

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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4 June 2020

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen

Meeting of Commissioners
16th June 2020

I enclose the Agenda for the Meeting of the Commissioners to be hosted at the Middle Level Offices at 10.00 am on Tuesday the 16th June 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 Commissioners

To the March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence

2. Standing Orders

To allow the Board to modify the manner in which they hold meetings (for a temporary period) whilst special arrangements are in place to deal with COVID19 Defra have agreed to the adoption of modified standing orders. (Copy pages 13-18) show an adapted set of the new model orders, as supplied by ADA, which includes two extra clauses at the end of them which allow a change to the way in which meetings are held to allow remote attendance etc.

The Commissioners' approval to these revised Standing Orders is sought.

3. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare any interests relating to the agenda.

4. Confirmation of Minutes

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of the Commissioners held on the 18th June 2019.

(Copy pages 19-33)

5. Matters arising from the Minutes

6. Appointment of Chairman

To appoint the Chairman of the Commissioners.
(Present Chairman – D G West Esq)

7. Appointment of Vice Chairman

To appoint the Vice Chairman of the Commissioners.
(Present Vice Chairman – Miss E Alerton)

8. Resignation of Mr J C Martin

The Clerk will report that, because of ill health, Mr John Martin has resigned as a Commissioner.

The Clerk will also report that Mr Martin has been a Commissioner since February 1968 and had been Chairman from 1985 to 2014.

9. Land Drainage Act 1991
Fenland District Council

Further to minute C.937, the Clerk will report that Fenland District Council have also appointed Councillor Mrs J French to be a Commissioner under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

10. Water Transfer Licencing

Further to minute C.897, 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 following this 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.

11. Waste Recycling Centre

Further to minute C.943, the Vice Chairman to report.

12. Norwood Pumping Station

Further to minute C.944, the Chairman to report.

13. Clerk's Report

The Clerk advises:-

i) COVID-19 Actions

That following the instructions given by government on 23rd March the following list of actions have been taken (this list is not exhaustive);

- Arrangements were made for all MLC staff to have the facility to work from home. This included access to email, and in most cases full remote access to work computers. This was implemented and fully operational by Wednesday 25th March.
- MLC operatives continue to attend work but in a more restricted manor following NHS guidelines.
- A skeleton rota to ensure that the office phones are manned has been put in place, post is received and processed and letters sent out where necessary.
- Other temporary arrangements have been implemented to help support the continued operation of the office whilst the COVID-19 government restrictions remain in place, this includes allowing more flexible hours of work, allowing access to the office as and when required to collect or deposit papers making arrangements for the post to be collected and delivered to a safe location outside the office.

- A licence to run video conferencing meeting was obtained and arrangements made to hold meetings by telephone and/or video. Chairmen were contacted at each stage as government advice emerged.
- A policy statement was issued via the MLC website stating the actions the MLC were taking.
- Consultation with ADA on more or less a daily basis were undertaken in the first few weeks encouraging them to take proactive action. Of value to us (and as called for) ADA have been able to secure IDBs 'Key Worker' status and have obtained approval from Defra to move to web/telephone conference meetings.

ii) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

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 34-37)

The Commissioners' 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.

That a fifth Chair's Meeting was held on the 10th March 2020.

Topics discussed included health and safety, effective communications with the public, the move to electronic agendas, consideration of the level of planning information included in reports, planning fees and the work of WRE.

Planning and Consenting

One of the agreed actions from the last Chair's meeting was that each Board be asked to consider the degree of delegation and reporting they require on planning and consenting

matters. This was in response to several queries over the extent of detail being reported on such matters and the delays in issuing responses due to the number of people being consulted. I have outlined several possible options below to assist the Board but of course there are many other permutations and it is for the Board to decide which suits its interests best.

- a) Remain with the current arrangements.
- b) Continue to delegate all commenting on consent applications and relevant planning matters to the chairman and in his absence (or where he has an interest) to the Vice Chair. The Chair to have the power to decide if a matter should be raised at the board meeting for its consideration where legal timeframes permit this. All matters however to be reported generally more briefly within the Board report, ie number of applications responded to and number of consents issued or refused.
- c) As above but leaving the Clerk with the power to determine the appropriate responses to consent applications and planning matters without reference to the Chair or Vice Chair.

The Commissioners' instruction is sought.

iii) 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 was held on Tuesday the 3rd March 2020.

The meeting format was as per the 2019 Conference with a workshop in the morning and the Conference in the afternoon. Topics covered were control of invasive species, water resources, planning and effective communications with the wider public.

That the date of the next meeting is Tuesday the 2nd March 2021.

d) Further Research on Eels

Further to minute C.899, ADA have advised that the valuable research work being carried out by Hull University on eels and eel behaviour in pumped catchments will be continuing for at least another two years. ADA consider that the financial support to the project to date provided by IDBs has been positive and noted by the regulator (EA), leading to positive engagement on finding practical solutions at pumping station sites. They therefore consider that it would be useful if IDBs could consider whether they would be willing to continue their annual contributions to this research over that period.

The Commissioners' instruction is requested.

e) 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.

iv) 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 principal 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 Commissioners' approval in principle is sought.

v) 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.

vi) 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 general feeling of the Boards so far was that they recognised there could be problems with Boards and the need to amalgamate possibly 10 years down the road but most seemed happy to continue with their current arrangements. However, this should remain under review and where appropriate amalgamations between Boards supported.

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

To consider the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

(Copy pages 42-66)

15. Capital Improvement Programme

To review and approve the Commissioners' future capital improvement programme.

(Copy page 67)

16. Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

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

(Copy pages 68-80)

17. Pumping Station duties – 2020/2021

With reference to minute C.949(iv), the Clerk will report that the payments in respect of the pumping station duties will be increased in accordance with the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award.

18. 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

Further to minute C.950(ii), consideration be given to the asset survey and the pumping station valuation.

19. Environment Agency – Precept

The Clerk will report that the precept for the financial year 2020/2021 has been fixed at £1,130.00 representing a rate (including special levies) of 1.74p.

The precept for 2019/2020 was £1,102.88.

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

The Clerk will report that following his submission of claims for contributions the gross sum of £1,140.11 (inclusive of supervision) has been received from the Environment Agency (£1,431.70 representing 80% of the Commissioners' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2019/2020 less £291.59 overpaid in respect of the financial year 2018/2019).

21. 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.

22. Repairs to unsafe bridge at Rings End Nature Reserve

The Clerk will report that repairs to the bridge were carried out by the Middle Level Commissioners' workforce on a rechargeable basis to Sustrans.

23. Ownership of Bridge over 20 Foot River - Formerly Bridge No. 1842 - The Railway Executive

The Clerk to report.

24. Contribution from Developer

With reference to minute C.137(ii), 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)

25. Health and Safety

a) Further to minute C.911(i), in light of the appointment of Cope Safety Management, it is considered important that the Board reconsider the appointment of a Health and Safety member or officer who will report at board meetings on any matters relating to health and safety.

Should the Board fail to nominate such a person then the default position will be to expect the Chairman to report on such matters.

b) Further to minute C.954, the Chairman will report and will refer to the reports received from Cope Safety Management following their visits to the District on the 13th September 2019 and 24th February 2020

(Copy pages 81-90)

The Clerk will remind the Commissioners that they are responsible for ensuring they are compliant with all Health and Safety legislation and are adequately insured. In view of this, all points for action raised by its' Health and Safety consultant must be implemented so as to avoid the Commissioners' insurance policy from becoming invalid.

