15 and 16 was received from ESP Ltd, the

applicant's consultant, in February but unfortunately it did not meet the Board's minimum validation requirements. Following further discussion with ESP Ltd, a revised application was received in May. This application was subsequently sent to the Board's Chairman and District Officer as part of an internal consultation and their responses were duly received and incorporated into a recommendation for approval which was passed to the Clerk to the Board later that month.

No subsequent correspondence or contact has occurred with either the applicant or ESP Ltd concerning this site.

Residential development on land to the east of Main Road, Three Holes – Fountain Construction (Anglia) Ltd (MLC Ref No 539 & 540)

Further to the last Board report, the Infiltration Device Self-Certification (Option 1) application submitted in January 2018 was refused and in accordance with a request from the Board at its last meeting a letter was sent to the Borough Council requesting that an advisory note be placed with the Local Land Charges Register (LLCR) advising that "...surface water drainage arrangements will also need to be approved of by this Authority to ensure compliance with the Land Drainage Act 1991".

The applicant's consultant ESP Ltd submitted a completed Infiltration Device Checking Service (Option 2) in May and following consideration the Clerk to the Board was advised in June that whilst there were concerns about the design the application had passed the numerical check. A Soakaway Certificate was subsequently issued and the removal of the advisory note with the LLCR was requested.

Development at Plawfield Cottage, 112 Green Road, Upwell – Mrs E Rigby (MLC Ref No 567 & 606)

A retrospective planning application was submitted to the Borough Council in July and subsequently approved in September.

Members will be aware that the site is in close proximity to the water control structure at Point 13 but it does not appear, from the information provided, that the proposal will detrimentally affect the Board's access and operations but its consent may be required for any structures within its maintenance access strip.

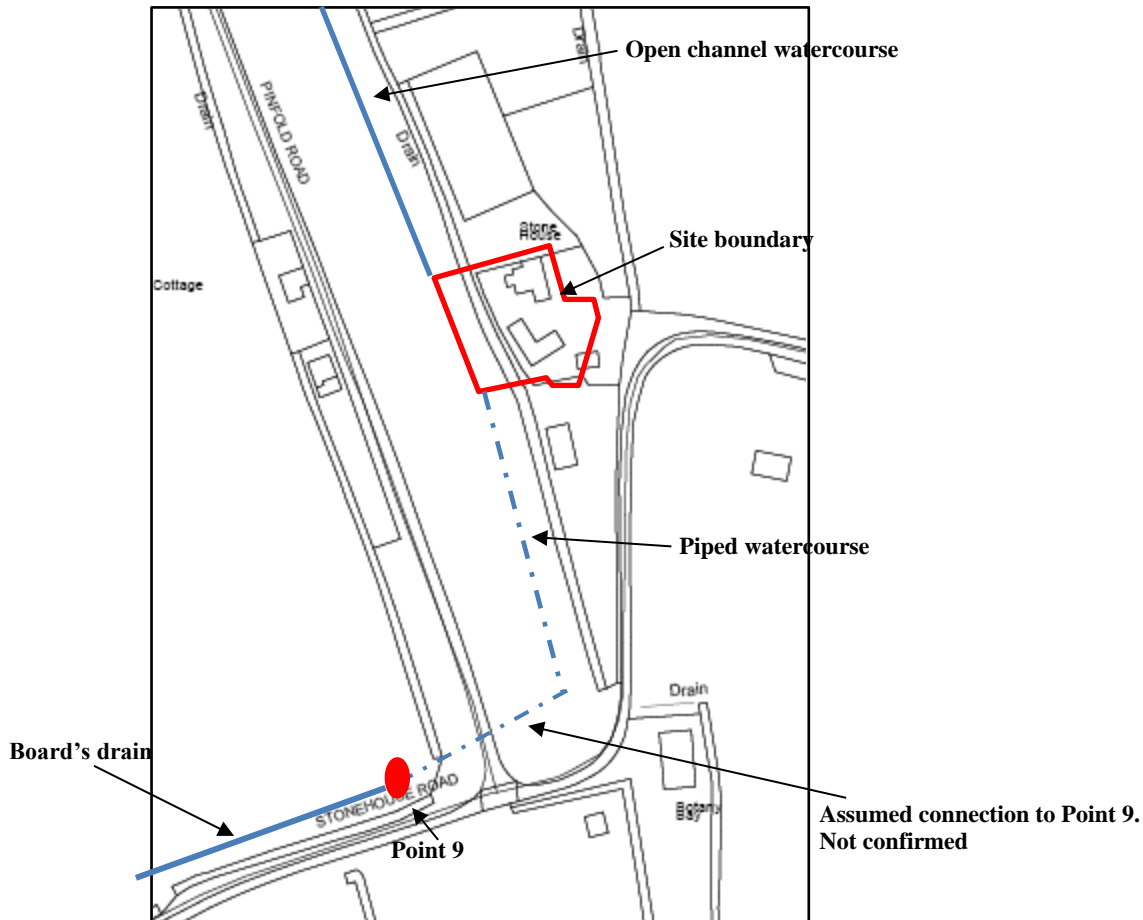


An extract from Trundley Design Services' Drawing No 19-P24-PL001 showing the proposals in proximity to the Board's System at Point 13

The planning application advises that the kennels discharge surface water into "Existing watercourses".

In view of the above, the Board may want to consider whether it wishes to regularise the situation and its further instruction is requested on how it wishes to proceed.

Construction of 2 dwellings to replace mobile residential units at Stonehouse Road, Upwell, Mr & Mrs Loveridge (MLC Ref No 612)



An application for the attenuated disposal of both surface and treated foul effluent water together with an application made under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act (LDA) have been received from the applicants' consultant, ESP Ltd.

At the time of writing the fees associated with these have not been received and, therefore, the applications have not been progressed.

The applicants' agent has agreed on his clients' behalf that any further discussion and action, beyond the processing of any required consents, would be undertaken as part of a detailed post-application consultation and the submitted information is being reviewed to check the engineering proposals.

It is proposed that treated foul effluent water will drain to a septic tank and for a partially attenuated discharge of surface water, only marginally above greenfield run-off rates, to the adjacent private watercourse. The proposal also includes the piping and filling of a section of open watercourse within the property which will connect into a section of piped watercourse that was granted consent in November 2003. The new section of pipeline will accept the surface water discharge and provide improved connectivity for the

upstream and downstream watercourse the condition of which has deteriorated since it was given up by the Board.

Proposed 2 self-build plots on land to the south west of 83 Baptist Road, Upwell – Mr D Lawrence (MLC Ref No 613)

An outline planning application has been submitted to, and is currently being considered by, the Borough Council for the erection of two detached dwellings on a “greenfield” site to the south west of New Bridge Lane.

As can be seen from the proposed site plan, below, the proposal encroaches within the Board’s maintenance access strip beside its Baptist Road Drain.



An extract from Peter Humphrey Associates (PHA) Ltd’s Drawing No 6071/PL01 showing the proposals in proximity to the Board’s Baptist Road Drain.

According to the Borough Council’s planning portal this development is “Awaiting Decision”.

With the exception of issuing the applicant with a copy of the “standard” response in December, no subsequent correspondence has been received and no discussions have been held

The Board is asked to consider the proposal and provide instruction on how it would wish us to proceed.

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 2016-2036

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 (SADMP) (adopted in 2016).

These two documents have been 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.

The document was considered and 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. The response included comments on consultation during the planning process and flood risk design with re-iteration of the previous comments on sites at:

- G96.1 - land adjacent to ‘The Bungalow’, Main Road, Three Holes
- G104.1 – land north of Townley Close, Upwell
- G104.2 – land south/east of Townley Close, Upwell
- G104.3 – land at Low Side, Upwell
- G104.4 – land off St Peter’s Road, Upwell

The relevant Borough Council's web page advises that the submitted comments and suggestions are being reviewed with another version of the plan being issued for further consultation in line with its [Local Development Scheme \(LDS\)](#) "to take place towards the end of the year/earlier next year."

Local Plan review Programme 2019-2021

| Local Plan Documents | 2019 | | | | 2020 | | | | 2021 | | | |
|--------------------------------------------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
| | Jan-Mar | Apr-Jun | Jul-Sept | Oct-Dec | Jan-Mar | Apr-Jun | Jul-Sept | Oct-Dec | Jan-Mar | Apr-Jun | Jul-Sept | Oct-Dec |
| Local Plan review (2016 – 2036) | E/C | C/D | D | D/E | F | G | G | | H/I/J | | | |
| Housing & Economic Availability Assessment | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Authority Monitoring Report | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | Key Stages of Local Plan Preparation | Regulation |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| A | Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report Consultation (completed 2016) | |
| B | Development of options – on-going engagement on issues and emerging options | |
| C | Publish and Consult on draft Local Plan | Regulation 18 |
| D | Pre-Submission plan development | |
| E | Pre-Submission publication and consultation | Regulation 19 & 20 |
| F | Submission of document to Secretary of State | Regulation 22 |
| G | Examination (Including Hearing Sessions) | Regulation 24 |
| H | Receipt of Inspectors Fact Check Report | |
| I | Receipt of final Inspector's Report | Regulation 25 |
| J | Adoption | Regulation 26 |

Upwell Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2038

Both the draft and revised versions of the plan have been considered as part of public consultations held between 5 April – 24 May and 18 November – 13 January.

The plan is very Upwell Village centric and the response made on behalf of both the Middle Level Commissioners and the associated Boards for whom we provide a planning consultancy service within the Upwell Parish was largely generic. Items of interest to the Board within the submitted document include Economic development including Housing – Scale and Location; Tourism, Leisure, Recreation, and Marina; Open Community Space including Local Green Spaces; the Natural Environment; Flood Risk and Prevention including maintenance of flood defences and specific comments on allocated sites at St Peters Road/Blunts Orchard.

The opportunity was also taken to provide general information on Risk Management Authorities (RMA); Watercourses protected by the LDA and relevant RMA Bylaws; Consultation during the planning process; Early engagement and the better design of infrastructure; River setting and corridors/Green Infrastructure; Biodiversity and protected habitats and species; Flood risk and water level management including hazard mapping and development within the floodplain, open watercourses and Water Resources.

Norfolk Minerals & Waste Local Plan

Norfolk County Council is preparing a Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan Review, to consolidate its three Development Plan Documents (DPD), including the Site Specific Allocation DPD referred to in the Board's April 2017 meeting report, into one Local Plan, and ensure that the policies within them remain up-to-date and to extend the plan period to the end of 2036 to ensure consistency with the other plans being developed by the Local Planning Authorities in Norfolk.

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that most local plans are likely to require updating in whole or in part at least every five years and this requirement was incorporated into the adopted Minerals and Waste Core Strategy.

A public consultation on the draft Preferred Options document took place over a six week period from 18 September until 30 October. The County Council has reviewed the responses received and these, together with the other relevant documents, can be viewed on the County Council's webpage.

A response made on behalf of the Middle Level Commissioners and our relevant associated Boards, within West Norfolk, in response to a public consultation, advised that the document had been considered and the proposals were found to be outside the respective catchments and, therefore, no specific comments were made.

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

The Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer has represented both the Middle Level Commissioners and their associated Boards on the Technical Group since the last Board meeting.

An article detailing the project was included on page 16 of the Summer edition of the ADA Gazette. This can be found at <https://flickread.com/edition/html/index.php?pdf=5d1efbbc0a48b#16>

The project is further discussed under a separate Agenda item.

General Advice

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

- (a) A request was made by the District Officer to provide an estimate for works to prevent erosion/vermin activity that is undermining the dam at Point 13. The estimated cost of the work to drive steel piles on the upstream end of the dam, to either side of the concrete headwall and to fill in behind with clay is £2,800+VAT.

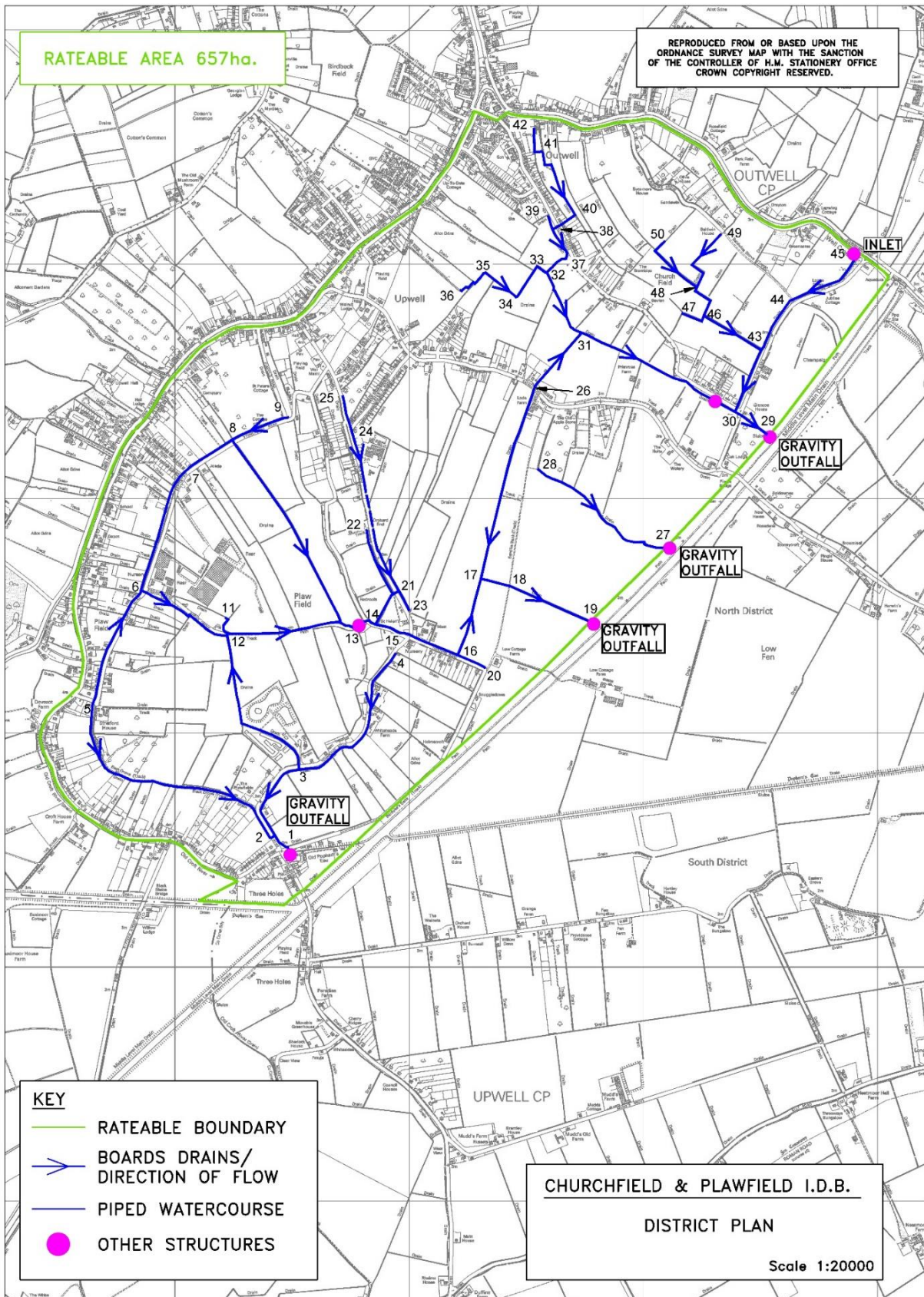
Consulting Engineer

13 February 2020





Churchfield & Plawfield I.D.B (306)\Reports\February 2020

RATEABLE AREA 657ha.