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

(Copy pages 91-96)

26. Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Commissioners – 2018/2019

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

(Copy pages 97-102)

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

(Copy pages 103-109)

27. Defra IDB1 Returns

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

(Copy pages 110-133)

28. Budgeting

The Clerk to refer to the budget update reviewed by the Chairman, with comparison to year end out-turn added, and any actions taken.

(Copy page 134)

29. Review of Internal Controls

To consider the system of Internal Control.

30. Risk Management Assessment

a) To give consideration to the Commissioners' Risk Register.

(Copy pages 135-146)

b) To review the insured value of the Commissioners' buildings and to give consideration to having a professional valuation of the Commissioners' real estate assets, for insurance purposes.

(Copy page 147)

31. Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

The Clerk will report that, as resolved at its' last meeting, the Commissioners 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.

32. 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.

33. Annual Governance Statement – 2019/2020

To review and complete the Annual Governance Statement.

(Copy page 148)

34. Payments 2019/2020

The Clerk to report on payments made during the financial year 2019/2020.

(Schedule page 149)

35. Annual Accounts of the Commissioners - 2019/2020

To consider the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2020 and the completion of Section 2 of the Annual Return as required in the Audit Regulations.

(Copy pages 150-153)

36. 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 154-155)

37. Date of next Meeting

38. Any other business

Rules made by the March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners with the approval of the Secretary of State under paragraph 3(1) of the Second Schedule to the Land Drainage Act, 1991. The relevant statutory provisions governing the proceedings of an Internal Drainage Board are set out in the Annex to these Rules for reference purposes

Regulations as to Proceedings

1. Meetings of the Board, for which 14 days notice will be given, will be open to the public and press who will on the invitation of the Chairman be able to speak at the meeting. The Board can name a resolution to exclude the public and/or press from a meeting or part thereof:-
 - a) The Board will hold an Annual General Meeting at which the election of Chairman and Vice Chairman will be made.
 - b) The Board will hold a meeting at which the drainage rate and special levies will be set to enable the latter to be served on the special levy council by no later than the 15th February in respect to the following financial year.
 - c) In the event of the need for an emergency meeting the notice will be waived.
2. For each meeting, other than for one arranged as an emergency meeting, members will receive an Agenda and any accompanying papers by post or other means despatched at least seven days before the meeting.
3. No business shall be transacted by the Board, other than that which appears on the Agenda, unless 75% of the members present agree to any such additional issue being discussed.
4.
 - a) A formal meeting of the Board cannot be conducted unless 3 members are present at the start of and during the meeting. If departures reduce the number below 3 then the Chairman will terminate the meeting at that point.
 - b) All resolutions and proposals will be decided by a majority of votes of the members present.
 - c) In the case of an equality of votes at any meeting, the Chairman for the time being of such meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
5. The Board shall meet at a venue to be determined from time to time with such venue being confirmed in the Agenda.
6. The Board shall, as soon as they conveniently can, appoint a Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The term of office of such Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall continue until the first meeting of the Board after the next election following his appointment.
7. If any vacancy occurs in the office of Chairman or Vice-Chairman, the Board shall as soon as they conveniently can after the occurrence of such vacancy, choose some one of their number to fill such vacancy.
8.
 - a) At any meeting of the Board the Chairman, if present, shall preside.

- b) If the Chairman is absent from a meeting of the Board, the Vice-Chairman, if present, shall preside.
 - c) If at any meeting of the Board both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are not present at the time the members present shall choose some one of their number to be Chairman of such meeting.
9. The Board shall cause Minutes to be made of all meetings and recorded in an appropriate form:-
- a) of all appointments of Officers made by the Board
 - b) of the names of the members present at each meeting of the Board and Committees or Sub-Committees of the Board
 - c) of all orders made by the Board and Committees or Sub-Committees of the Board, and
 - d) of all resolutions and proceedings of meetings of the Board and of Committees or Sub-Committees of the Board.

The Board will approve, with or without amendment, the minutes of the preceding meeting and these will be duly signed by the Chairman together with any financial statements presented at that meeting.

10. All proceedings, resolutions and reports of every Committee or Sub-Committee intended to be laid before the Board shall be circulated among the members of the Board at least seven days before the meeting of the Board at which the same are to be submitted.

Committees or Sub-Committees

11. The Board may appoint such Committees or Sub-Committees as they think fit but all acts of any Committee or Sub-Committee shall be subject to the approval of the Board unless the Board has delegated its powers to that Committee or Sub-Committee to deal with a specific issue.
12. A Committee or Sub-Committee may elect a Chairman of their meetings. If no such Chairman is elected, or if he is not present, the members present shall choose some one of their number to be Chairman of such meeting.
13. A Committee or Sub-Committee may meet and adjourn as they think proper. Proposals at any meeting shall be determined by a majority of votes of the members present, and shall be decided by a show of hands. In case of any equal division of votes the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.
14. Regulations 9 and 10 shall apply to minutes of Committees and Sub-Committees.

Standing Orders
Order of Debate

15. Every proposal or amendment, other than a proposal for the approval of a Committee or Sub-Committee, shall be proposed and seconded and shall, if required, be written out and handed to the Chairman who shall read it out before it is further discussed or put to the meeting.
16. The Chairman will invite members to speak on the subject under discussion.
17. Members must declare where they have an interest in a matter to be discussed, the Chairman then deciding what if any part the member can take in any ensuing discussion and whether the member can vote.
18. A proposal or amendment once made shall not be withdrawn without the consent of the Board.
19. Every amendment shall be relevant to the proposal to which it is applied.
20. Whenever an amendment upon an original resolution has been proposed and seconded, no second or subsequent amendment shall be moved until the first amendment shall have been dealt with, but notice of any number of amendments may be given.
21. If an amendment is rejected then other amendments may be proposed on the original resolution or proposal.
22. If an amendment is carried the proposal as amended shall take the place of the original proposal and shall become the question upon which any further amendment may be moved.
23. No proposal to rescind any resolution which has been passed within the preceding six months, nor any proposal to the same effect as any proposal which has been negatived within the preceding six months shall be in order unless: (a) notice thereof has been given and specified in the Agenda and (b) the notice bears, in addition to the name of the member who proposed the resolution, the names of two other members; and when such resolution or proposal has been disposed of by the Board, it shall not be competent for any member to propose a similar proposal within a further period of six months.
24. Order 23 shall not apply to proposals which are moved by the Chairman or other members of the Committee or Sub-Committee in pursuance of the report of the Committee.

Common Seal

25. The Common Seal of the Board shall be kept in some safe place. All deeds and other documents to which the Common Seal of the Board shall require to be affixed shall be sealed in pursuance of the Board, and in the presence of both the Chairman and the Clerk of the Board.
26. Copies of all sealed documents must be retained.

Suspension of Standing Orders

27. Any one or more of the standing orders, in any case of urgency or upon resolution or proposal made on a notice duly given, may be suspended at any meeting, so far as regards any business at such meeting, provided that 75% of the members of the Board present and voting are in agreement.

Special Circumstances - Coronavirus

28. In relation to any meeting held before 7th May 2021, “presence” at a meeting includes physical attendance and being present through remote attendance. “Remote attendance” means attending or participating in a meeting by electronic means, including by one or more of the following:
- i) telephone conference,
 - ii) video conference,
 - iii) live webcast,
 - iv) live interactive streaming.
29. In relation to any meeting held before 7th May 2021, regulation 5 is suspended, and the Board shall instead provide members with relevant details to enable members to attend and participate in meetings, including remotely. The board shall provide confirmation of these details in the agenda. For these purposes, “details” includes one or more of the following:
- i) the venue,
 - ii) the availability of a telephone conference facility and the manner of accessing such facility,
 - iii) the availability of a video conference facility and the manner of accessing such facility,
 - iv) the availability of a live webcast facility and the manner of accessing such facility,
 - v) the availability of a live interactive streaming facility and the manner of accessing such facility.

STATUTORY PROVISIONS REGARDING THE PROCEEDINGS OF AN INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD SET OUT IN PARAGRAPH 3 OF SCHEDULE 2 TO THE LAND DRAINAGE ACT, 1991.

Proceedings of internal drainage board

- 3.-(1) An internal drainage board may, with the approval of the relevant Minister, make rules—
- (a) for regulating the proceedings of the board, including quorum, place of meetings and notices to be given of meetings;
 - (b) with respect to the appointment of a chairman and a vice-chairman;
 - (c) for enabling the board to constitute committees; and
 - (d) for authorising the delegation to committees of any of the powers of the board and for regulating the proceedings of committees,
- including quorum, place of meetings and notices to be given of meetings.
- (2) The first meeting of an internal drainage board shall be held on such day and at such time and place as may be fixed by the relevant Minister; and the relevant Minister shall cause notice of the meeting to be sent by post to each member of the board not less than fourteen days before the appointed day.
- (3) Any member of an internal drainage board who is interested in any company with which the board has, or proposes to make, any contract shall—
- (a) disclose to the board the fact and nature of his interest; and
 - (b) take no part in any deliberation or decision of the board relating to such contract;
- and such disclosure shall be forthwith recorded in the minutes of the board.
- (4) A minute of the proceedings of a meeting of an internal drainage board, or of a committee of such a board, purporting to be signed at that or the next ensuing meeting by a person describing himself as, or appearing to be, the chairman of the meeting to the proceedings of which the minute relates—
- (a) shall be evidence of the proceedings; and
 - (b) shall be received in evidence without further proof.
- (5) Until the contrary is proved—
- (a) every meeting in respect of the proceedings of which a minute has been so signed shall be deemed to have been duly convened and held;

- (b) all the proceedings had at any such meeting shall be deemed to have been duly had; and
 - (c) where the proceedings at any such meeting are the proceedings of a committee, the committee shall be deemed to have been duly constituted and to have had power to deal with the matters referred to in the minute.
- (6) The proceedings of an internal drainage board shall not be invalidated by any vacancy in the membership of the board or by any defect in the appointment or qualification of any member of the board.

The Common Seal of the
March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners
was affixed in the presence of:-

Chairman

Clerk

Note: Items 28, 29 and 3(1-6) forming part of these standing orders were added on ZZZZZZZ.

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

At a Meeting of the March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners
held at the Middle Level Offices, March on Tuesday the 18th June 2019

PRESENT

D G West Esq (Chairman) T E Alerton Esq
Miss E Alerton (Vice Chairman) M Arnold Esq
M Cornwell Esq

Miss Samantha Ablett (representing the Clerk to the Commissioners) and Mr Morgan Lakey (representing the Consulting Engineers) were in attendance. Mr Malcolm Downes (Mechanical and Electrical Engineer) attended for part of the meeting.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from J C Martin Esq and M J Mottram Esq.

C.933 Declarations of Interest

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

Mr Alerton declared an interest in any matters involving pumping station duties.

C.934 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Commissioners held on the 19st June 2018 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

C.935 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED

That D G West Esq be appointed Chairman of the Commissioners.

C.936 Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED

That Miss E Alerton be appointed Vice Chairman of the Commissioners.

C.937 Land Drainage Act 1991
Fenland District Council

Miss Ablett reported that Fenland District Council had re-appointed Councillor M Cornwell to be a Commissioner under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

Miss Ablett also reported that Councillor Court was not re-appointed.

C.938 Contingency Plans in the Event of Pump Failure

Further to minute C.898, Miss Ablett reported that the Consulting Engineer had advised that whilst the pump body and wet bolts could be inspected annually when the water levels were lowered, in his opinion, it was unlikely that the pump bolts had deteriorated as when the pump was last overhauled in 2007 they were replaced in stainless steel.

RESOLVED

That no further action be taken and this item be removed from future agendas.

C.939 Potential Amalgamation with March Fifth DDCs

Further to minute C.900, the Vice Chairman reported that when the potential amalgamation was discussed at the March Fifth DDC meeting there was no desire to continue with the process. She added that initially the main driver for amalgamating the Commissioners was due to lack of members attending meetings. She advised that now the numbers in attendance had increased the Commissioners did not consider there was a desperate need to merge. Mr Alerton agreed as he had spoken with the Chairman of March Third DDC who had confirmed that they were also of the same opinion.

Councillor Cornwell enquired whether there would be any financial implications. The Vice Chairman confirmed that there were potentially within March Third DDC as they had large sums of money in their funds and a very low rate, due to development within the District, however these funds would most likely be ring fenced and differential rating used.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners do not proceed with any amalgamation and this item be removed from future agendas.

C.940 Updating IDB Byelaws

Further to minute C.908(e), the Commissioners considered their updated Byelaws.

RESOLVED

That the updated Byelaws be adopted.

C.941 Policy Statement

Further to minute C.908(f), the Commissioners 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.

C.942 Requirements for a Biosecurity Policy

Further to minute C.913, the Commissioners considered their Biosecurity Policy.

RESOLVED

That the Biosecurity Policy be adopted.

C.943 Waste Recycling Centre

Further to minute C.931, Mr Alerton reported that the site operator had recently contacted him and enquired whether he wished to lease the field/pond but he was waiting for them to confirm the amount of annual rent they would require before making a decision. He advised that should he decide not to rent the land the site operator had enquired whether the Commissioners would be interested. Mr Alerton confirmed there was a water storage resource on site, which could be used for irrigation purposes. Mr Lakey, the Middle Level Commissioners' Assistant Operations Engineer advised there was a possibility there was a natural spring in the bottom of the pond so it could well be self filling.

RESOLVED

That this item be included in the agenda for the next meeting of the Commissioners for the Vice Chairman to report and in the meantime Mr Alerton to liaise with the Chairman to keep him informed.

C.944 Norwood Pumping Station

Further to minute C.932, the Chairman reported that at a meeting held approximately two years ago, Sustrans had confirmed they did own the pit and some of the land around it. He advised that the Commissioners had indicated an interest in purchasing the pit and surrounding land but since then there had been no further communication.

C.945 Clerk's Report

Miss Ablett advised:-

i) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That a second Chair's meeting was held on the 17th October 2018 and that discussions centred around meeting Health and Safety legislative requirements and the possible options

for increased efficiency in delivery of IDB/DDC services. Outline detailed proposals on the latter are to be brought before the next Chair's meeting for consideration.

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

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

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

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

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

The Chairman stated that savings would have to be significant to make the exercise worthwhile.

The Vice Chairman confirmed that local knowledge and input, together with differential rating would be required and if the driver behind this was based on the age and numbers of members then the proposed sub committees would face the same challenges.