REPRODUCED FROM OR BASED UPON THE
ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE SANCTION
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KEY

-  RATEABLE BOUNDARY
-  BOARDS DRAINS/
DIRECTION OF FLOW
-  PIPED WATERCOURSE
-  OTHER STRUCTURES

CHURCHFIELD & PLAWFIELD I.D.B.
DISTRICT PLAN
Scale 1:20000

| Churchfield & Plawfield Internal Drainage Board | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Capital Improvement Programme (2020/2021) | | PREVIOUS YEARS | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | 2026/27 | 2027/28 | 2028/29 | 2029/30 | FUTURE YEARS | ALL YEARS |
| | | Pre Yr 0 | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Post Year 10 | Total Expenditure |
| Structures | Gravity outfall refurbishment/replacement | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 10.0 | 10.0 |
| | Control structure refurbishment/replacement | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 10.0 | 10.0 |
| | Inlet structure refurbishment/replacement | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Refurbishment of culvert at Small Lode (Point 26) | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | Sulivans dam refurbishment | 0 | 0.0 | 2.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.8 |
| | Jetting - Points 24 - 25 | | 3.0 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | CCTV survey - Point 21 | | 0.9 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| reinstatement open watercourse | 0 | 1.75 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.8 | |
| Drainage Channels | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 0 | 5.7 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 25 |

Further to Minute B.1007, Members to give consideration to the possible refurbishment of the culvert at Small Lode, Point 26

District officer's report 2019-20

Maintenance work was again completed by The King's Lynn Consortium of Internal Drainage Boards.

Repair to the leaking sewer pipe between Points 35 and 36 has not been completed satisfactorily and, to my knowledge, no consent has been granted for its presence.

The control structure at Point 14, leaking around the dam board retainers, has not been repaired yet.

Clearance of brush and brambles has begun along the access strip between Points 29 and 30 adjacent Mr. Wagner's embankment.

The nursery stock planted on the access strip between Points 48 and 49 is still in situ'.

Illegal horse grazing has compromised the structural integrity of the ditch bank between Points 44 and 48.

Levels are still being monitored at Point 26.

Fly-tipping and general litter is an ongoing problem.

Maintenance for the forthcoming season: Flailing and weed cutting as usual. As the requirement for culvert cleansing has increased, the implementation of a jetting programme would also be beneficial.

Board members to advise on other potential issues at the meeting.

The following will remain on my reports for the foreseeable future.

Comment: I prefer to keep my report brief, factual and written in the third person. However, I would like to put on record that, in my humble opinion, the number of new dwellings and associated impermeable surfaces planned for the North-West of the district in the near future will render that part of the system inadequate in a high rainfall event leading to localized flooding.

Churchfield & Plawfield Internal Drainage Board

Biodiversity Action Plan Report 2019-20

Note on 2019-20 report

The ADA-led process to review and update existing BAP guidelines and metrics is in motion with a national meeting scheduled for March 2020. The outcomes of this will be shared with all Boards as and when it is finalised. Until then, this report continues in the format of previous ones.

Report Summary

Churchfield & Plawfield IDB offers a range of ditch types from small, shallow field drains to the Middle Level Main Drain bordering its eastern edge. On the whole, ditch profiles are good and appear sensitively managed, as such they are likely to be favourable for water voles. The Conservation Officer will re-survey some stretches in spring 2020 (at the time of writing conditions were poor for mammal activity). There were few signs of bats or barn owls but it is expected both are frequent in the district. A replacement barn owl box for the MLC Pingle Bridge site has been re-ordered and will be installed when possible (with quite a high usage from dog walkers and anglers an alternative site may be sought)

Other

Invasive Species

The non-native invasive **American Mink** continues to be found in the Middle Level and adjacent catchments and the Conservation Officer is keen to hear of any sightings in the Board's area. It has been suggested that Internal Drainage Boards may be interested in supporting renewed efforts to eradicate mink from their drains and helping ensure the survival of our native Water Vole. A recommendation has been included below and a copy of a letter with more information included on the use of remote-monitoring technology (see Appendix 1).

Floating Pennywort continues to cause significant problems in the Ouse Washes area and as such all IDBs are urged to be vigilant and report any sightings (confirmed or otherwise) to the Conservation Officer. (An ID poster produced for boaters in 2019 will be attached to this report, it can be printed and shared or copies are available from Head Office)

Recommendations

Per Appendix 1, Mink Traps are available for purchase via the Conservation Officer at a cost of £210.68.

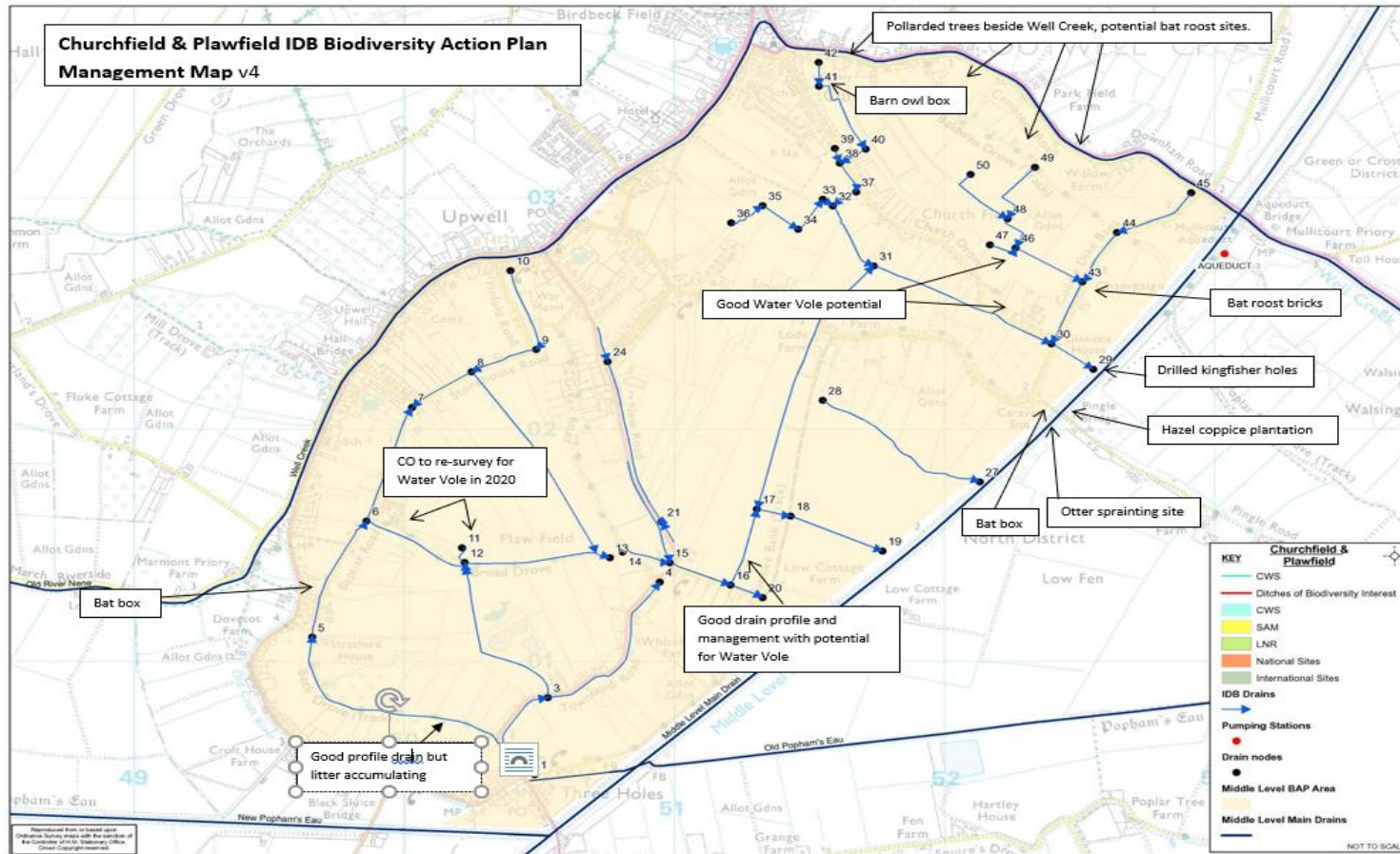
Training

The next Middle Level Biodiversity Meeting will take place on Wednesday 2nd December 2020 at the Oliver Cromwell Hotel in March. Further training events will be scheduled in due course – the Conservation Officer welcomes suggestions for topics Board members may find useful/interesting.

The Conservation Officer is happy to assist with any enquiries arising from this report.

Peter Beckenham
Peter.beckenham@middlelevel.gov.uk
07765 597775

Churchfield & Plawfield IDB Map 2019-20



Drainage Ditch Action Plan

| Target Reference | Target | Action Reference | IDB Actions | Partners | Date | Indicators | Report |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Manage ditches for biodiversity as well as for drainage | 1.1 | Establish and maintain a management plan for routine IDB operations incorporating key biodiversity features | Conservation Officer | 2015 | Plan finalised and followed each year | <i>A map-based is attached. It will be amended as further information is gathered.</i> |
| | | 1.2 | Look for opportunities to provide natural erosion protection such as marginal plant ledges when re-profiling ditches | Conservation Officer | Ongoing | If re-profiling is carried out, opportunities identified | <i>No re-profiling carried out during the period.</i> |
| | | 1.3 | Provide natural erosion protection as in 1.2 if opportunities available | Conservation Officer | Ongoing | Length of ditch with ledge / natural vegetation revetment | <i>As above.</i> |
| 2 | Identify ditches of conservation interest and manage appropriately | 2.2 | Ensure appropriate management of ditches for priority species | Conservation Officer, Plantlife, Wildlife Trust | Ongoing | Specified in management plan | <i>Ditches of interest identified on Management Plan map.</i> |
| 3 | Support the Conservation Officer in working with landowners to benefit wildlife in the district | 3.1 | Refer private landowners to the Conservation Officer for advice on creating field margin buffer zones and wildlife-friendly ditch management | Conservation Officer, Natural England, Wildlife Trust, FWAG | Ongoing | Number of contacts received and passed to Environmental Officer | <i>No enquiries were received during the period</i> |
| 4 | Control invasive species | 4.1 | Report any sightings of non-native invasive species immediately to the Conservation Officer and control as appropriate (see Appendix F for species list) | Conservation Officer, Environment Agency, Plantlife, Wildlife Trust | Ongoing | Reports to Conservation Officer | <i>No invasive plant species recorded; see note re. Floating Pennywort</i> |

Reedbed Action Plan

| Target Reference | Target | Action Reference | IDB Actions | Partners | Date | Indicators | Report |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Identify, assess and map any areas of reedbed over 0.5ha in size | 1.1 | Pass details of any known areas to Conservation Officer | Wildlife Trust, Natural England, Environment Agency | 2013 | Review of reedbed areas carried out | <i>No areas of reedbed over 0.5ha identified.</i> |
| 2 | Support appropriate reedbed creation | 2.2 | Manage the District adopted drains, where possible, to assist private landowners who wish to create areas of reedbed on their own land | Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency | Ongoing | (a) Number of requests received (b) Number of landowners assisted | <i>No requests received.</i> |
| 3 | Take conservation value of reedbed into account when planning and carrying out ditch and river maintenance | 3.2 | Where reeds are present, commence mowing or cleansing work outside the bird breeding season (7 th April – 15 th July). Where reeds are growing in water be aware of the potential for late-nesting reed warblers being present until late August and avoid mowing in that location. In exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, seek advice from the Conservation Officer. | Conservation Officer, Wildlife Trust, RSPB | Ongoing | Reeds not cut during bird nesting season | <i>Management work was not carried out during the bird nesting period.</i> |

Open Water Action Plan

| Target Reference | Target | Action Reference | IDB Actions | Partners | Date | Indicators | Report |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Promote the creation of ponds, lakes and reservoirs in appropriate areas | 1.1 | Consider pond creation as mitigation when a ditch has to be filled in or culverted | Local authorities, Amphibian & Reptile Conservation, Wildlife Trust | Ongoing | (a) Number of mitigation opportunities (b) Number of ponds created | <i>(a) None (b) None</i> |
| | | 1.2 | Support creation of flood storage areas and reservoirs | Environment Agency, Natural England, Wildlife Trust, RSPB | Ongoing | Number of projects involved with | <i>No flood storage areas or reservoir projects arose during the period</i> |
| | | 1.3 | Assist private landowners with advice, information or contacts as necessary | Amphibian & Reptile Conservation, Wildlife Trust | Ongoing | (a) Number of information requests (b) Number responded to | <i>No information requests were received</i> |
| 2 | Look for opportunities to create open water habitat when managing ditches | 2.1 | Create a pool at an appropriate ditch junction when re-profiling (see the Drainage Channel Biodiversity Manual, technique CL3) | Conservation Officer | 2010 | One pool successfully created | <i>No new opportunities for this method arose.</i> |

Water Vole Action Plan

| Target Reference | Target | Action Reference | IDB Actions | Partners | Date | Indicators | Report |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Manage ditches according to the law and to best practice for water vole | 1.1 | Assume water voles are present when carrying out works and follow the ADA water vole mitigation guide | Conservation Officer | Ongoing | Measures incorporated in management plans | <i>Water vole Best Practice methods were used</i> |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | 1.2 | Publicise good practice for rat control near drainage ditches | Conservation Officer, Wildlife Trust | Ongoing | Good practice publicised | <i>Best Practice for rat control has been previously publicised in the Environmental Officer's Natural Level newsletter.</i> |
| 2 | Enhance drainage ditch habitat to benefit water vole | 2.1 | Look for opportunities to add a marginal shelf when re-profiling banks | Conservation Officer | Ongoing | (a) Opportunities identified (b) Measures taken | <i>No opportunities identified; no measures taken during the period.</i> |
| | | 2.2 | Consider using coir roll to stabilise banks and provide marginal vegetation | Conservation Officer | Ongoing | (a) Sites considered (b) Measures taken | <i>No appropriate sites or opportunities arose during the period.</i> |
| 3 | Monitor water vole populations | 3.1 | Set up a survey programme to monitor water vole populations | Conservation Officer, Wildlife Trust | 2010 | Surveys carried out | <i>Conservation Officer to arrange water vole survey in spring 2020.</i> |
| | | 3.2 | Provide data on water vole to the relevant Biological Records Centres | Conservation Officer, CPERC, NBIS | Ongoing | Data sent via Environmental Officer annually | <i>Data sent to CPERC.</i> |
| 4 | Control mink as necessary | 4.2 | Carry out mink control as part of the Middle Level programme and report all sightings to the Conservation Officer | Conservation Officer | Ongoing | (a) Number of trapping days (b) Number of mink caught | <i>No mink reported. See Appendix 1 for update on mink trapping in Middle Level</i> |

Otter Action Plan

| Target Reference | Target | Action Reference | IDB Actions | Partners | Date | Indicators | Report |
|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Improve otter habitat | 1.1 | Identify and maintain existing key bushes and trees near watercourses likely to be important for otters | Conservation Officer | 2012 and ongoing | Sites identified and listed in management plans | <i>Suitable habitat and popular sprainting sites represented on map</i> |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2 | Monitor otter populations | 2.3 | Ensure any dead otters are reported to the Conservation Officer and transferred to the Environment Agency for post mortem | Environment Agency | Ongoing | Otters reported to Conservation Officer, if found | <i>No dead otters were reported</i> |
| 3 | Reduce otter deaths related to eel and crayfish trapping and road traffic | 3.1 | Report incidents of suspected illegal netting, trapping or fishing to the Environment Agency Fisheries Officers and the Conservation Officer | Environment Agency, Angling Clubs & syndicates | Ongoing | Incidents reported, if discovered | <i>No reports or indications of illegal trapping noted. Members are encouraged to report any suspicious activity or illegal fishing to the EA or Conservation Officer.</i> |