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

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners have no interest in amalgamating at this time.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

b) Annual Conference

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

RESOLVED

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

c) Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse Branch

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

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

d) Good Governance Guide for Internal Drainage Board Members

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

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

That ADAs workshops were well attended and are helping to deal with the questions being raised by Defra following the Audit Commission Report which criticized aspects of IDB governance. At least one Commissioner 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 Commissioners may wish to consider an order of priority for future training and a timetable for delivery.

e) Workstreams

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

iii) External Bodies Conservation Initiatives

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

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

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

iv) Catchment Strategy

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

v) Water Resources East Group Meeting

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

vi) Anglia Farmers

Further to minute C.926, Miss Ablett advised that the running of the remainder of the Anglia Farmers electricity contract had been monitored and was pleased to report that the service provided had improved.

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

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

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

Miss Ablett reported that the Chairman had subsequently agreed for the Commissioners to remain with Anglia Farmers.

RESOLVED

That the actions of the Chairman be approved and the Commissioners remain with Anglia Farmers for a further contract period post 30th September 2019.

vii) The New Rivers Authorities & Land Drainage Bill

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

C.946 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

The Commissioners considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

Mr Lakey reported that during an inspection with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and District Officer at the pumping station it was noted that the access path around the pump control building and steps down to the weedscreen were deteriorating. He confirmed that a quotation for works on the steps, reinforced concrete on top of the weedscreen deck together with a handrail at the steps had been obtained in the sum of £6,575. He also advised that if this work was not completed it was an area that could give rise to health and safety issues.

Miss Ablett advised the Commissioners of the £47,000 held in their development fund which could be used to pay for these repairs.

The Vice-chairman considered the quotation was reasonable and in view of the health and safety implications proposed that the works be carried out.

Mr Lakey reported that, having been informed by Mr Steward that he no longer wished to carry out any flail mowing works, he had approached R Dale and N Harrison who were both interested in the work. He advised the Commissioners of the rates quoted by both contractors and enquired who they wished to appoint.

After further discussion, the Commissioners agreed to ask R Dale to carry out the works for the coming year and for this to be reviewed at the next meeting.

Miss Ablett referred to planning applications (MLC Ref. Nos. 65, 78, 79, 108, 139, 142 & 150 143) for which no further information had been received since the Commissioners' last correspondence and enquired whether the Commissioners wished for the Planning Engineer to write again to the applicant and the applicants' agents for further information.

With regards to the erection of 11 business units and palisade fencing and gates at land north of Thorby Avenue, March, (MLC Ref No. 155), Miss Ablett reported that neither the applicant, its agent nor engineering consultants had contacted the Commissioners to discuss the matter further and an application for discharge consent had also not been received. She enquired whether the Commissioners wished to write to all parties concerned in order to resolve the issue.

Mr Downes joined the meeting.

The Chairman requested Mr Downes report on the weedscreen.

Mr Downes reported that the weed screen was corroded and advised that welding a bar across the top of it would be sufficient for it to last another 5-10 years.

The Chairman enquired whether the Commissioners needed to consider replacing the weedscreen and Mr Downes confirmed that this would not be necessary once it had been repaired.

Mr Downes left the meeting.

Councillor Cornwell advised that the Councils Local Plan was currently being reviewed and updated and considered the Commissioners should contact Fenland District Council with a view to having a land drainage policy regarding planning applications included within the plan for consideration.

The Vice Chairman considered this was a matter the Middle Level Commissioners should undertake on behalf of all Boards as they were all experiencing the same problems relating to planning applications.

The Chairman confirmed he would raise this point at the next Chair's meeting.

RESOLVED

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

ii) Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

That the recommendations contained in the Report be approved.

iii) That the works relating to the concrete works, path, steps and handrail at the pumping station be approved and paid for from the development fund.

iv) That the corroded weedscreen be repaired and paid for from the development fund.

v) Planning Applications MLC Ref. Nos. 78, 79, 108, 139, 142 & 143

That the Planning Engineer write to all parties who have not responded to the Commissioners initial correspondence .

vi) That a letter be sent to all parties relating to planning application (MLC Ref. No. 155).

vii) That the Planning Engineer contact Fenland District Council's Planning Department to enquire whether a policy statement on land drainage could be added to the Local Plan.

C.947 Capital Improvement Programme

The Commissioners considered their future capital improvement programme.

Councillor Cornwell enquired whether the weedscreen would last a further 10 years and whether the Pump Attendant was happy to continue with the manual raking arrangements.

The Pump Attendant advised he was satisfied with the current arrangements and the proposed improvements works.

The Vice Chairman referred to the Consulting Engineer's comments and considered that based on his view and the weedscreen being repaired in the current year the Commissioners should perhaps consider the installation of automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment in 10 years time.

Discussion followed and it was agreed to include the £7,000 for the pumping station and weed screen repairs in 2019/2020, that the £80,000 for an automatic weedscreen cleaner should not be considered until 2028/2029 at the earliest and that £7,000 be included in 2024/2025 in case the weedscreen needed replacing in the meantime.

Miss Ablett advised that the capital programme is reviewed each year and the Commissioners need to start considering the funding of automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment in the near future.

RESOLVED

That, subject to the amendments listed, the Capital Programme be approved and kept under review:-

£7,000 be included in 2019/2020 for repairs to the pumping station surrounds and weedscreen repairs.

£7,000 be included in 2024/2025 for a replacement weedscreen.

£80,000 be included for automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment in 2028/2029.

C.948 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

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

The Commissioners considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

C.949 Pumping Station duties

- a) The Commissioners gave consideration to the payments in respect of pumping station duties for 2019/2020.
- b) The Commissioners gave consideration to the fuel allowance payable to Mr Alterton.

RESOLVED

- i) That T Alterton Esq continue as Pump Attendant to the Commissioners during the ensuing year.
- ii) That the Commissioners agree that the sum of £633.00 be allowed for the provision of pumping station duties for 2019/2020.
- iii) That the Commissioners agree that a £52.00 fuel allowance be allowed to Mr Alterton.
- iv) That, in future years, an increase in accordance with the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award be made to the Pump Attendant.

(NB) – Mr Alterton declared a financial interest when this item was discussed.

C.950 State-aided Schemes

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

Update on the EA grant-in-aid position

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

Miss Ablett reported an asset survey of the pumping station had not been carried out for 10 years and enquired whether the Commissioners wished for this to be revisited as it may assist with planning for future investment needs. She advised that the cost of a survey would be in the region of £250. Miss Ablett further reported it had been approximately 5 years since the pumping station had been valued by the Mechanical & Electrical Engineer for insurance purposes and enquired whether the Commissioners wished for this to be re-visited also.

The Vice Chairman considered that, based on both the Consulting Engineer's report and the repair works scheduled for the current year, there was no need for either the survey or the valuation to be re-visited and that the repairs should be completed before a decision could be made.

The Chairman agreed and proposed that both the asset survey and the pumping station valuation be deferred until the planned works had been completed and any points that may be raised by the health and safety consultants had been addressed. He confirmed that both items should be considered next year.

RESOLVED

- i) That no proposals be formulated at the present time.
- ii) That both the asset survey and the pumping station valuation be deferred and consideration be given at the next meeting.

C.951 Environment Agency – Precept

Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2019/2020 in the sum of £1,102.88 (the precept for 2018/2019 being £1,050).

C.952 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

(a) Miss Ablett reported that the sum of £1,124.87 (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency (£1,311.26 representing 80% of the Commissioners' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2018/2019 less £186.39 overpaid in respect of the financial year 2017/2018).

(b) Further to minute C.907(b), Miss Ablett referred to the discussions with the Environment Agency over the monies available to fund highland water claims.

RESOLVED

That the position be noted and the situation kept under review.

C.953 Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Subscriptions

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

RESOLVED

That the increased subscription be paid for 2019.

b) Future ADA Communications

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

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

C.954 Health and Safety

The Chairman reported that, following various Chairs meetings, it had been agreed to enter into a 3 year contract with Cope Safety Management. He advised that the annual cost to the Commissioners would be £200 per annum which would include 2 inspections the first year and one the following two years but should extra support be needed Cope could provide this at a day rate of £500 per day or £85 per hour.

The Chairman reported that having received a letter from the Clerk enquiring whether the Commissioners wished to be included in the joint arrangement he had discussed this with the Vice-Chairman. He advised that both he and the Vice-Chairman raised their concerns with the Clerk and enquired whether Cope would shoulder the responsibility should there be any issues, as the Commissioners did not want to be held responsible.

The Chairman reported that Cope had responded and advised that, essentially, if they provided advice or assistance or failed to provide such assistance when asked, which caused the Commissioners to perform a wrongful act, then Cope could be prosecuted for that offence. The Chairman further

reported that Cope had also confirmed that this would extend to other persons in a similar capacity such as electrical or mechanical contractors carrying out work on behalf of the Commissioners.

Councillor Cornwell stated that although this gave some comfort the Commissioners could not remove all risk and could be open to prosecution. The Vice-Chairman agreed but highlighted that using a health and safety consultant would reduce the risk to them quite significantly.

Miss Ablett confirmed that although using Cope would reduce the risk of any non-compliance, ultimately the Commissioners would still be responsible.

The Chairman advised that based on the response received from Cope both he and the Vice-Chairman thought it was in the interest of the Commissioners to join the arrangement with Cope Safety Management.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman's actions be approved

C.955 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Commissioners – 2017/2018

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

C.956 Defra IDB1 Returns

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

C.957 Budgeting

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

C.958 Review of Internal Controls

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

C.959 Risk Management Assessment

- a) The Commissioners considered and expressed satisfaction with their current Risk Management Policy.
- b) The Commissioners reviewed and approved the insured value of their buildings and considered having a revaluation of the Commissioners' real estate assets, as required for audit purposes.

RESOLVED

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

C.960 Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

Miss Ablett reported that, as resolved at its last meeting, the Commissioners 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.

C.961 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.

C.962 Annual Governance Statement – 2018/2019

The Commissioners 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 Commissioners, for the financial year ending 31st March 2019.

C.963 Payments

The Commissioners considered and approved payments amounting to £17,580.02 which had been made during the financial year 2018/2019.

(NB) – Mr Alterton declared an interest in the payment made to him.

C.964 Annual Accounts of the Commissioners – 2018/2019

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

RESOLVED

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

C.965 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2019/2020

The Commissioners considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2018/2019 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 58.01% and 41.99%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £9,714 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 £5,635 and £4,079 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 15.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v) That a Special levy of £4,079 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vi) That the seal of the Commissioners 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.

C.966 Display of rate notice

RESOLVED

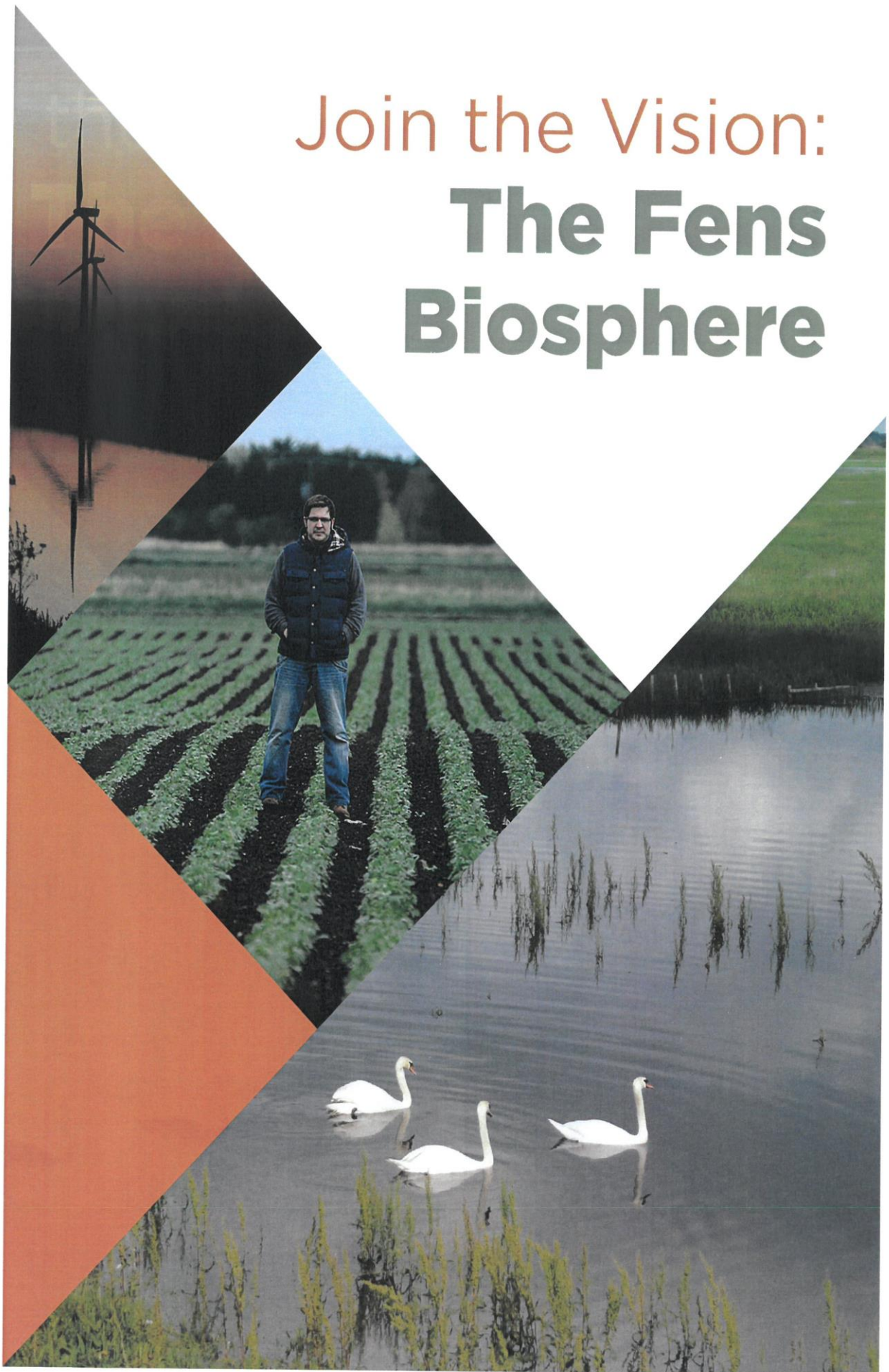
That notice of the rate be affixed within the District in accordance with Section 48(3)(a) of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

C.967 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Commissioners be held on Tuesday the 16th June 2020.