Bats Action Plan

| Target Reference | Target | Action Reference | IDB Actions | Partners | Date | Indicators | Report |
|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Improve habitat for bats | 1.1 | Put up at least one bat box at an appropriate site, e.g. a pumping station | Bat Conservation Trust | 2015 | Number of bat boxes sited | <i>Two bat boxes previously installed at 2 sites - Stratford House Farm 26/04/12, Pingle Bridge 25/11/13.</i> |
| | | 1.2 | Pollard suitable trees to provide bat roosts | | Ongoing | Number of trees pollarded | <i>No trees identified.</i> |
| | | 1.3 | Identify potential sites for a bat hibernaculum, e.g. in disused buildings or tunnels | Conservation Officer, Bat Conservation Trust | As opportunities arise | (a) Potential sites looked for (b) Site created | <i>(a) A site for bat roosting bricks was identified at the brick culvert at point 44. (b) 4 bat bricks were installed under the culvert in 2015.</i> |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 2 | Collect information on bat populations | 2.1 | Monitor bat boxes | Bat Conservation Trust | 2015 onwards | (a) Number of boxes monitored (b) Number of boxes used by bats | <i>(a) two (b) 0 (Pingle Bridge box used by birds)</i> |
| | | 2.2 | Pass bat box information to CPBRC and NBIS | Conservation Officer, CPBRC, NBIS | 2015 onwards | Data via Conservation Officer annually | <i>Annually if box found to be occupied by bats.</i> |

Kingfisher Action Plan

| Target Reference | Target | Action Reference | IDB Actions | Partners | Date | Indicators | Report |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Improve the quality of kingfisher habitat | 1.1 | Provide at least one potential nest hole in sheet pilings | Conservation Officer | Ongoing | Number of nest sites provided | <i>One site provided.</i> |
| | | 1.2 | Leave kingfisher fishing perches where possible (e.g. occasional branch) | Conservation Officer | Ongoing | Number of perch sites left | <i>There are many natural perch sites for kingfishers available along the Old Pop and Main Drain.</i> |
| 2 | Collect records of kingfisher breeding between March and July | 2.1 | Note sightings of potential breeding kingfisher and pass information to CPBRC and NBIS via the Environmental Officer | Conservation Officer, CPBRC, NBIS | Ongoing | Data sent via Conservation Officer annually | <i>Kingfishers seen regularly along the Main Drain in 2019</i> |

Barn Owl Action Plan

| Target Reference | Target | Action Reference | IDB Actions | Partners | Date | Indicators | Report |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Improve the quality of barn owl habitat | 1.1 | Put up at least one barn owl nest box in a suitable location | Wildlife Conservation Partnership | 2015 | Number of nest boxes provided | <i>One (box placed near Pingle Bridge has fallen down or been taken down)</i> |
| | | 1.2 | Pollard suitable trees to provide natural nest sites | Conservation Officer | Ongoing | Number of trees pollarded | <i>None</i> |
| 2 | Collect records of barn owl presence | 2.1 | Monitor nest boxes for use. Have occupied boxes checked for success by licensed barn owl ringers. | Wildlife Conservation Partnership | 2015 | (a) Number of nest boxes checked by licensed ringers (b) Number of nest boxes used | <i>(a) One (b) follow up visit to confirm</i> |
| | | 2.2 | Pass barn owl box information to CPBRC and NBIS | Conservation Officer, Wildlife Conservation Partnership, CPBRC, NBIS | 2015 | Data sent via Conservation Officer annually | <i>Annual, when box is occupied.</i> |

MIDDLE LEVEL COMMISSIONERS

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MIDDLE LEVEL OFFICES
85 WHITTLESEY ROAD,
MARCH
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
PE15 0AH

Peter Beckenham
Conservation Officer

3rd December 2019

FAO Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen

Mink Control in the Middle Level

Dear Sirs, Madam

I am writing with an update on mink control in the Middle Level and proposing a future strategy for managing the species that I hope Internal Drainage Boards will support.

Background

Internal Drainage Boards of the Middle Level have a proven record in delivering for conservation as part of Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs). These plans focus on watercourse habitat conservation and the range of species that are dependent on them in the fens. Our work with Barn Owls, Kingfishers and Otters, among others, has been recognised nationally for its achievements.

Water Voles

The Water Vole is described as Britain's fastest declining mammal, having disappeared from 70% of known sites in the seven years between national surveys in the late 1980s and early 1990s (GWCT, 2019). More recently, a further 30% decline was reported nationally between 2006 - 2015 (McGuire & Whitfield, 2017). In the Middle Level our work (supported by the Wildlife Trust) has shown that Water Voles are still present in number thanks to a combination of factors including continuity of drain management practices. However, given the precarious situation nationally, every effort should be taken to conserve and enhance Water Voles in the Middle Level.

Mink in the Middle Level

The American Mink is an invasive non-native species (INNS) widely regarded as having contributed significantly to the decline of Water Voles across the country. This predation is acknowledged in the State of Nature 2019 report "INNS may outcompete or predate native species, as has happened with American Mink and Water Vole (Hayhow, et al. p35). The species is a formidable predator also targeting water birds such as Moorhen as well game birds, fish and other small mammals.

Sightings, reports and camera traps show that, although some control is ongoing, Mink are still well-established in the Middle Level in 2019. There is now growing acknowledgement of the scale and persistence of the mink problem and a need for a strategic, national approach to control alongside existing commitments made in BAPs.

Using Remote Monitoring to control Mink

Previously mink trapping involved daily checks on a trap in order to ensure there was no undue suffering to the animal. This is problematic in that the time and responsibility taken on by the volunteer is often not sustainable for long periods.

Advances in technology have now resulted in the ‘Remoti’ device being made available. This device clips to the back of a cage and is capable of remotely monitoring a mink trap and notifying a volunteer/coordinator via text message or email if the trap is triggered. Once set up this ends the need to check traps daily, reducing the onus on a trap checker and thus greatly increasing the area that can be covered.

Middle Level ‘Remoti’ trial, autumn 2019

In September 2019 the Middle Level Commissioners purchased 4 Remoti devices with new rafts and cages to test their suitability to local conditions such as mobile reception, public/environmental interactions and ease of use.

After 6 weeks the results were good with no malfunctions or incidences of interference. 1 Mink was caught in this time with the process of initial notification through to humane despatch being trouble-free. The devices work by using mobile network signals and this was found to be an issue in one location, however, another site was soon found nearby.

Mink control is taking place in adjacent catchments with the Ely Group of IDBs already operating 20+ ‘remoti’ rafts, Welland & Deepings and Lindsey Marsh IDBs are looking at options.

Costs of Mink Control/Monitoring

The cost of supplying and operating a single mink raft with a Remoti is as follows (inc. VAT):

| Item | Cost (£) (inc VAT) | Details |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mink Raft | £75.28 | New design benefits by being made locally from recycled plastic and having a covered outer edge to reduce chance of polystyrene degrading and entering the water course |
| Perdix Mink Trap (cage) | £32.40 | Metal cage is coated to reduce rusting. Older cages may work provided they are rust-free. |
| Remoti Unit + Subscription Fee | £98.00 | The unit requires a subscription fee to cover all data charges and website functionality for 24 months (included with purchase). Beyond that the ongoing cost of a subscription renewal in 2021 is estimated to be £24.00 per annum per unit* (excluding V.A.T) |
| Assorted assembly items (eg cord, drill bit, tape, cable ties) | £5.00 | |
| TOTAL | £210.68 | Initial cost. Then £24.00 per year after 2 years (as above*) |
| Despatch per GWCT guidelines is suggested as an air pistol or air rifle. https://www.gwct.org.uk/advisory/guides/mink-raft-guidelines/dispatching-a-mink/ | | |

It is possible that a reduced rate can be negotiated on the above if a bulk order is placed.

Summary and next steps

- IDBs are well-placed to provide a large-scale network of Mink control monitoring
- Such a scheme in the Middle Level will benefit our native Water Voles through the removal of invasive non-native American Mink and continue to demonstrate our interest in and commitment to Biodiversity Action Plan objectives
- As well as trapping Mink, the rafts will have long-term value as a means of recording water vole presence through latrines which are often left on rafts
- With IDB support there is potential to expand Mink control from spring 2020 across the Middle Level

Mink are known to be particularly active from April and I am keen not to lose out in this important window. As such, in advance of board meetings next year, I would like to ask IDB Chairmen if they are interested in offering financial support for the purchase of new mink rafts and ‘Remoti’ devices for their districts per the costs outlined above.

IDBs vary in size/length of drainage network so I will leave it to individual boards to assess what/if an amount can be contributed. As a guideline, an initial donation of £500 per IDB would allow for 2 fully kitted rafts with some of that sum going towards future maintenance/volunteer training etc. The Conservation Officer will liaise with the relevant parties over suitable locations for the rafts.

The Conservation Officer is on hand to answer any questions on the matter, send further information or attend Board Meetings. All IDBs will be kept informed of progress.

If you are willing to support this initiative please reply by email or letter by 31st January 2020.

Many thanks, Peter Beckenham
peter.beckenham@middlelevel.gov.uk



Figure 1 & 2: New mink raft in operation. Note otter guards in place. Remoti unit attached to rear (2).



FLOATING PENNYWORT



BOATERS

Please follow this advice to help prevent the spread of Floating Pennywort:

- Before entering the Middle Level system carry out a visual inspection of your vessel for Floating Pennywort and remove anything that should not be there and leave by the side of the watercourse, as far from the water as possible.
- If your vessel has an inboard engine check any weed filters or strainers and clear them.
- On a narrowboat lift & check for weed via the weed hatch where fitted and when safe to do so.
- Apply regular short bursts of reverse thrust when underway to throw off and unwrap any weed caught around propellers.

If you do find something you suspect to be Floating Pennywort:

- Note the location and take a photo.
- If it is on a Middle Level waterway phone the Middle Level Commissioners on 01354 653232.
- On any other waterways contact the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60.

Photos from: Olaf Booy, Richard Lansdown (RL), Mike McCabe, British Waterways



CE/112



Churchfield and Plawfield Internal Drainage Board

Site Safety Inspection Record

Complete

| |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name of organisation: Middle Level Commissioners |
| Date of site visit <input type="checkbox"/> 7th Feb, 2020 <input type="checkbox"/> 1:00 PM GMT |
| Address of inspected premises Churchfield and Plawfield Internal Drainage Board |
| Name of Advisor Martin Clark |
| Time of arrival at site: <input type="checkbox"/> 7th Feb, 2020 <input type="checkbox"/> 1:00 PM GMT |
| Audit Name Churchfield and Plawfield Internal Drainage Board |



Audit

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| An opening meeting was held with Mr S Carlton (Chair) | |
| Have there been any accidents since our last visit? | No |
| Have there been any new starters since our last visit? | No |
| <p>1</p> <p>Introduction. Churchfield and Plawfield IDB covers an area of 660 hectares and comprises of 3 pen stocks and 5 gravity fed outfalls with one inlet (controlled by Kings' Lynn board). It was not possible to visit the slacker locations or the outfalls due to field conditions making access difficult. There are no mechanical pumps as part of this Board. The Board has no direct employees. Board members are responsible for the operation of the slackers as required, usually between May and November. Any maintenance work carried out on the slackers or drains is undertaken by Middle Level Commissioners or their approved contractors.</p> <p>In the event that other contractors are used it should be ensured that they are competent to undertake the work and have appropriate liability insurance in place.</p> <p>All Boards have been made aware that whilst Middle Level Commissioners provide a conduit for health and safety information and can provide general advice, it is the Boards responsibility to ensure appropriate measures are taken to ensure that Board members, contractors and anyone else who could be affected by the Boards undertakings are not placed at risk of injury or ill health. This can be achieved by complying with the relevant legislation and best practice guidance.</p> | |
| <p>2</p> <p>Working near water. There is a risk of drowning if workers fall into the water. Only one outfall location has barriers and a platform from which to operate, the remaining slackers and outfalls are essentially unprotected. The locations of the outfalls means that transiting between them is carried out on foot and they are visited infrequently even during the summer months. Care should be exercised when working in close proximity to water and there is an additional risk from waterborne and zoonotic diseases from contact with contaminated water. Any contact with water should be kept to a minimum and good personal hygiene should be maintained, particularly hand washing, and ensuring any cuts or scratches are covered with a waterproof plaster.</p> | |
| <p>3</p> <p>Lone Working. IDB members usually operate or inspect the slackers and outfalls on their own. It should be ensured that a system is in place so that their whereabouts is known prior to and on completion of any work.</p> | |
| <p>4</p> <p>Manual Handling. Slacker mechanisms are checked visually for any damage or poor operation and remedial action is taken as required to reduce the risk of manual handling injuries from operating the screws. It should be ensured that equipment is maintained in good working order.</p> | |

Photographic Risk Assessment

Signature of person informed

Signature of person informed 1

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Signature of person informed | |
|  | Steve Carlton 7th Feb, 2020 1:22 PM GMT |
| Advisor's signature | |
|  | Martin Clark 10th Feb, 2020 2:33 PM GMT |
| Departure time | |
| 📅 7th Feb, 2020 ⌚ 2:30 PM GMT | |
| Photographic Risk Assessments closed out during the visit. | |
| N/A | |
| Number of outstanding Photographic Risk Assessments | 0 From 0 to 99 |



ADA Advice Note:

Internal Drainage Boards' Health, Safety & Welfare Survey 2018

Prepared by Innes Thomson

Executive Summary

The content of this note is derived from the results of the first survey of health, safety and welfare (HS&W) across internal drainage boards (IDBs) in England and represents findings from just under 75% of all IDBs in England. Those who responded are thanked for taking the time to provide their answers.

Although the questionnaire did not require any hard evidence in the form of supporting documentation, responses were of a breadth to suggest a reasonably accurate reflection of the current situation regarding HS&W in the IDB sector.

Overall, the advice note highlights several areas where there are opportunities for improvements, some of which could be viewed as quick wins where others will require a little more investment.

Three areas highlighted for improvement have a common linkage around attitudes and behaviours where IDBs could demonstrate that they are leading their staff and employees in best practice. This includes:

1. Ensuring that HS&W is an integral part of discussions at all Board Meetings.
2. Actively showing that Board Members care about the competency and welfare of their staff and employees.
3. Implementing a no-blame, anonymous, easy-to-access incident reporting system with active reviews and actions fed back to staff/operatives.

Several excellent examples of HS&W best practice were highlighted from the questionnaire responses and all IDBs are encouraged to strive for such best practice. All IDBs should ensure that they have the capacity to undertake their functions safely and IDBs are encouraged to share and compare their Health & Safety approaches, systems and processes with other IDBs and wider ADA members to help achieve best practice outcomes.

ADA has suggested a series of recommendations for IDBs to consider and review which could support and guide them in the implementation of HS&W best practice in a consistent manner.

The conclusions also set out a series of recommended actions to help IDBs further improve their HS&W. Key to this will be the development of a series of HS&W seminars by ADA, supported by both IDB and HS&W professionals. These presentations will then be made available via the Knowledge section on ADA's website.

Finally it is essential that ADA engages with the IDBs that were unable to meet the response deadline and seek to assist them in understanding their HS&W requirements and to aim to achieve a consistent approach to the advice provided across all IDBs. ADA will be contacting all IDBs that were unable to complete the initial HS&W survey.



Introduction

During 2018 ADA conducted a detailed survey of HS&W within IDBs.

The purpose of the survey was to identify a baseline through gathering a level of qualitative about HS&W of IDBs' board members, staff and operatives in order to:

1. act as a useful HS&W benchmark for IDBs as a community,
2. support ADA in their desire to help provide consistent industry guidance and recommendations,
3. assist IDBs seeking to identify potential areas of improvement in the way they manage HS&W within their operations to achieve best practice wherever possible.

The survey was held via an online questionnaire that IDBs could complete on the SurveyMonkey website. IDBs were first notified of the survey on 17 July 2018 and the questionnaire remained available for responses until 31 December 2018.

The questionnaire was based on a set of HS&W questions prepared by Ian Benn, PG Dip H&S and Env Law, Dip, NEBOSH, Grad IOSH, MCQJ CQP (Honorary Health & Safety Advisor, ADA), in conjunction with Ian Moodie (Technical Manager, ADA) and Innes Thomson (Chief Executive, ADA), and in consultation with ADA's Committees and Board of Directors.

ADA's Board of Directors made the assurance that all responses would be handled on a confidential basis in order to ensure ADA received accurate and open data about HS&W. Therefore, no individual data is identifiable from this report, and the general ethos of its production has been to encourage improvement across all IDBs in the way that HS&W is managed.