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

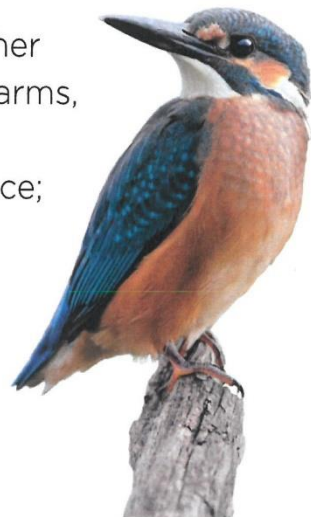
A Biosphere is a globally recognised accolade awarded by UNESCO to a region which has a strong cultural and landscape identity and can demonstrate excellence in sustainable development.

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:

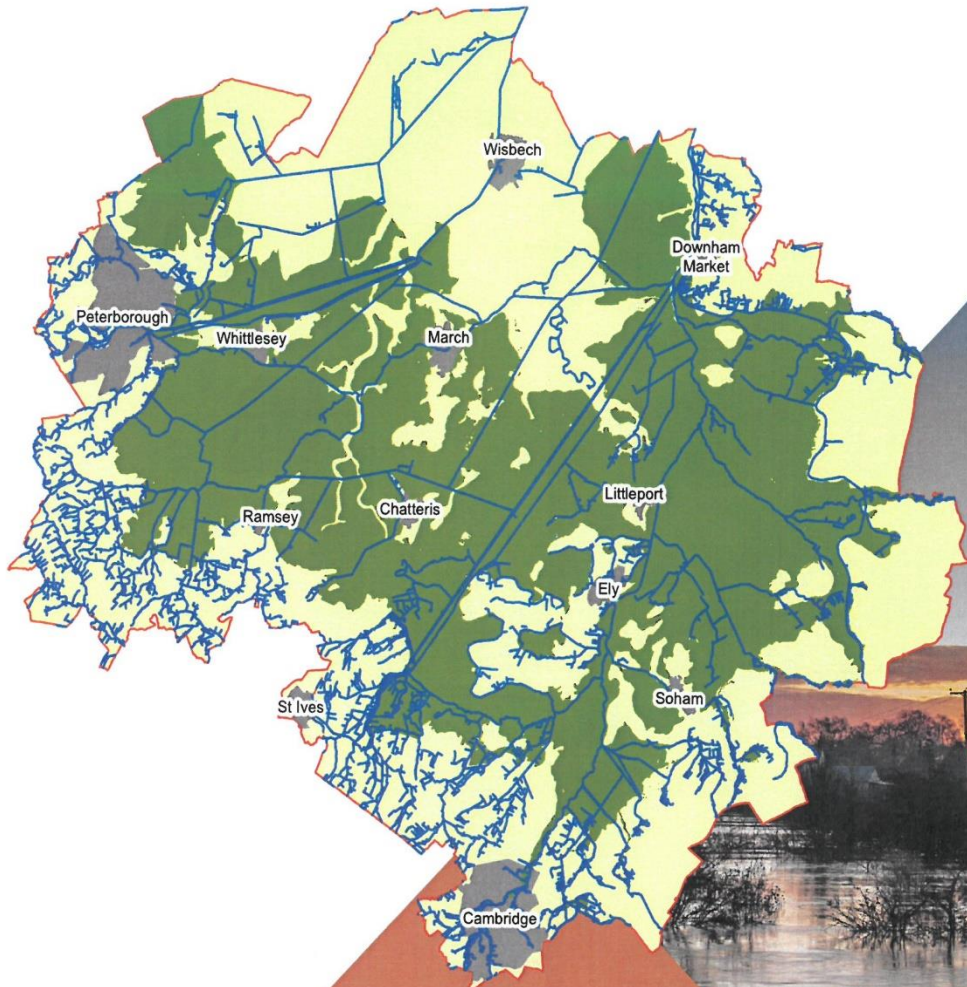
- **Achieve Biosphere status for the Fens by 2022**
- **Join the exclusive global network of 701 Biosphere in 124 countries**

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@cambsacre.org.uk 01353 865030 or
- **Rachael Brown** at rachael.brown@cambsacre.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



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Representing Drainage Water Level & Flood Risk Management Authorities

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Hazel Durant
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Defra
2 Marsham Street
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LONDON
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by e-mail: hazel.durant@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

Member of EUWMA- the European Union of Water Management Associations
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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)

ADA – representing drainage, water level and flood risk management authorities

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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.

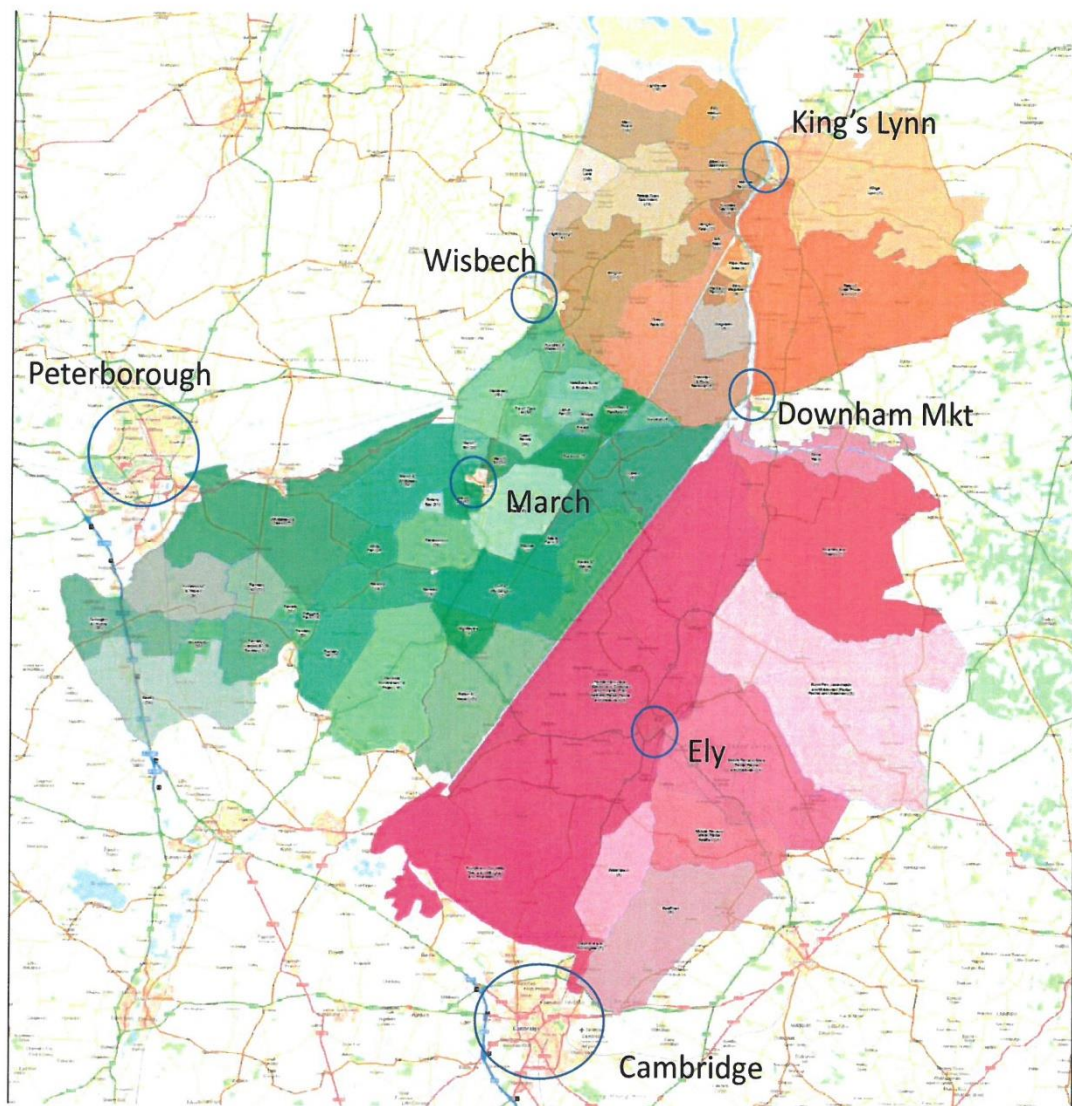
It is essential therefore that each RMA confirms support for the Tactical Plans and the principles of the benefit apportionment for the Great Ouse Fens. Please could you send an email or letter confirming your support to this approach, to Paul Burrows Area Flood and Coastal Risk Manager, Environment 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.



March Sixth D.D.C.

Consulting Engineers Report – June 2020

Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

The maintenance works carried out last year generally accorded with the recommendations approved by the Commissioners' at their last annual meeting.

Roundup herbicide applications were applied to the Commissioners' drains included within last year's machine cleansing programme, and to other District drains where it was required to control dense stands of reed and emergent aquatic vegetation.

A recent inspection of the Commissioners' District drains has been undertaken revealing that the majority of drains are in a generally satisfactory condition and being maintained to a good standard. The inspection indicates that many of the District drains that fall within this year's machine cleansing programme will only require light machine cleansing to retain them in good status.

Drains to the West of the Prison

The Commissioners' District drains to the west of the prison are generally in good condition. The inspection did highlight sporadic growths of aquatic vegetation throughout the EEDA drains in the western area. As this area falls within this year's maintenance programme, the affected reaches will be treated with an application of Roundup herbicide, followed by light machine cleansing, to retain the currently good status.



Reach 12-14



EEDA Drain, reach 19-20

Drains to the East of the Prison

The District drains to the east of the prison remain in a generally satisfactory condition; however, the inspection did reveal sporadic stands of reed and emergent aquatic vegetation in the Norwood Farm drains. It is recommended that the affected reaches are treated with an application of Roundup herbicide during the summer months, which should prevent any further infestations later on in the season.

As the Commissioners have previously agreed, in recent years, it is again recommended that the main Norwood Pumping Drain, reach 1-2-10, is included within this year's phased machine cleansing programme. Historically this has proven to be an effective method of reducing the weed mass at the manually cleansed weedscreen during winter pumping periods.

A sum has been allocated within the Commissioners' estimate to allow for Roundup applications to be made to drains, as required, and for flail mowing of the District drains to be undertaken this year.

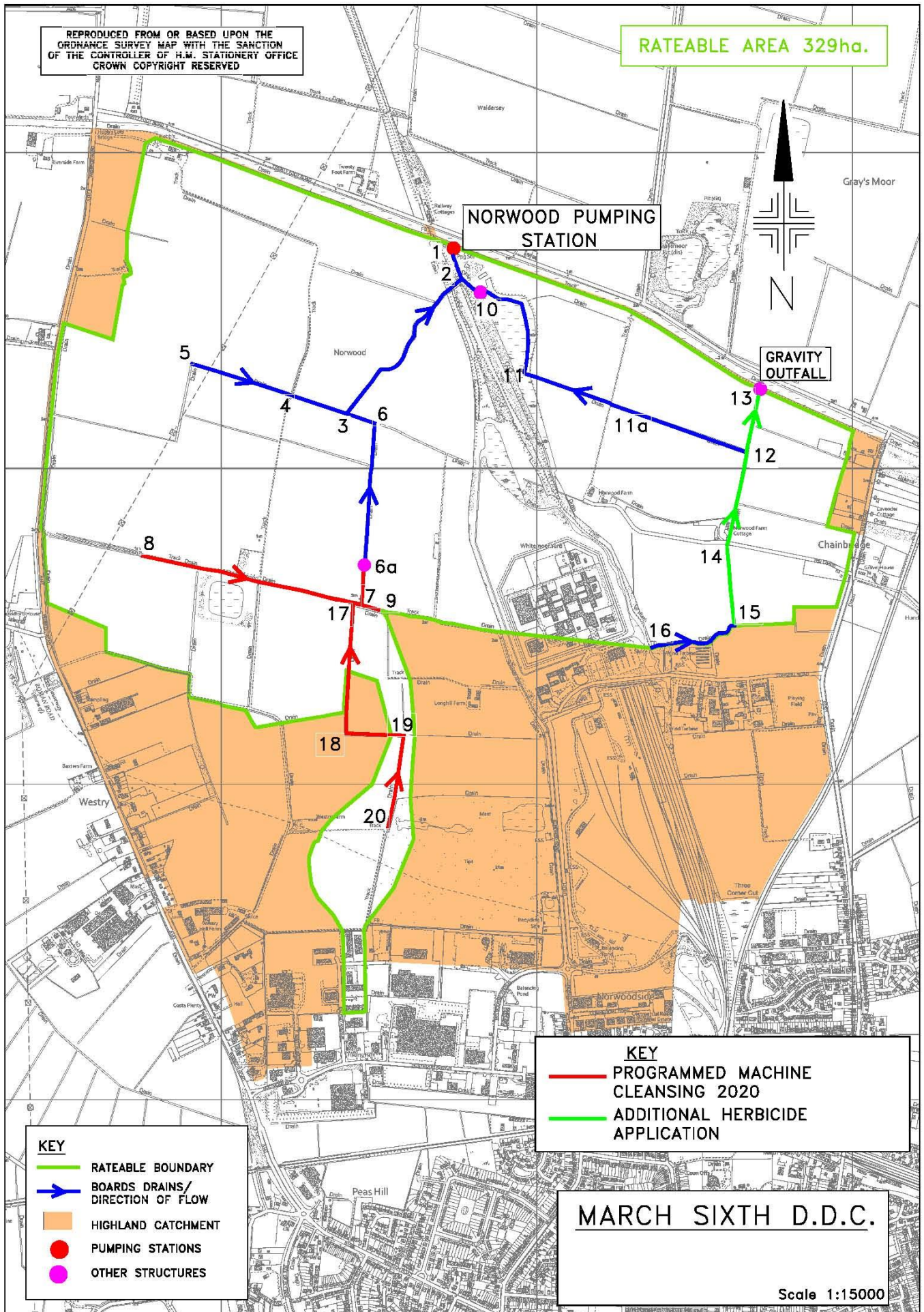
A provisional sum has also been included within the estimate for any other emergency machine cleansing, culvert clearance or Filamentous algae (cott) removal works that may be deemed necessary later in the year.

The estimated costs of this year's recommended Weed Control and Drain Maintenance works are shown below, please refer to the following plan for locations.