This is the first survey of its kind to get to this stage of evaluation across IDBs as a whole. ADA intends to evaluate progress with a repeat survey to be completed by 31 December 2021.

ADA commends those who have responded in providing an assessment of HS&W within their respective IDBs. Nearly 75% of all IDBs participated in the survey and we are encouraged to hear that all IDBs that completed the survey found it a useful audit of their HS&W capacity that will enable them to focus their own improvement efforts.



Conclusions & Recommendations

The key to successful approaches in delivering and maintaining effective HS&W are wide and varied. They are also indelibly linked to peoples' behaviours and attitudes to the subject. Behaviours and attitudes are influenced by what people know through experience and how they have learnt about the subject.

This advice note seeks to guide ADA members about where improvements in personal and corporate HS&W can take place. On the back of these results, ADA will consider how we can further assist our members with HS&W systems and processes. However, the ultimate responsibility for good HS&W falls uniquely upon IDB Board Members themselves.

Whilst annual accident statistics were gathered as part of the survey, the purpose of this note is not intended to examine the detail of those incidents. It is noted, however, that these figures showed a steadily increasing number of near-miss events between 2013 and 2017. It is almost certain that such an increase can be attributed to better recording of near misses by IDBs throughout the period. This is not a negative statistic and should be viewed as extremely encouraging. Any statistics that have been collected by IDBs may support future risk assessment and risk reduction projects where applicable.

ADA has concluded that the data from this survey can be summarised in the following way, with recommendations for review and necessary actions/reflections by Boards.

As a first and top priority, all Boards should check key HSE guidance on what the statutory minimum expectation would be of Boards as employers and employees. This can be found at:

www.hse.gov.uk/workers/employers.htm



Top Three Recommendations

- a) **Governance and leadership** | The majority of Boards reported that their day-to-day managers had received HS&W training. However, there are still opportunities to ensure that a greater number of Board Members receive HS&W training. Behaviours around H,S&W are about leadership. It is recommended that all IDBs initially focus on this area. Virtually all IDBs reported that they have an HS&W policy, and all IDBs should review their policy to ensure that it is being fully implemented, or to see if the policy needs updating. Boards should ensure that HS&W is a standing item for discussion at every Board Meeting, including short HS&W briefings for Board Members.

- b) **Ensuring competence** | We are pleased to note that nearly two thirds of responding Boards reported that they carry out tests to ensure that their employees are competent to undertake their work safely. Boards should ensure that all IDB operatives are tested and licensed for their competency to operate plant and equipment in connection with their jobs.

- c) **Recording accidents and near misses** | Several Boards reported that they do not hold sufficient records of accidents or near miss events, and lack a proper documented process for recording accidents. It is strongly recommended that Boards have distinct policies for recording accidents, incidents and near misses. This should note that all data is reviewed by the Board and that lessons learned are fed back into the updating of risk assessments potentially as hazard mitigation measures. All staff and contractors should be duty-bound to report accidents, incidents and near misses.



Additional Recommendations for IDBs to Consider

The following additional recommendations (in no particular order) are made by ADA to support IDBs with the review and potential improvement of their HS&W activities.

| Ref | Issue | Recommendation |
|-----|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| d) | Quality of advice | Review the provision of HS&W advice so that Board Members, managers and staff receive the proper and correct advice in line with their functions. |
| e) | Welfare facilities | Ensure that all staff and operatives have access to appropriate toilet & mess facilities when working away from base office /depot. |
| f) | Routine training | Plan and provide regular HS&W training updates to all staff and operatives, especially following accidents or incidents. |
| g) | Health surveillance | Implement regular health screening for all staff and operatives. |
| h) | Capacity | Ensure that the IDB has the suitably qualified resource and capacity to undertake their functions safely. In doing so, the IDB should review the opportunities for closer working with their neighbouring IDBs to achieve best practice outcomes. |
| i) | Risk assessment | Ensure that risk assessments are undertaken for the IDB's activities. |
| j) | Toolbox Talks & Training | Plan and deliver programmes that provide information, instruction, training and supervision for hazardous activities highlighted in risk assessments. |
| k) | Machinery inspection | Ensure that the IDB has a documented programme of routine machinery inspection. |



Recommended Actions for ADA in support of IDBs

ADA is committed to supporting its members in striving to achieve best practice across all of their functions, but especially HS&W. To that end, and on the basis of the results of the survey and this note, ADA will be seeking to complete the following actions with the assistance of external experts.

| No. | Action | Timescale |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. | ADA to check and review HS&W with all IDBs that were unable to respond to the survey within the allotted timeframe. | Before 31 March 2020 |
| 2. | ADA to consider how to capture and then annually compile and publish summary information about IDBs' health and safety incidents and near misses. | Annually |
| 3. | ADA to complete second HS&W survey of IDBs, and seek a 100% response rate. | Before 31 December 2021 |
| 4. | Investigate if a series of standard HS&W Policy templates for use by IDBs may be appropriate. | Before 31 December 2020 |
| 5. | Consider the preparation of toolbox talk materials for IDBs, utilising the ADA website and ADA News Stream to communicate these to members. | To commence before 31 December 2020 |
| 6. | Prepare briefings on HS&W matters for dissemination to IDB Clerks & Chief. | To commence before 31 December 2020 |
| 7. | Hold a series of HS&W seminars supported by both IDB and HS&W professionals. These presentations will then be made available via the Knowledge section on ADA's website. | Before 31 December 2020 |

ENDS

Final Version issued – 29 November 2019

Churchfield & Plawfield Internal Drainage Board

Notice of conclusion of the audit

Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2019

Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014
Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015 /234)

- 1 The Audit of accounts for the Churchfield & Plawfield Internal Drainage Board for the year ended 31st March 2019 has been concluded and the accounts published.
- 2 The Annual Governance & Accountability Return is available for inspection by any local government elector of the area of Churchfield & Plawfield Internal Drainage Board on application to:

The Clerk
Churchfield & Plawfield Internal Drainage Board
85 Whittlesey Road
March
Cambridgeshire
PE15 0AH

between the hours of 9.00am and 4.00pm on Mondays to Fridays (excluding public holidays), when any local elector may make copies of the Annual Return.
- 3 Copies will be provided to any local elector on payment of £2.40 for each copy of the Annual Return

Announcement made by:


C.D.C Thomas - Clerk to the Board

Date of Announcement:

6th September 2019

Annual Internal Audit Report 2018/19

CHURCHFIELD & PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2019.

The internal audit for 2018/19 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

| Internal control objective | Agreed? Please choose one of the following | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Yes | No | Not covered** |
| A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2017/18, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. ("Not Covered" should only be ticked where the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2017/18 AGAR) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| L. During summer 2018 this authority has correctly provided the proper opportunity for the exercise of public rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| M. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

20/06/19 23/06/19

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Whiting & Partners

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

M. Hayden - Whiting & Partners

Date 05/07/19

*If the response is 'no' you must include a note to state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Churchfield and Plawfield Internal Drainage Board
Year Ended 31st March 2019
Supplementary Schedule – Regarding “Not Covered” in Year per Annual Return

| Internal Control Objective Section | Date of most recent summary audit work carried out on this area | Date of most recent detailed audit work carried out on this area | Date when next planned detailed audit work will commence |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| A | Year ended 31/03/2019 | | |
| B | Year ended 31/03/2019 | | |
| C | Year ended 31/03/2019 | Year ended 31/03/2017 | Year ending 31/03/2020 |
| D | Year ended 31/03/2019 | Year ended 31/03/2017 | Year ending 31/03/2020 |
| E | Year ended 31/03/2019 | Year ended 31/03/2018 | Year ending 31/03/2021 |
| F | Year ended 31/03/2019 | N/A – no petty cash | N/A – no petty cash |
| G | Year ended 31/03/2019 | | |
| H | Year ended 31/03/2019 | N/A – no assets | N/A – no assets |
| I | Year ended 31/03/2019 | | |
| J | Year ended 31/03/2019 | Year ended 31/03/2018 | Year ending 31/03/2021 |
| K | Year ended 31/03/2019 | Limited assurance review carried out for year ended 31/03/2018 | |

Our internal review work for the year ended 31st March 2019 is based on a combination of annual whole system review, annual analytical review and other works; this is in addition to the more detailed sampling methodology outlined above, carried out on a planned cyclical basis as modified if appropriate in light of the current year assessment.

Conclusion

From our work carried out, the internal control objectives listed above are satisfactory for the year ended 31st March 2019.

Name of person who carried out the internal audit – WHITING & PARTNERS

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit – M. Haydon – Whiting & Partners

M. Haydon - Whiting & Partners

Date *5 July 2019*

PARTNERS

Philip M Peters FCA
Mark N Haydon CA
James D Gater FCA
Paul N Tatham FCA
J James Harrison FCA

Andrea P Winstons FCA
Christopher D Ridgeon FCCA
Richard C Meadows FCA
Ian G C Piper FCA
Christopher P Kelly FCA
Barbara Nicholas CMA

Andrew R Bond FCA
Trev J Mann FCA
Mark J Day FCCA
Aranda E Newman FCA
Iain Clayton FCA

ASSOCIATES

Richard A Alcock ACT
Joseph P Moore ACCA
Stephen D Miles CMA
Paul M Jefferson ACA

PRACTICE MANAGER

Janet Frostick

Registered to carry on audit work in the UK and Ireland, regulated for a range of investment business activities, and licensed to carry out the reserved legal activity of non-contentious probate in England and Wales by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2018/19

We acknowledge as the members of:

CHURCHFIELD & PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2019, that:

| | Agreed | | Yes means that this authority | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Yes | No* | | |
| 1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements. | ✓ | | prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations. | |
| 2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness. | ✓ | | made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge. | |
| 3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances. | ✓ | | has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so. | |
| 4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations. | ✓ | | during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts. | |
| 5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required. | ✓ | | considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly. | |
| 6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems. | ✓ | | arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority. | |
| 7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit. | ✓ | | responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit. | |
| 8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements. | ✓ | | disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant. | |
| 9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit. | Yes | No | N/A | has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts. |

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets should be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

30/06/2019

and recorded as minute reference:

B.1072

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman 

Clerk 

Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)
Authority web address

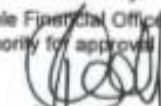
Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2018/19 for

CHURCHFIELD & PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

| | Year ending | | Notes and guidance |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | 31 March 2018 £ | 31 March 2019 £ | |
| 1. Balances brought forward | 36,428 | 36,077 | Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year. |
| 2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies | 21,164 | 21,219 | Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received. |
| 3. (+) Total other receipts | 833 | 512 | Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received. |
| 4. (-) Staff costs | 0 | 0 | Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses. |
| 5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments | 0 | 0 | Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any). |
| 6. (-) All other payments | 22,348 | 20,925 | Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5). |
| 7. (=) Balances carried forward | 36,077 | 36,883 | Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6). |
| 8. Total value of cash and short term investments | 36,535 | 44,325 | The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation. |
| 9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets | 0 | 0 | The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March. |
| 10. Total borrowings | 0 | 0 | The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB). |
| 11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable) | Yes | No | The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets. N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions |
| | | | |

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2019 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval


Date 6th June 2019

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

30/06/2019

as recorded in minute reference:

6.1073

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved



Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2018/19

In respect of **Churchfield and Plawfield Internal Drainage Board – DB0017**

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2019; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

2 External auditor report 2018/19

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with *Proper Practices* and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

- The annual internal audit report focuses on a series of internal control objectives covering an authority's key financial and accounting systems and concludes whether, in all significant respects, the internal control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the authority. We note that the internal auditor has not provided a conclusion on the following internal control objectives: C, D, E and J. The annual internal audit report will inform the authority's response to assertions 2 and 5 in the annual governance statement. As a result, the authority must ensure that assurance that has not been provided via these control objectives has been sought elsewhere.

3 External auditor certificate 2018/19

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2019.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

PKF Littlejohn LLP

Date

02/09/2019

* Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews for 2018/19 in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)



MNH/BB/SAB/MM053

15 October 2019

Messrs. D Thomas and R Hill
Middle Level Commissioners
Middle Level Offices
85 Whittlesey Road
March
Cambs.
PE15 0AH

Dear Messrs. Thomas and Hill

Internal Drainage Boards - Internal Audit 2018-2019

Having completed the internal audit work for the various Internal Drainage Boards administered by the Middle Level Commissioners officers for the year ended 31 March 2019, we are pleased to provide you with the following recommendations to be considered for comment and implementation. We have included some general points and some points which are related to specific boards.

General points

1. Surplus Balances

We made reference in last year's management letter to the fact that a number of IDB's hold significant cash reserves. Unfortunately we note that this has not been acted upon in all cases and monies have not been reinvested. Again, we would recommend any significant surplus balances are reinvested in order to achieve a greater return on public funds and to spread inherent risk between even UK financial institutions.

Client Comment:

Investment opportunities are kept under review, but during the period, interest rates remained low, which led to further restrictions in relation to investments. During this period, the minimum balance to invest with approved bodies remained higher than Boards would be able to achieve. During the current financial year minimum balances to invest have started to reduce and therefore opportunities to invest further will be looked into on an individual Board basis.

2. Opera Bank Reconciliations

As in prior years we have noticed that there are still issues with the Opera bank reconciliation function, as such in some cases the Opera unreconciled reports do not tie back to the main cashbook reconciliation. We are aware that this is a software issue and

PARTNERS

Philip M Peters FCA
Mark N Haydon CA
James D Cater FCA
Paul N Tatum FCA

Andrew P Winearls FCA
Christopher D Ridgdon FCCA
Ian G C Piper FCA
Christopher P Kelly FCA
Barbara Nicholas CTA

Andrew R Band FCA
Trina J Nunn FCA
Keith J Day FCCA
Amanda E Newman FCA
Kim Clayden FCA

ASSOCIATES

Richard A Alecock ATT
Jonathan P Moore ACCA
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PRACTICE MANAGER

Janet Frostick

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March

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Peterborough

Ramsey

St Ives

St Neots

Wisbech

not down to human error. In all cases with the assistance of the manual reconciliation provided, no differences were identified in the year end bank and cash figures.

Client Comment:

As referred to, this is a minor software glitch associated with system shut-downs at the time transactions are being processed, with part of the transaction ending up on the unreconciled report. Although we are now able to have these postings rectified remotely by our software provider through our maintenance agreement, this is obviously done after the event. As mentioned, these do not constitute an error with the transaction postings which would lead to any adjustments to the accounting ledgers being required.

3. Rate Software

As in prior years we are satisfied that the rate software is operating as expected. However, on enquiry we understand that the programme is still not being used to its full capabilities as a result of it not being fully linked to the Opera software. This was highlighted previously and therefore we question whether the system is delivering full value for money to the boards and ratepayers as it appears the system is effectively being used in the same way as the preceding system.

As mentioned in the prior year's management letter it was identified that only one member of staff has a working knowledge of the rates system and is the only member of staff who can access the programme. This could lead to great operational impact if the employee became indisposed or decided to leave the organisation. As such we would urge that further users are trained to avoid over reliance on one member of staff and improve control risk by way of promoting segregation of duties.

Client Comment:

The installation/commissioning of the new software took longer than initially anticipated and through this process the software was restricted to one workstation. The software is now on two workstations, both of which are used. There is an operational manual for the operation of the software and staff are required to keep an updated procedures manual for their areas of work. Currently, when opportunities arise, in-house training is being given to provide continuity of cover. There continues to be a delay in getting the software fully integrated with the accounting software and the finance officer will shortly be attending a meeting with the software provider to discuss these difficulties further.

4. ADA Subscription

We are pleased to note that ADA subscriptions are being accounted for under the accruals basis in the current year. We accept that this has led to some variance between the current prior years charges during this transitional year, these variances are not material.

5. Bank Reconciliation Verification

We are pleased to note that in the main bank reconciliation verifications are being carried out. There are still isolated cases where this has not occurred and would therefore consider this to be an improvement on the prior year position. Again we would suggest that concerted effort is made to ensure all monthly bank reconciliations are verified in the current year.

6. Insurance

We note as in prior years that from the property insurance schedule provided that the buildings (excluding pumping stations) were last revalued for insurance purposes in 2012. We would suggest that due to residential and commercial property values increasing in recent times that the buildings owned by the IDB's might be worth more in today's market and could therefore potentially be slightly underinsured. As such we would suggest that, as with the pumping stations in 2015, the IDB's with such property revalue for insurance purposes and carry out regular revaluations going forward, eg every fifth year.

It is also noted that extra engineering insurance has not been taken out by a number of boards, due to the difficulties faced when trying to make claims due to the fact that it is impractical for a time a value for money perspective to maintain pumps in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines. We appreciate that the nature of the insurance covers "sudden & unforeseen" damage to the pumps and does not cover general wear and tear. On enquiry the boards in question have decided that if such damage was to occur, sufficient funds are in place to repair any such damage. On review of the fund balances available at the year ended 31st March 2019 in the main we would agree that this is the case, however we would suggest that a separate ring fenced fund is created for any "sudden & unforeseen" damage that may arise in the future to such plant and machinery. We would also suggest that each Board annually reviews its discussed position on this matter formally by way of minute record and its action plans for such contingent events.

Client Comment:

For pumping stations, it was recommended that Boards review the asset appraisals carried out in 2015 and the majority approved to instruct the engineer to re-visit these and provide an update for the 2020 Board meetings, at which point the Board will be able to review this valuation against the current insured value and take appropriate action. For residential buildings, the Board now annually review a schedule showing the insured value and therefore have the opportunity to increase/decrease the insured values if considered appropriate.

Following the withdrawal of engineering insurance a number of Boards started a "ring fenced" fund for pumping plant repairs/replacements. A Number of Boards had already been raising money for this purpose and Boards will continue to review the matter in relation to their individual circumstances.

7. Employee Benefits

Residential Property

As a result of HMRC's compliance visit to the Middle Level Commissioners some points arose in relation to the provision of vehicles and properties to its employees. Whilst we appreciate that the IDB's are separate entities and did not fall under the scope of the visit due to the synergies in relation to Middle Level and the IDB's administrative working practices the conclusions reached by HMRC might apply to other individual drainage boards.

We note that a number of IDB's have residential property that is occupied by employees; these individuals do not pay rent. It is noted from the most recent P11d submitted that no benefit has been calculated on the basis that their occupancy is necessary to the proper performance of their duties; in addition to the fact that it is customary within the industry

to provide such accommodation. This aside HMRC determined that this still constitutes a chargeable benefit as their work responsibilities did not deem it necessary for the employee to be significantly on site. Changes in technology, social needs and working practices meant that customary may not apply for general engineering staff now.

In addition it is noted that in some cases utility charges are also considered to be fully exempt on the basis that these are used wholly for business use. Again it is questionable whether this can be the case if occupied by employees as tied or rental basis.

As such going forward we advise that such arrangements are reviewed on a case-by-case basis to ensure that any such benefit is commensurate with the service provided by the tenant and extent of services provided to the tenant.

Vehicle Usage

Where IDB's own vehicles, in the majority of cases these are specifically assigned to the relevant boards' employees and it has been declared that these vehicles are not used for private use. We gather from the notes that accompany the P11d that this declaration is provided by the chairman who is not generally the same as the employee.

We would advise that annual confirmations from the chairman are only acceptable if the employee provides physical confirmation (eg signature) on a separate schedule to their contract of employment when:

- they are first employed by the board
- renewed when any personal circumstances change (e.g. if vehicle used is changed)
- renewed if their role within the board changes and

regardless of the above, if nothing has changed the employee should provide written confirmation every three years.

8. Residential Property – Occupied by Pumping Attendants

It has been noted on some boards that subcontracted pumping attendants/assistants are living rent free or at a reduced rental rate. We gather from the notes that accompany the P11d that this again is required in order to allow for the individual to fully and effectively discharge their duties. This requires the provision of accommodation to be included within their contract of employment and linked to the need to be on site /close to the pumping station for the better performance of their duties. On review of the typical annual fee charged by such individuals against what an equivalent rental charge would be we consider this "benefit" to be overly generous. As such in order to provide value for money to ratepayers of the affected IDB's we would suggest rent is charged on, albeit at a potentially reduced rate, to the individuals in residence or the value of accommodation factored into the current salary position.

9. Land – rented to individuals/bodies associated with IDB's

In the cases where IDB's have surplus land in and around the pumping stations it is noted that this is rented out in some cases to individuals or bodies that are associated with the IDB's, in the main by virtue of their position as commissioners. Whilst we appreciate that some consideration is received, in the majority of cases we question whether this is at market rate and therefore whether this represents value for money to the affected boards.

It is noted that some of the individuals charged have held tenancies for a number of years and therefore it may be difficult to increase rents until these come up for renewal. The affected boards should review these tenancies on a semi-regular basis and take appropriate action where needed to ensure that value for money principles are being applied. In addition, we suggest that there should be a specific declaration of the interest for members that have land rental arrangements and approval of the arrangement on an annual basis at a board meeting.

Client Comments:

Employee Benefits

For those Boards concerned, we have written to the Chairman to outline the position and made the suggestion of a meeting to fully review those matters relevant to the Board and any actions that may be needed to update current procedures.

Land Rentals

Boards with land holdings which are rented do review rental values on a regular basis, with those Boards with larger holdings engaging third party independent land agents. Board members do already complete a register of members' interest and we will look to ensure that these continue to be updated as tenancy agreements change.

10. Provisions

In the past a number of boards have necessarily made provisions to take account of potential costs that are unquantifiable, but due, at the balance sheet date. We note in the current year that when the related actual costs have been paid over by the boards any resulting difference between provisional and actual costs has not always been written back in the accounts. As such going forward we would suggest that all boards with such provisions carry out a review on an annual basis to ensure that write backs are being carried out, where necessary.

Client Comment:

As part of the end of year accounts procedures, provisions are looked at and a decision on an individual basis made as to retain or write back.

11. Exercise of Public Rights

Going forward we note that all boards are now required to advertise a period of 30 days in which individuals can exercise their rights to inspect the accounts and relevant backing records. We believe that all boards are well prepared for this and have always been, for a number of years, advertising this right to the general public when the accounts are published on the Middle Level website.

Client Comment:

Boards are required advertise the appointment of the auditor, audit period, publication of unaudited annual accounts and publication of audited accounts. As mentioned, the regulations provide specific instructions concerning the publication of notices and each Board annually publishes the required notices in accordance with the regulations.

12. Health and Safety Reviews

It was noted that some internal drainage boards had commissioned health and safety reviews during the audited year. It was noted that there were some instances where a

number of improvements had been communicated to these boards on completion. We would suggest that in light of the consistency of systems, processes and procedures across the majority of boards it would be prudent to ensure a review is carried out by each board in order to identify any further issues and action required to ensure boards reduce their exposure to any potential associated claims from staff and other users/visitors of their district facilities.

Client Comment:

Health and safety arrangements have been a topic discussed at the Middle Level Chairman's meetings and for the 2019 round of Board meetings, members were asked to consider the recommendations coming from the Chairman's meeting. All but one Board approved to appoint Cope Safety Management as health and safety consultants for a period of three years; this will provide administration support services to the Board as well as the provision of inspections and annual reporting. The Board that didn't appoint Cope have appointed the NFU instead.

13. Risk Management Policy and procedures

We note that most boards undertook a substantial risk management assessment process in 2014 leading to formal acceptance in April 2015 which is subject to brief formally Minutes review each year.

As we are now in mid-2019 these need to be checked on the agreed periodic 5 yearly cycle to ensure they remain fully 'fit for purpose' taking account of both internal and external changes to the economic circumstances, staff/management changes, climate changes considerations and other environmental developments - past, current and anticipated.

The purpose is to identify potential risks, put in place to preventive measures, and monitor/measure and have actions plans pre-developed to cater for such eventualities in order to minimise issues occurring in the first place and minimising their effect if they do happen enabling quick and effect action to take place.

This work, while possibly initiated on an across Middle Level administrative IDB framework/template, will require detailed input from officers and members of each individual Board to achieve target completion and formal acceptance dates of Spring 2020.

Specific Points

1. Waldersey and Hundred of Wisbech IDBs

As has been the case for a number of years the two aforementioned boards have a joint pumping arrangement. Waldersey IDB constructed a new pumping station, to which Hundred of Wisbech IDB evacuate their water. Whilst we are happy with the current arrangement we would strongly suggest that a legal arrangement be made.

Client Comment:

The "terms of the agreement" are going to be reviewed during this current financial period to ensure that it still remains relevant in relation to changes to land use and as part of the process opportunity can be taken to look into the formal arrangements further.

2. Haddenham IDB

It came to light during the course of the audit that the wages for the employee of Haddenham IDB had not been amended to reflect the standard wage increase agreed in the minutes. This issue has been rectified retrospectively and appears to have been an isolated incident. We have made the required disclosures on the annual return and our supplementary schedule to reflect this.

Client Comment:

This matter has been disclosed as part of the audit submissions and procedures put in place to reduce the risk of this happening again.

3. Manca & Welney IDB

During the year the fixed assets have increased in value by £300,000. This is in relation to the Old Glen House pumping station which was previously not valued or insured; this has also been separately insured for the same value in the year for the first time in recent years.

We note that the chairman has advised of this valuation, but no detailed backing documentation has been provided to support the figure uplifted. As such we would suggest that where valuation changes are made in relation to pumping stations and property in the future that sufficient backing documentation is provided to endorse the movement.

In addition, due to the pumping station not being currently operational it is questionable whether Old Glen House should be included within operational assets, instead it may be more appropriate to include within a separate heritage asset classification. However we note that there is potential for the engines to be restored which could again bring the pumping station back into operation.

Client Comment:

The Commissioners have approved to investigate the possibility of works to the site and possible avenues of funding. We will therefore review the position further at the end of the current financial year.

Finally we take this opportunity to thank your staff involved in our audit for their assistance and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,



Whiting & Partners



Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2019

The Law – the following annual report is provided in accordance with Paragraph 4 of Schedule 2 to the Land Drainage Act 1991.

No later than 30 September 2019 a copy must be provided to:

- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Flood Management Division, Floor 3, Seacole, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF via floodreports@defra.gsi.gov.uk
- National Flood and Coastal Risk Manager (Strategic Delivery), The Environment Agency, Horizon House, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AH via rachael.hill@environment-agency.gov.uk
- The Chief Executives of:
 - all local authorities that pay special levies to the Board;
 - all County Councils or London Boroughs within which the Board is situated.

Please complete the form electronically. If you are unable to complete the form electronically, please complete in BLOCK LETTERS using black ink.

Please round all cash figures down to nearest whole £.

CHURCHFIELD & PLAWFIELD

Internal Drainage Board

Section A – Financial information

Preliminary information on special levies issued by the Board for 2019- 20

Information requested below is essential in calculating future formula spending share. It is not covered elsewhere on this form or by the external auditor's certificate.

| Special levies information for financial year 2019-20 (forecast) | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Name of local authority | 2019-20 forecast £ |
| 1. BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KINGS LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK | 17,886 |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |
| 6. | |
| 7. | |
| 8. | |
| Total | 17,886 |

Section A – Financial Information (continued)

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31 March 2019

All Internal Drainage Boards must ensure that the Income and Expenditure information provided below is consistent with the Board's annual accounting statements which have been prepared in accordance with proper practices found in *Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – A Practitioners' Guide to proper practices to be applied in the preparation of statutory annual accounts and governance statements March 2017*

| | Notes | Year ending 31 March 2019 £ |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------|
| INCOME | | |
| 1. Drainage Rates | | 3,910 |
| 2. Special Levies | | 17,309 |
| 3. Higher Land Water Contributions from the Environment Agency | | 0 |
| 4. Contributions received from developers/other beneficiaries | | 0 |
| 5. Government Grants (includes capital grants from EA and levy contributions) | | 0 |
| 6. PSCAs from EA and other RMA's | | 0 |
| 7. Loans | | 0 |
| 8. Rechargeable Works | | 0 |
| 9. Interest and Investment Income | | 162 |
| 10. Rents and Acknowledgements | | 0 |
| 11. Other Income | | 350 |
| Total income | | 21,731 |
| EXPENDITURE | | |
| 12. New Works and Improvement Works | | 0 |
| 13. Total precept to the Environment Agency | | 2,637 |
| 14. Watercourse maintenance | | 10,887 |
| 15. Pumping Stations, Sluices and Water level control structures | | 0 |
| 16. Administration | | 6,691 |
| 17. PSCAs | | 0 |
| 18. Rechargeable Works | | 0 |
| 19. Finance Charges | | 0 |
| 20. SSSIs | | 0 |
| 21. IDB Biodiversity and conservation (other than item 20 expenditure) | | 468 |
| 22. Other Expenditure | | 242 |
| Total expenditure | | 20,925 |

| EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------|
| 23. Profits/(losses) arising from the disposal of fixed assets | | 0 |
| Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for the year | | 806 |
| 24. Developers Funds income not applied in year | | 14,165 |
| 25. Grant income not applied in year | | 0 |

Notes:

11. Include all other Income, such as absorption account surpluses (for example plant and labour absorption accounts).
12. State the gross cost of undertaking minor capital works that have not been capitalised and the annual depreciation charges of all major schemes that have been capitalised. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with delivery of the schemes.
13. State the total precept demanded for the year as properly issued by the Environment Agency, in accordance with section 141 of the Water Resources Act 1991. Providing that the precept has been properly issued as before stated it should always be included here, even when the Board has appealed against the amount of contribution, in accordance with section 140 of the Water Resources Act 1991. Where the Board knows with certainty the outcome of any such appeal, it should also include the appropriate accrual/prepayment.
14. State all costs associated with the maintenance of watercourses, meaning work associated with open channels, pipelines, culverts, bridges, etc. Plant, vehicle and labour charges should include a fair proportion of the overheads such as depot/workshop costs, employment on-costs, insurances and depreciation, etc. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with delivery of the maintenance programme.
15. State all costs associated with maintaining and operating the pumping stations, sluices and water level control structures. Plant, vehicle and labour charges should include a fair proportion of the overheads such as depot/workshop costs, employment on-costs, insurances and depreciation, etc. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with maintaining and operating the pumping stations, sluices and water level control structures.
16. Include the cost of non-technical staff only, office accommodation, annual depreciation of office equipment that has been capitalised, minor office equipment that has not been capitalised, postages, telecoms', stationery, printing, advertising, auditing of accounts, general insurances and all other costs associated with supporting the organisation. Please note that this does not include support costs, which are directly associated with the delivery of front line services.
17. State all costs associated with the PSCA
18. State all costs associated with undertaking work for third parties. Plant, vehicle and labour charges should include a fair proportion of the overheads such as depot/workshop costs, employment on-costs, insurances and depreciation, etc. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with undertaking the rechargeable work.
19. Include the cost of servicing any borrowing, in terms of bank/loan/hire purchase interest payable.
20. State all costs associated with undertaking works – capital or maintenance – specifically for helping to achieve favourable condition on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). In most cases, these costs will be incurred in implementing actions set out in SSSI Water Level Management Plans or SSSI River Restoration Plans.
21. State all costs associated with undertaking works – capital or maintenance – that are likely intended to help conserve biodiversity (other than works on SSSIs). These costs are likely to be incurred in implementing actions set out in an IDB's Biodiversity Action Plan or other conservation actions on non-designated sites.
22. Include all other expenditure, such as a provision for bad/doubtful debts, write-offs, and absorption account deficits (for example plant and labour absorption accounts).
23. For the disposal of assets, state the difference between any proceeds from the sale/disposal of the asset and the cost of the asset less accumulated depreciation.
24. Total balance of developer fund year end.
25. Unspent grant at year end.

Section B –IDB Reporting

Policy Delivery Statement

Boards are required to produce a publicly available policy statement setting out their plans for delivering the Government's policy aims and objectives. It is recommended that these statements be published on Boards' websites where they have them and reviewed every three years.

Is an up to date statement in place and copy (or weblink) provided to Defra, and EA?.....Yes No

Biodiversity

Please indicate whether your Board has a Biodiversity Action PlanYes No

If "yes" is the Biodiversity Action Plan available on your website?.....Yes No

What year was your Biodiversity Action Plan last updated?.....

Have you reported progress on BAP implementation on your web site?.....Yes No

When was biodiversity last discussed at a Board meeting (date)?.....

Do you have a biosecurity process?.....Yes No

SSSI water level management plans

Please indicate whether your Board is responsible for any SSSI water level management plans?.....Yes No

If so, which ones:

Area of SSSI with IDB water level management plans.....

Area of SSSI where IDB water level management activities are contributing to recovering or favourable condition?

Area of SSSI where IDB water level management actions are required to achieve recovering or favourable condition?

Access to environmental expertise

Does your IDB have access to environmental expertise? If so please tick all those options below through which environmental expertise is regularly provided to your IDB:

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Appropriately skilled Board Members (e.g. Board member from an Environmental Body/Authority) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Co-opted members | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Directly employed staff | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Contracted persons or consultants | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Environmental Partners/NGOs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (please describe) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Asset Management

What system/database does your Board use to manage the assets it is responsible for?

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ADIS | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Paper Records | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Other Electronic System | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Has your Board continued to undertake visual inspections and update asset databases on an annual basis?

Yes No

What is the cumulative total of identified watercourse (in km) that the Board periodically maintains?

18

How many pumping stations does the Board operate?

0

What is the cumulative design capacity of the Board's pumping station(s) (enter zero if no stations are operated)?

0

Health and Safety

Does the Board have a current Health and Safety policy in place?

Yes No

Does the Board have a responsible officer for Health and Safety?

Yes No

Have there been any reportable incidents in the past year?

Yes No

If so, please summarise in the box below:

Guidance and Best Practice

Has your IDB adopted a formal Scheme of Delegation? Yes No

Has your IDB provided training for board members in the last year in the any of the following areas?

- Governance
- Finance
- Environment
- Health, safety and welfare
- Communications and engagement
- Other (please describe)

Is your Board's website information current for this financial year? (Board membership, audited accounts, programmes of works, WLMPS, etc)..... Yes No

Has your IDB adopted computerised accounting and rating systems?..... Yes No

Has your board published all minutes of meetings on the website?..... Yes No

Does the Board publish information on its website on its approach to maintenance works and provide contact details to allow for and encourage public engagement? Yes No

When planning maintenance and capital works are environmental impacts taken into account and wherever possible best practice applied? Yes No

Has your Board adopted the following governance documents?

Standing Orders Yes No

Have the Standing Orders been approved by Ministers Yes No

Byelaws Yes No

If you have Byelaws, have you adopted the latest model byelaws published in 2012..... Yes No

Have the Byelaws been approved by Ministers..... Yes No

Code of Conduct for Board Members..... Yes No

Financial Regulations.....Yes No
 Register of Member's Interests.....Yes No
 Anti-fraud and corruption policy.....Yes No

Board membership and attendance

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| How many Board members (in total – elected and appointed) do you have on your IDB? | 16 |
| Seats available to appointed members under the Land Drainage Act 1991. | 9 |
| Number of elected members on the board at year end. | 8 |
| Number of appointed members on the board at year end. | 4 |
| Mean average number of elected members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year. | 5 |
| Mean average number of appointed members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year. | 1 |

Have you held elections within the last three years?.....Yes No N/A
 Did elections comply with the requirements specified by the Secretary of State under Regulation 28 of the Land Drainage (Election of Drainage Boards) Regulations 1938?..... Yes No N/A

Complaints procedure

Is the procedure for a member of the public to make a complaint about the IDB accessible from the front page of its website?.....Yes No

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| Number of complaints received in the financial year? | 0 |
| Number of complaints outstanding in the financial year? | 0 |
| Number of complaints referred to the Local Government Ombudsman? | 0 |
| Number of complaints upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman? | 0 |

Public Engagement

Set out what your Board has done in this financial year to engage with the public (tick relevant box(es) below):

Press releases
 Newsletters
 Web site
 Meetings
 Shows/events (including open days/inspections)
 Consultations
 Notices

Percentage (in value) of drainage rates outstanding at year end?

3.6%

Section B: NOTES

Guidance and Best Practice

Has your Board published **all** minutes of meetings on the web site? In answering this question, this should apply to all the main Board meetings held in the year and any appropriate meetings the Board has held with external stakeholders.

Board membership and attendance

When referring to **elected members** of the Board, this relates to the number of landowners/drainage rate payers that are elected to the Board.

When referring to **appointed members** of the Board, this relates to the number of members appointed by the local authorities to represent the local council taxpayers.

When referring to mean average number of elected and appointed members in attendance at meetings at each board meeting – **this should be expressed as a number of attendees** and not as a percentage attendance.

With regard to elections, under Schedule 1 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, elected members should hold office for three years, at which point a further election is held. When elections are held, they should comply with the requirements under Regulation 28 of the Land Drainage (Election of Drainage Boards) Regulations 1938 – to advertise and notify local stakeholders accordingly.

Section C – Declaration

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| CHURCHFIELD & PLAWFIELD | Internal Drainage Board |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|

I confirm that the information provided in sections A-C or with this form is correct.

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Signature | <input type="text" value="S Ablett"/> |
| Date | <input type="text" value="18/9/19"/> |
| Name in BLOCK LETTERS | <input type="text" value="MISS SAMANTHA ABLETT"/> |
| Designation | <input type="text" value="ASSISTANT TREASURER"/> |
| Email address | <input type="text" value="ADMIN@MIDDLELEVEL.GOV.UK"/> |



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

2 Marsham Street,
London, SW1P 4DF

T: 03459 335577
helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

To: The Chairs of all Internal Drainage Boards
in England

August 2019

Dear All,

Thank you for completing last year's IDB1 reports. From analysis Defra officials have undertaken of these returns, I am pleased to see that you and your Boards have been able to demonstrate continued improvement in many areas, including on governance and accountability. I would like to thank you and reiterate my continued support for the work that you do. I also welcome ADA's work on the Good Governance Guidance. A copy of our summary report is attached for your information.

You will have received IDB1 forms for 2018-19 to be completed and returned to us by 30 September 2019. I encourage you to continue with this upward trend and ensure that you adopt all relevant model governance documents as soon as possible, as well as continuing to address all other aspects of your work. I look forward to seeing this progress continue and I am keen that your boards aim for zero audit qualifications this year.

As you may know, the report from our recent research into IDB membership will be published shortly. I am particularly keen that local authorities are properly represented on your boards and my officials will continue to work closely with ADA and others to ensure that actions to address the findings are taken.

By working together in these areas, I am confident that IDBs can remain on a firm footing to contribute widely to the needs of society in the long-term.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Thérèse Coffey MP



Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs): Annual
report summary and analysis - 2018

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Introduction

1. In response to the findings of the NAO report into Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) that was published back in March 2017, Defra has been working closely with Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA) to address the issues raised with regard to IDBs' governance and accountability.
2. A number of steps have been taken to strengthen IDBs governance, including adding more questions to the IDB1 form. We worked closely with ADA and the IDBs, EA, NE, RSPB, CLA and NFU in updating the form.

IDB1 forms published annual returns

3. An IDB makes an annual return to the Defra via a standard IDB1 form. This reports on the IDB's finances and confirms that IDBs have performed appropriately over the previous year. There are three parts to the return:
 - Financial information from their internal audit report setting out income (for example, drainage rates, special levy and other contributions) and expenditure,
 - A forecast of next year's levy incomes; and
 - A series of declarations that the IDB has complied with relevant guidance and best practice for the sector during the preceding year.
4. The information collected from IDB1 forms will be used to identify:
 - Broad trends and themes within the sector;
 - Areas where the sector as a whole may require additional support and guidance to come into compliance with expected requirements; and
 - Individual IDBs who may require support.
5. Initial analysis received from all the 113 IDBs as shown in Annex A on some of the key themes is set out in the following sections.

Policy delivery statement

6. Nearly all boards report that they have in place an up to date policy statement.

| Question | Percentage in 2018 | Percentage in previous year (2017) |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Boards that have an up to date statement | 90% | 64% |

Biodiversity action plans (BAPs)

7. Nearly all boards report (96%) that they have in place a biodiversity action plan, and in most cases this is available to the general public.

| Question | Percentage in 2018 | Percentage in previous year (2017) |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| Boards that have a biodiversity action plan | 96% | 66% |
| Boards that have made their plan publicly available | 77% | 66% |
| Boards that have reported progress on BAP implementation | 49% | 39% |
| Boards that have a biosecurity process | 38% | N/A |

SSSI water management (WLM) plans

8. A small number of IDBs (27%) reported that they are responsible for SSSI WLM plans.

| Question | Percentage in 2018 | Percentage in previous year (2017) |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| Boards that are responsible for any SSI WLM plans | 27% | N/A |

Access to environmental expertise

9. The majority of boards (84%) report that they have access to environmental expertise via contracted persons or consultants.

| Question | Percentage in 2018 | Percentage in previous year (2017) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| Boards who have appropriately skilled Board Members (e.g. Board member from an Environmental Body/Authority) | 19% | 18% |
| Boards who have Co-opted members | 4% | N/A |
| Boards who have directly employed staff | 18% | 11% |
| Boards who have contracted persons or consultants | 84% | 66% |
| Boards who have environmental Partners/NGOs | 26% | 20% |
| Boards who have other | 9% | 8% |

Asset management

10. All boards (100%) report that they have continued to undertake visual inspections and update asset.

| Question | Percentage in 2018 | Percentage in previous year (2017) |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| | | Different ways of recording |
| Boards who have ADIS systems/database | 35% | |
| Boards who have Paper records | 36% | |
| Boards who have Other electronic systems | 42% | |
| Boards who have continued to undertake visual inspections and update asset | 100% | |

Health and Safety (H&S)

11. Practically all boards (98%) report that they have a current Health and Safety policy and a good number (86%) of boards have a responsible officer for H&S.

| Question | Percentage in 2018 | Percentage in previous year (2017) |
|----------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
|----------|--------------------|------------------------------------|

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|--------------|
| Boards who have a current Health and Safety policy | 98% | Not reported |
| Boards who have a responsible officer for H&S | 86% | Not reported |
| Boards who have had any reportable incidents in past year | 1% | Not reported |

Guidance and Best Practices

12. Nearly all boards have adopted good guidance and best practices recommendations such as: (93%) report that they have adopted a formal scheme of delegation, (92%) boards have reported to have website information current for this year, (98%) have adopted computerised accounting and rating systems, as specified in the IDB Review, (100%) have ensured that environmental impacts are taken into account and Standing Orders and Byelaws are adopted. (99%) boards that have adopted Code of Conduct for board Members, (80%) boards have adopted Anti-fraud and corruption policy.

| Question | Percentage in 2018 | Percentage in previous year (2017) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Boards that have adopted a formal Scheme of Delegation | 93% | 64% |
| Boards that have provided training for members in the last year on Governance | 22% | 63% |
| Boards that have provided training for members in the last year on Finance | 13% | N/A |
| Boards that have provided training for members in the last year on Environment | 21% | N/A |
| Boards that have provided training for members in the last year on health, safety and welfare | 16% | N/A |
| Boards that have provided training for members in the last year on communications and engagement | 10% | N/A |
| Boards that have provided other means of training for members in the last year | 4% | 29% |
| Boards that have website information current for this year (Board membership, audited accounts, programmes of works, WLMPS, etc.) | 92% | 67% |
| Boards that have adopted computerised accounting and rating systems, as specified in the IDB Review | 98% | 68% |
| Boards that have published all minutes of meetings | 86% | N/A |
| Boards that have publish approach to maintenance | 86% | N/A |
| Boards that have ensured that environmental impacts are taken into account | 100% | N/A |
| Boards that have adopted Standing Orders | 100% | 70% |
| Boards that have adopted Standing Orders that have been approved by Ministers | 96% | 66% |
| Boards that have adopted Byelaws | 95% | 64% |
| Boards that have adopted the latest set of Byelaws published in 2012 | 41% | N/A |
| Boards that have had their byelaws approved by Ministers | 88% | 66% |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-----|
| Boards that have adopted Code of Conduct for Board Members | 99% | 70% |
| Boards that have adopted Financial Regulations | 99% | 70% |
| Boards that have adopted Register of member's Interests | 100% | 70% |
| Boards that have adopted Anti-fraud and corruption policy | 80% | N/A |

Board membership and attendance

13. Nearly all boards (93%) report that they have held elections in the last three years.

| Question | Percentage in 2018 | Percentage in previous year (2017) |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Boards that have held elections in last three years | 93% | Not reported |
| Boards that held elections that comply with requirements | 94% | Not reported |
| Boards that have complaints procedure accessible from their websites | 91% | Not reported |

Public Engagement

14. Nearly all boards (97%) report that they have websites in place. IDBs report that the most popular way of engaging with the public is via meetings (82%) and newsletters (77%).

| Question | Percentage in 2018 | Percentage in previous year (2017) |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Boards that have conducted press Releases | 8% | Not reported |
| Boards that have had newsletters | 77% | Not reported |
| Boards that have websites in place | 97% | Not reported |
| Boards that have conducted meetings | 82% | Not reported |
| Boards that have conducted shows/events | 40% | Not reported |
| Boards that have had consultations | 38% | Not reported |
| Boards that display notices | 66% | Not reported |

Findings

The following findings are based on comparisons of 2017 and 2018 reports. It is important to note that a number of steps have been taken to strengthen IDBs governance, including adding more questions to the IDB1 form from this year. Therefore, some of the questions were not in the 2016 - 2017 IDB1 form and therefore it is not possible to carry a comparison check on progress.

15. Based on the responses, there are some positive results. It is showing that majority of IDBs are making good use of their websites as a platform to share important information as a way of being transparent. It is also showing that majority of IDBs have adopted good guidance and best practices such as having in place code of conducts, financial regulations and approved statutory instruments such as standing orders and byelaws. IDBs are also ensuring that that environmental impacts are taken into consideration.

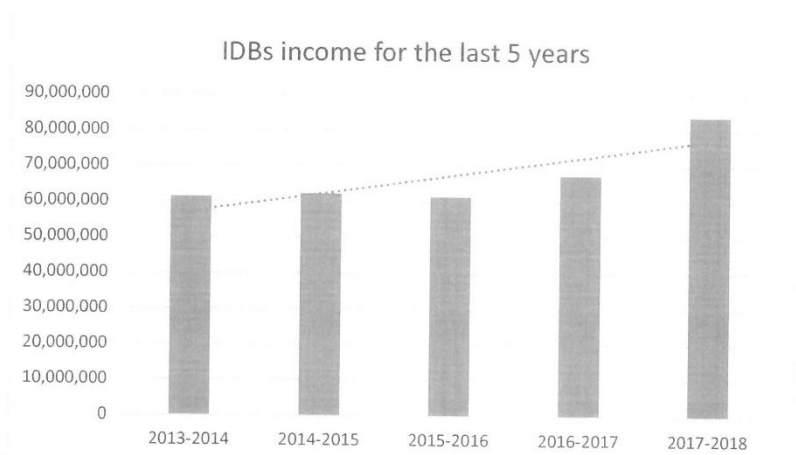
16. Based on the responses, there are some positive results. It is showing that majority of IDBs are making good use of their websites as a platform to share important information as a way of being transparent. It is also showing that majority of IDBs have adopted good guidance and best practices such as having in place code of conducts, financial regulations and approved statutory instruments such as standing orders and byelaws. IDBs are also ensuring that that environmental impacts are taken into consideration.
17. However, there are still some areas which require further improvement, for instance more work needs to be done around providing training on health, safety and welfare for their board members. Training for finance, communication and engagement etc is also on a low side and requires further attention. IDBs also need to ensure that biodiversity action plans are more publicly available. Furthermore, even though majority of the boards have byelaws in place, there is a need for some of the boards to adopt the latest sets of Defra byelaws, but this may depend upon local needs.

Funding

18. IDBs reported a total income of £83,8m for financial year 2017-2018.

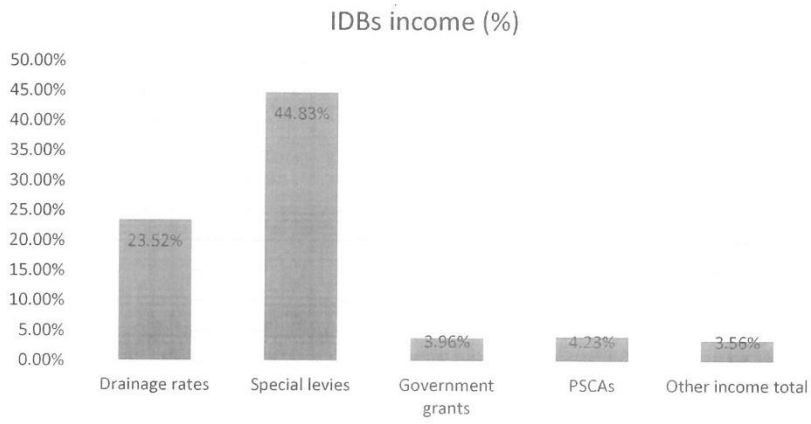
Trend in funding

19. The sector's reported total income has increased for the last five years and by around 20% in real terms over the last year as the chart below shows.

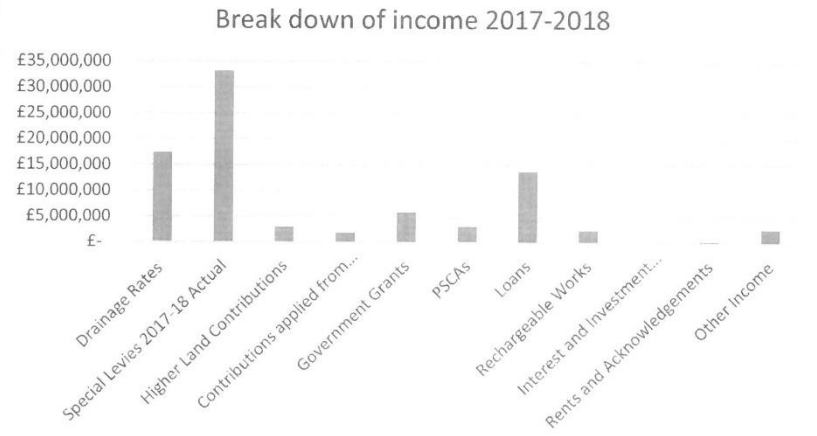


20. 80% of the sector's income comes from special levies (paid by local authorities) and drainage rates (paid by landowners within the internal drainage district). The remainder comes from a variety of sources including government grants and rental income as demonstrated below.

Income 2017 - 2018

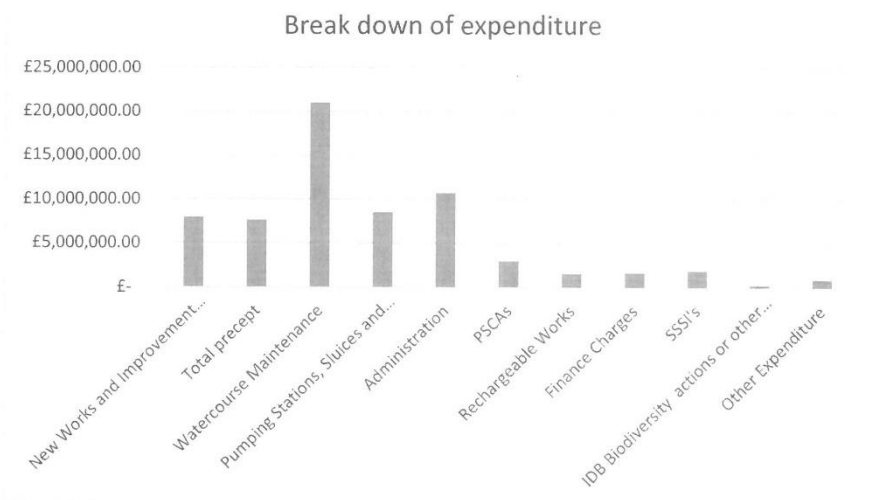
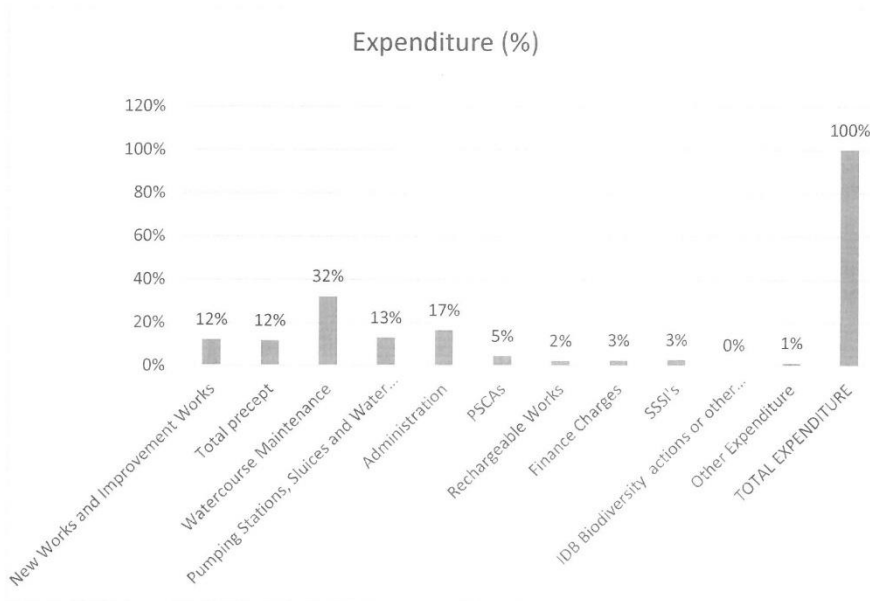


Breakdown of income



21. In 2017 – 2018 reporting year alone, around 45% of the sector’s income came from special levies.

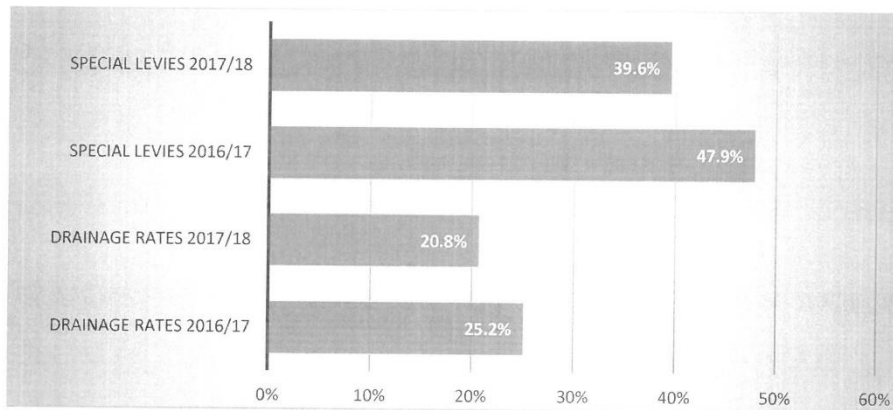
Expenditure



22. 32% of the sector's is around watercourse maintenance. The remainder is around a variety of activities such as administration costs and new work and improvements.

Comparison of the major funding

23. Drainage rates have slightly decreased as a percentage of total income from the previous year 25% in 2016-17 to 20% in 2017-18 and special levies have decreased from 47% in 2016-17 to 39% in 2017-18. However, monetary value has increase from the previous year from £16,930,773 in 2016-17 to £17414981 in 2017-18 and special levies has increased from £32215377 in 2016-17 to £33184557 in 2017-18.



Conclusion

24. Based on the responses from the IDB1 forms, IDBs are showing willingness and good cooperation in addressing concerns that have been raised. However, some areas still need to be addressed.
25. However, there are still some IDBs who are not yet fulfilling some of these requirements. Such as implementation of BAPs and ensuring all of the guidance and best practices are implemented fully.

Recommendations

26. Defra should continue to work closely with ADA, IDBs and other key players such as EA, NE, RSPB and other public bodies to ensure that IDB guidance that has been published recently is exercised fully by all of the board members. More work is needed such as encouraging IDBs to implement more training for their boards and making their biodiversity plans publicly available. Furthermore, even though the majority of the boards have byelaws in place, there is a need for some of the boards to adopt the latest set of Defra byelaws, but we also need to ensure the byelaws are updated and fit for purpose.

Annex A

List of IDBs who submitted IDB1 forms

- 1 Ainsty (2008) IDB
- 2 Airedale DC
- 3 Alconbury and Ellington
- 4 Ancholme Internal Drainage Board
- 5 Axe Brue
- 6 Axeholme & North Notts
- 7 Bedfordshire and River Ivel
- 8 Benwick
- 9 Beverley and North Holderness IDB
- 10 Black Drain DB
- 11 Black Sluice IDB
- 12 Bluntisham
- 13 Braunton Marsh DB
- 14 Broads
- 15 Buckingham and River Ouzel
- 16 Burnt Fen
- 17 Cawdle Fen
- 18 Churchfield and Plawfield
- 19 Connington & Holme
- 20 Cowick & Snaith
- 21 Curf and Wimblington Combined IDB
- 22 Danvm Drainage Commissioners
- 23 Dempster IDB
- 24 Doncaster East
- 25 Downham & Stow Bardolph
- 26 Earby & Salterforth
- 27 East Harling
- 28 East of the Ouse, Polver and Nar IDB
- 29 East Suffolk IDB
- 30 Euixmoor
- 31 Feldale
- 32 Foss IDB (2008)
- 33 Goole and Airmyn IDB
- 34 Goole Fielde
- 35 Haddenham Level
- 36 Holmewood and District DB
- 37 Hundred Foot Washes IDB
- 38 Hundred of Wisbech
- 39 Kings Lynn
- 40 Kyle and Upper Ouse IDB
- 41 Lakenheath
- 42 Lindsey Marsh DB
- 43 Littleport and Downham
- 44 Lower Medway IDB
- 45 Lower Severn IDB(2005)
- 46 Manea & Welney
- 47 March 3rd

| | |
|----|---------------------------------------|
| 48 | March 5th |
| 49 | March 6th |
| 50 | March East |
| 51 | March West and White Fen |
| 52 | Melverley IDB |
| 53 | Middle Fen and Mere |
| 54 | Middle Level Commissioners |
| 55 | Mildenhall |
| 56 | Needham & Laddus |
| 57 | Nightlayers |
| 58 | Nordelph |
| 59 | Norfolk Rivers |
| 60 | North East Lindsey |
| 61 | North Kent Marshes |
| 62 | North Level District IDB |
| 63 | North Somerset Levels IDB* |
| 64 | Northwold |
| 65 | Old West |
| 66 | Ouse and Derwent IDB |
| 68 | Ouse and Humber |
| 69 | Over and Willingham |
| 70 | Padnal and Waterden |
| 71 | Parrett |
| 72 | Pevensey and Cuckmere |
| 73 | Ramsey |
| 74 | Ramsey 1st (Hollow) |
| 75 | Ramsey 4th (Middlemoor) |
| 76 | Ramsey Upwood & Gt. Raveley |
| 77 | Ransonmoor |
| 78 | Rawcliffe DB |
| 79 | Rea IDB |
| 80 | Reedness and Swinefleet DB |
| 81 | River Lugg IDB |
| 82 | River Stour (Kent) IDB |
| 83 | Romney Marshes Area IDB |
| 84 | Sawtry |
| 85 | Scunthorpe and Gainsborough WLM Board |
| 86 | Selby Area IDB |
| 87 | South Holderness |
| 88 | South Holland |
| 89 | Southery & District |
| 90 | Sow and Penk DB |
| 91 | Stoke Ferry |
| 92 | Strine IDB |
| 93 | Stringside |
| 94 | Sutton & Mepal |
| 95 | Swaffham |
| 96 | Swale and Ure |
| 97 | Swavesey |
| 98 | Thorntree IDB |
| 99 | Trent Valley |

- 100 Upper Medway IDB
- 101 Upper Witham
- 102 Upwell
- 103 Vale of Pickering
- 104 Waldersey
- 105 Warboys, Somersham and Pidley
- 106 Waterbeach Level
- 107 Waveney, Lower Yare and Lothingland
- 108 Wellend and Deepings
- 109 Whittlesey and District
- 110 Witham 1st
- 111 Witham 3rd
- 112 Witham 4th
- 113 Woodwalton

CHURCHFIELD AND PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Risk Management Strategy

Risk Management Policy

Risk Register

April 2020

Contents

1. Purpose, Aims & Objectives
2. Accountabilities, Roles & Reporting Lines
3. Skills & Expertise
4. Embedding Risk Management
5. Risk and the Decision Making Processes
6. Risk Evaluation
7. Risk Control
8. Supporting Innovation & Improvement

Appendices

- A – Risk Management Strategy Statement
- B – Risk Management Policy Document

CHURCHFIELD AND PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD (the Board)

Risk Management Strategy

1. Purpose, Aims and Objectives

1.1 The purpose of the Board's Corporate Risk Management Strategy is to effectively manage potential opportunities and threats to the Board achieving their objectives. See attached Corporate Risk Management Policy Statement, Appendix A.

1.2 The Board's Corporate Risk Management Strategy has the following aims and objectives:

- Integration of Risk Management into the culture of the Board
- Raising awareness of the need for Risk Management by all those connected with the delivery of services (including partners)
- Enabling the Board to anticipate and respond to changing social, environmental and legislative conditions
- Minimisation of injury, damage, loss and inconvenience to employees, Members, members of the public, service users, assets etc arising from or connected with the delivery of the Board's functions
- Introduction of a robust framework and procedures for identification, analysis, assessment and management of risk, and the reporting and recording of events, based on best practice
- Minimisation of the cost of risk

1.3 To achieve these aims and objectives, the following strategy is proposed:

- Establish clear accountabilities, roles and reporting lines for all employees
- Acquire and develop the necessary skills and expertise
- Provide for risk assessment in all decision making processes
- Develop a resource allocation framework to allocate resources for risk management
- Develop procedures and guidelines
- Develop arrangements to measure performance of Risk Management activities against the aims and objectives
- To make all partners and service providers aware of the Board's expectations on risk, both generally and where necessary in particular areas of operation

1.4 The Board have noted and taken account of the Audit Commission definition of Risk:

- 'Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect the organisation's ability to achieve its objectives and to successfully execute its strategies'.

2. Accountabilities, Roles and Reporting Lines

2.1 A framework has been implemented that has addressed the following issues:

- The different types of risk – Strategic and Operational

- Where it should be managed
- Corporate, Departmental and Risk Management Unit roles and accountabilities
- The need to drive the policy throughout the Board
- Prompt reporting of accidents, losses, changes etc

2.2 In many cases, risk management follows existing service management arrangements.

2.3 Strategic risk is best managed by the Board.

2.4 The Clerk will be responsible for the overall risk management strategy, and will report directly to the Board.

2.5 The Chairman will be responsible for the overall Health and Safety policy and will report to the Board.

2.6 It is envisaged that the development of a risk management strategy will encourage ownership of risk and will allow for easier monitoring and reporting on remedial actions/controls.

3. Skills and Expertise

3.1 Having established roles and responsibilities for risk management, the Board must ensure that they have the skills and expertise necessary. They will achieve this by providing appropriate training for employees and contractors and where appropriate providing awareness courses that address the individual needs of both the manual workforce and office staff.

3.2 Training will include focusing on best practice in risk management and on specific risks in areas such as the following:

- Partnership working
- Project management
- Operation of vehicles and equipment
- Manual labour tasks eg Health and Safety issues

4. Embedding Risk Management

Risk management is an important part of the service planning process. This will enable both strategic and operational risk, as well as the accumulation of risks from a number of areas to be properly considered. Over time the Board aim to be able to demonstrate that there is a fully embedded process.

This strategy and the information contained within the appendices provide a framework to be used by all employees and Members in the implementation of risk management as an integral part of good management.

5. Risks and the Decision Making Process

- 5.1 Risk needs to be addressed at the point at which decisions are being taken. Where Members and Officers are asked to make decisions they should be advised of the risks associated with recommendations being made. The training described in the preceding section will enable this to happen.
- 5.2 The Board will need to demonstrate that they took reasonable steps to consider the risks involved in a decision.
- 5.3 A template has been developed for use with all significant decision reports.
- 5.4 There needs to be a balance struck between efficiency of the decision making process and the need to address risk. Risk assessment is seen to be particularly valuable in options appraisal.
- 5.5 This process does not guarantee that decisions will always be right but it will demonstrate that the risks have been considered and the evidence will support this.

6. Risk Evaluation

- 6.1 Managers have been made aware that there are a number of tools that can be used to help identify potential risks:
 - Workshops
 - Scenario planning
 - Analysing past claims and other losses
 - Analysing past corporate incidents/failures
 - Health & safety inspections
 - Induction training
 - Performance Review & Development interviews
 - Feedback
- 6.2 Having identified areas of potential risk, they must be analysed by:
 - An assessment of impact
 - An assessment of likelihood

This is to be done by recording the results using the risk matrix below:

RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

| | | | | |
|----------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Likelihood of occurrence ↑ ↓ | HIGH | Low Impact High Likelihood 4 | Medium Impact High Likelihood 5 | High Impact High Likelihood 6 |
| | MEDIUM | Low Impact Medium Likelihood 3 | Medium Impact Medium Likelihood 4 | High Impact Medium Likelihood 5 |
| | LOW | Low Impact Low Likelihood 2 | Medium Impact Low Likelihood 3 | High Impact Low Likelihood 4 |
| | | LOW | MEDIUM | HIGH |
| | | ← Impact on the Business → | | |

The high, medium and low categories for impact and likelihood are defined as follows: However, certain activities will, of necessity, cross categories.

IMPACT

- *High* – will have a catastrophic effect on the operation/service delivery. May result in major financial loss (over £100,000). Major service disruption (+ 5 days) or impact on the public. Death of an individual or several people. Complete failure of project or extreme delay (over 2 months). Many individual personal details compromised/revealed. Adverse publicity in national press.
- *Medium* – will have a noticeable effect on the operation/service delivery. May result in significant financial loss (over £25,000). Will cause a degree of disruption (2-5 days) or impact on the public. Severe injury to an individual or several people. Adverse effect on project/significant slippage. Some individual personal details compromised/revealed. Adverse publicity in local press.
- *Low* – where the consequences will not be severe and any associated losses and/or financial implications will be low (up to £10,000). Negligible effect on service delivery (1 day). Minor injury or discomfort to an individual or several people. Isolated individual personal details compromised/revealed. NB A number of low incidents may have a significant cumulative effect and require attention.

LIKELIHOOD

- *High* – very likely to happen. (*matrix score 3*)
- *Medium* – likely to happen infrequently and difficult to predict. (*matrix score 2*)
- *Low* – most unlikely to happen. (*matrix score 1*)

7. Risk Control

7.1 Using the risk matrix produces a risk rating score that will enable risks to be prioritised using one or more of the “three T’s”

- **Treat – score 2-3 – accept the risk but take cost effective in-house actions to reduce the risk**
- **Transfer – score 4-5 – let someone else take the risk (eg by insurance or passing responsibility for the risk to a contractor)**
- **Terminate – score 6 – agree that the risk is too high and do not proceed with the project or activity**

NB – Insurance cover may be taken out for a risk falling within levels 2-3 when appropriate to do so.

7.2 Risk assessment and risk matrices provide a powerful and easy to use tool for the identification, assessment and control of business risk. They enable managers to consider the whole range of categories of risk affecting a business activity. The technique can assist in the prioritisation of risks and decisions on allocation of resources. Decisions can then be made concerning the adequacy of existing control measures and the need for further action. It can be directed at the business activity as a whole or on individual departments/sections/functions or indeed projects.

8. Supporting Innovation and Improvement

8.1 Risk Management will be incorporated into the business planning process with a risk assessment of all business aims being undertaken as part of the annual Estimates process.

8.2 The internal auditor will have a role in reviewing the effectiveness of control measures that have been put in place to ensure that risk management measures are working.

RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT

Risk is a feature of all businesses. Some risks will always exist and can never be eliminated: they therefore need to be appropriately managed.

The Board recognise that they have a responsibility to manage hazards and risks and support a structured and focused approach to managing them by approval at appropriate intervals of a Risk Management Strategy.

In this way the Board will improve their ability to achieve their strategic objectives and enhance the value of services they provide to the community.

The Boards' Risk Management objectives are to:

- Embed risk management into their culture and operations
- Adopt a systematic approach to risk management as an integral part of service planning and performance management
- Manage risk in accordance with best practice
- Anticipate and respond to changing social, environmental and legislative requirements
- Ensure all employees have clear responsibility for both the risk and the tools to effectively reduce/control it

These objectives will be achieved by:

- Establishing clear roles, responsibilities and reporting lines within the organisation for risk management
- Incorporating risk management in decision making and operational management processes
- Reinforcing the importance of effective risk management through training
- Incorporating risk management considerations into Service/Business Planning, Project Management, Partnerships & Procurement Processes
- Monitoring risk management arrangements on a regular basis

The benefits of Risk Management include:

- A safer environment for all
- Improved public relations and reputation
- Improved efficiency
- Protecting employees and others from harm
- A reduction in probability/size of uninsured or uninsurable losses
- Competitive Insurance Premiums (as insurers recognise the Board as being a “low risk”)
- Maximising the efficient use of available resources

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY DOCUMENT

In all types of undertaking, there is the potential for events and consequences that may, either be opportunities to benefit or a cause of difficulty or harm. The Boards' operations are no different and risk management is increasingly recognised as being central to their strategic management. It is a process whereby the risks are methodically addressed. The focus of good risk management is to identify what can go wrong and take steps to avoid this or successfully manage the consequences.

Risk management is not just about financial management; it is about achieving objectives to deliver high quality public services. The failure to manage risks effectively can be expensive in terms of litigation and reputation, the ability to achieve desired targets, and, eventually, the rate and special levy bills.

The Board need to keep under review and, if need be, strengthen their own corporate governance arrangements, thereby improving their stewardship of public funds and providing positive and continuing assurance to rate and special levy payers.

Risk is already examined as part of the day to day activities but there is now a need to look at, adapt, improve where necessary and document existing processes.

The importance of looking afresh at risk comes in the wake of a more demanding society, bold initiatives and a greater propensity to challenge and litigate when things go wrong. It also arises because of the Defra IDB Review. The Board currently face pressures that potentially give rise to a range of new and complex risks and which suggest that risk management is more important now than at any other time.

Members are ultimately responsible for risk management because risks threaten the achievement of policy objectives. Members therefore should, at appropriate intervals:

- take steps to identify and update key risks;
- evaluate the potential consequences if an event identified as a risk takes place; and
- decide upon appropriate measures to avoid, reduce or control the risk or its consequences.

This Risk Management Policy document is designed to be a living document which will be continually updated when new risks are identified or when existing risks change.

The assessment of potential impact will be classified as high, medium or low. At the same time it will assess how likely a risk is to occur and this will enable the Boards to decide which risks they should pay most attention to when considering what measures to take to manage the risks.

After identifying and evaluating risks the responsible officer will need to decide upon appropriate measures to take in order to avoid, reduce or control the risks or their consequences.

Risk Register

| Risk Identified | Risk Level | Treat | Transfer | Terminate | Details of how risk will be managed | Review Date | Officer |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty (fidelity guarantee) | 2 | | Y | | Insure and Fraud Prevention Policy | April annually | Clerk |
| Computer Programming services & Telemetry Installations | 2 | Y | | | Through the Middle Level Commissioners | April annually | |
| Banking arrangements, including borrowing or lending | 3 | Y | | | Within the authority given by the Board | April annually | Clerk |
| Keeping proper financial records in accordance with statutory requirements | 3 | Y | | | Internal Auditor employed & External Audit required. | Continuous | Clerk |
| Complying with restrictions on borrowing | 2 | Y | | | Monitored by Clerk and Internal Auditor | Continuous | Clerk |
| Proper, timely and accurate, reporting of the Board's business in the minutes | 2 | Y | | | Managed by Clerk | Meetings | Clerk |
| Regular review of policies | 2 | Y | | | Clerk to produce schedule | Every 5 years unless more frequent review required | Clerk |
| Protection of buildings (loss or damage) | 3-4 | Y | Y | | Regular recorded asset inspections, buildings and assets insured | April annually | Engineer |
| Protection of plant and equipment (loss or damage) | 3-4 | Y | Y | | Regular inspections, insurance | Ongoing | Engineer |
| Ensuring all business activities are within legal powers applicable to the Board | 2-4 | Y | Y | | Clerk's advice taken in conjunction with specialist advice where appropriate | Ongoing | Clerk |
| Ensuring that all requirements are met under employment law and HM Revenue & Customs regulations | 2-4 | Y | Y | | Clerk to manage seeking advice where necessary. AP Partnership Employment Law advice taken | Ongoing | Clerk |

| Risk Identified | Risk Level | Treat | Transfer | Terminate | Details of how risk will be managed | Review Date | Officer |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Ensuring the adequacy of the annual rates and levies within sound budgeting arrangements | 3 | Y | | | Annual Estimates recommended to the Board by Clerk. Board approve at rate setting meetings; following regular monitoring at Board Meetings | At meetings | Clerk |
| Meeting the laid down timetables when responding to consultation invitations | 2 | Y | | | Clerk | Annually | Clerk |
| Responding to those wishing to exercise their rights of inspection | 2 | Y | | | Notices posted in accordance with Legislation | Annually | Clerk |
| Register of Members' Interests and Gifts and Hospitality in place | 2-3 | Y | | | Maintained by Clerk | Annually | Clerk |
| The Risk of damage to third party property or individuals as a consequence of the Board providing services (public liability) | 3-4 | Y | Y | | Risk Assessments and insurance | Annually | Clerk |
| Critical incident loss of data | 3-4 | Y | Y | | Back up computer facility | Ongoing | Clerk |
| Corporate Manslaughter Legislation for employees | 4-5 | Y | Y | | Seek specialist advice/employ NEBOSH qualified Engineers | Ongoing | Clerk |
| Maintenance of watercourses and pumping stations | 3-4 | Y | Y | | Routine operations | Consider at AGM | Board |
| Vehicle or equipment lease or hire | 2 | Y | Y | | Insure | Annually | Board |
| Damage to wildlife and subsequent prosecution | 4 | Y | | | Conservation Officer employed | Annually | Conservation Officer |
| Complying with Health and Safety Law | 4 | Y | Y | | Clerk. Croner employed as Consultant | Ongoing | Clerk |
| Regular budget monitoring | 3 | Y | | | | Ongoing | Clerk |

| Risk Identified | Risk Level | Treat | Transfer | Terminate | Details of how risk will be managed | Review Date | Officer |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Flood inundation by actions of others ie failure of raised embankments | 4 | Y | | | Environment Agency in conjunction with Engineer/Board | Annually | Engineer |
| Major failure of Middle Level pumping plant, and flood defence structures | 4 | Y | | | Operations/Mechanical & Electrical Engineers to inspect. Unlikely to be insurance for maintenance breakdown | Annually | Engineer |
| Legal liability as a consequence of asset ownership (public liability) | 4 | Y | Y | | Insure | Annually | Clerk |
| Legal liability as an employer (employers' liability) | 4 | Y | Y | | Insure | Annually | Clerk |
| Legal liability as the owner of motor vehicles (motor insurance) | 5 | | Y | | Insure | Annually | Clerk |
| Mechanical & Engineering Asset Inspections | 4 | Y | Y | | Annual inspection by insurance provider. Regular in house inspections | Ongoing | Engineer |

CHURCHFIELD AND PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Payments 2018/2019 (1st February 2019 - 31st March 2019)

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Association of Drainage Authorities (River Great Ouse branch) - Subscription 2018/2019 | 6.00 |
| Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal | 40.00 |
| Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution (Environmental Officer) | 467.50 |
| Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2017-2018 accounts) | 498.00 |
| Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2019 | 663.60 |
| Crown Lodge Hotel - Expenses in connection Board meeting | 54.00 |
| District Officer's expenses 2018/2019 | 2,268.55 |
| Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications) | 126.30 |
| | <hr/> |
| | <u>4,123.95</u> |

Payments 2019/2020 (1st April 2019 - 31st January 2020)

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery and Health and Safety contract | 3,834.13 |
| Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications) | 931.13 |
| Environment Agency - Precept | 1,384.57 |
| Mr & Mrs S Taggart - Rate refund | 3.01 |
| Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to grill floor at Glencoe Outfall | 143.83 |
| Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications) | 1,847.88 |
| Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution (Environmental Officer) | 467.50 |
| Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages and telephone charges | 2,712.60 |
| Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2018-2019 accounts) | 522.00 |
| PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit fee (2018-2019 accounts) | 240.00 |
| Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances | 216.30 |
| Middle Level Commissioners - Provision of Health & Safety services - COPE Safety Management Limited | 160.00 |
| King's Lynn Internal Drainage Board - Flail mowing | 6,504.00 |
| Environment Agency - Precept | 1,384.57 |
| Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Discussions with Mr Wagner regarding access between points 29 and 30, planning and development applications) | 829.80 |
| | <hr/> |
| | <u>21,181.32</u> |

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

CHURCHFIELD AND PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET 2020/2021

| | <u>Estimated</u> <u>2019/2020</u> £ | <u>Probable actual</u> <u>2019/2020</u> £ | <u>Budget proposal</u> <u>2020/2021</u> £ | <u>Remarks</u> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Insurances | 260 | 216 | 250 | A - Includes for: Flail mowing/weed cutting 5,420 Slubbing 0 |
| 2 District work and repairs and renewals (including Environmental measures) | 13,500 | 12,000 A | 16,000 B | B - Includes provision for: Flail mowing/weed cutting 6,000 Jetting culverts (24-25) 3,000 CCTV survey (point 21) 900 Reinstate open watercourse 1,750 |
| 3 Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising etc | 7,150 | 7,150 | 7,350 | 11,650 |
| 4 Environment Agency Precept | 2,769 | 2,769 | 2,838 | |
| | 23,679 | 22,135 | 26,438 | C - Includes use of balances - refurbishment of Sulivans dam 1,000 |
| LESS Deposit Accounts interest | 1,753 C | 925 | 1,486 D | D - Includes use of balances - prior year surplus 700 |
| | 21,926 | 21,210 | 24,952 | |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------|
| <u>Estimated General Fund</u> | | | | | |
| Opening Balance | | 22,718 | 22,718 | 23,434 | |
| Rate set | 4.65p | 21,926 | 21,926 | | |
| Rate Required | | | | 24,952 | 5.25 p |
| Net Expenditure | | 21,926 | 21,210 | 24,952 | |
| Use of balances | | 1,000 | | 700 | |
| Closing Balance | | <u>21,718</u> | <u>23,434</u> | <u>22,734</u> | |

Churchfield & Plawfield Internal Drainage Board

Rate and levy requirements

Under Section 37 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, the appropriate proportions in which the net expenditure of the Board must be borne for 2020/2021 is:-

- a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 18.24%.
- b) Proportion to be borne by Special levy issued to the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk – 81.76%.

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £867.

In 2020/2021 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levy would raise £4,753.

Estimated revenue cash balance in hand on 31st March 2020 – £23,400.

The estimated net expenditure for the Boards Revenue and Capital Programmes in 2020/2021 is £24,952, is equivalent to:-

- a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 5.25p and
- b) a Special levy on the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk of £20,401.

In 2019/2020 a rate of 4.65p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £17,886 on the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk.

D C THOMAS

Clerk to the Board

February 2020

NOTES