Phased Machine Cleansing Programme

1. Drains to West of the Prison				
(i)	Reach 8-7-9	800 m @	1.10	880.00
(ii)	Reach 6a-17-18-19-20	1150 m @	1.10	1265.00
2. Machine cleanse				
	Norwood Pump Drain	150 m @	2.00	300.00
3. Allow sum for Roundup application to control Japanese Knotweed at Norwood Pumping Station, if required, self-sown saplings and emergent aquatic weed within the Commissioners' drains				
		Item	Sum	750.00
4. Allow sum for flail mowing				
		Item	Sum	950.00
5. <u>Provisional Item</u>				
	Allow sum for emergency machine cleansing or cott removal work	Item	Sum	700.00
6. Fees for inspection, preparation and submission of report to the Commissioners, arrangement and supervision of herbicide applications and maintenance works				
		Item	Sum	550.00
TOTAL				£ 5,395.00

Orders for the application of herbicides by the Middle Level Commissioners are accepted on condition that they are weather dependant and they will not be held responsible for the efficacy or failure of any treatment.



Pumping Station

Other than matters reported below only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant is mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition.

It has been noted that either the motor bearings or the pump thrust bearing has become a little noisy, it is therefore recommended that the three bearings are replaced this summer. This should be possible without removing the pump providing the drain water is low enough to allow access into the intake sump and the pump shaft at the point it enters this discharge bend. The motor can easily be removed using a Hiab or teleporter.

The corroded weedscreen has been strengthened by welding steel angle across the top of its bars in order to extend its life, but it is likely to require replacement in the next 5 years.

Pumping Hours

Total Hours Run/ Pumping Station	May 12 - May 13	May 13 - May 14	May 14 - May 15	May 15 - May 16	May 16 - May 17	May 17 - May 18	May 18 - May 19	May 19 - May 20
Norwood	(6058) - (6549) 491	(6549) - (6789) 240	(6789) - (7177) 388	(7177) - (7364) 187	(7364) - (7546) 182	(7546)- (7760) 214	(7760) (7909) 149	(7909)- (8249) 340

Planning Procedures Update

Further to the last Board meeting the Clerk to the Board has received invitations and attended meetings held by both Fenland District and King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough (KL&WN) Councils' Developers Forum and the latter's Inter-Agency Flood Group.

The use of Infiltration Devices

At the last Inter-Agency Working on Flood & Water Group meeting the issue of minor developments (less than 10 houses) not having adequate safeguards in place where infiltration (soakaway) drainage is proposed was raised, 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.

Local Land Charges Register (LLCR)

A challenge to the legality of the requests by the Middle Level Commissioners to place notes on the Land Charges Registry was raised. This has resulted in KL&WN Council ceasing adding any such notes. Interestingly the stance being taken by Fenland District Council differs from this and it has advised that it holds notes on file which are passed on whenever a Land Charges Registry enquiry is made. In this way it can rightly assert that the notes are not on the Registry but are held separately.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 10 new development related matters have been received and dealt with since the last meeting:

MLC Ref.	Council Ref.	Applicant	Type of Development	Location
159	F/YR19/0307/O	PMJ Services Ltd & Spartan Land Division	Residential (Up to 8 plots)	Woodville Drive, Westry*
160	F/YR19/0405/F	J F Jupp Utility Contractor Ltd	Office	Longhill Road, March
161	F/YR19/0471/PNC04	Mr & Mrs C Baker	Residential (4 plots)	Wisbech Road, March
162	Enquiry	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority	Transportation	Elm Road/Flaggrass Hill area, March*
163	F/YR19/0766/F	Mr Shedden	Retail (Extension)	Thorby Avenue, March*
164	F/YR19/1000/RM	Spartan Group Holdings Ltd	Residential (8 plots)	Woodville Drive, Westry
165	F/YR19/1106/F	Ely Diocesan Board of Finance	Residential (9 plots)	Wisbech Road, Westry
166	F/YR19/0602/RM	Guy James Ltd	Residential (9 plots)	Wisbech Road, March*
167	F/YR19/3090/COND	Guy James Ltd	Residential (9 plots)	Wisbech Road, March*
168	Enquiry	FACT Community Transport	Office	Martin Close, March

Planning applications ending 'PNCO' relate to prior notification change of use issues

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

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

Developments that are known to propose direct discharge to the Commissioners' system are indicated with an asterisk. The remainder are understood to propose surface water disposal to soakaways/infiltration systems or sustainable drainage systems, where applicable. The applicants have been notified of the Commissioners' requirements.

No applications for Infiltration Device Self Certification or the Checking Service have been received since the last meeting report.

Further to general principles detailed in Minute C.946 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters the current position is being ascertained in respect of the following developments:

- *Erection of industrial buildings hardstanding on land West of 30 Thorby Avenue, March – Elliott Charles Group (MLC Ref No 079 & 108) and RFGM Ltd (MLC Ref No 150)*
- *Re-development of the former Brimur Packaging Ltd and Agrihold facilities at 1-3 Hostmoor Avenue and 1 Martin Avenue, March – Client of MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd (MLC Ref No 139) & Harrier Developments Ltd (MLC Ref No 143)*
- *Erection of up to 8 x dwellings on land south east of 433 Wisbech Road, Westry, March - Mr & Mrs J C & M A Martin (MLC Ref No 152)*
- *Erection of 11 x business units (B1, B2 and B8) and 1.8m high palisade fencing and gates at land north of 57 Thorby Avenue, March – Batchelor Developments Ltd & Litchfield Roofing Contractors Ltd (MLC Ref No 155)*

Any inspection of the site to ascertain whether work has commenced and any subsequent discussion with the applicant's agent will have to be delayed until the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) working restrictions are lifted.

Residential development at Phoenix House, Wisbech Road, March – Mrs C Dean (MLC Ref Nos 117, 119, 124, 147 & 153), Shire Home Building Service Ltd (MLC Ref No 141) & Mr A Dean (MLC Ref Nos 157 & 158)

Further to the last Meeting Report, an application for the disposal of both surface and treated foul effluent water was received from Shire Homes and Building Services Ltd (Mr A Dean) in respect of an additional dwelling at Plot 1A (MLC Ref No 153) of the Church Gardens development. The application was recommended for approval.

Extension to existing switches and crossings building and erection of lean-to to enclose house jet wash equipment at Whitemoor Yard, Hundred Road, March – Network Rail (MLC Ref No 126)

The requested meeting with Network Rail to discuss the issues concerning the site remains outstanding.

Erection of 13no business units for B1, B2 and B8 plus non-food retail warehouse with associated parking and erection of 1.8 (min) metre high security fence at land east of 33 Thorby Avenue, March – Mr & Mrs Fink (MLC Ref Nos 128 & 134) & Client of MTC Engineering (Cambridge) Ltd (MLC Ref No 133)

Further information concerning the discharge rates is awaited and once this has been received it will be possible to progress the consent application.

Residential development on land in the vicinity of St Marys Church, Woodville, and Gipsy Lane, off Wisbech Road, March

(a) *Inter-catchment transfer*

Members will be aware from previous reports of the re-development of the former St Marys Rectory site, Church Gardens, by Shire Homes and Building Services Ltd (Mr A Dean). Subsequent to this, planning permission has been sought for further development in the area.

According to the respective District plans this area is within “highland” (land within the catchment that is not rated) of both the Commissioners and the neighbouring March West and White Fen IDB. There is an absence of readily available suitable

points of discharge. It is understood that a private and largely piped system of unknown condition and capacity is within the north eastern verge of Wisbech Road which discharges into the March West and White Fen IDB's Westry Drain via other private connections. The discharge into the March Sixth DDC system is via a private open watercourse which has, in the past, been poorly maintained and flooding has been experienced in this area. It should also be noted that the southern end of this system is connected to the Hostmoor Phase One balancing pond via an adopted sewer and thus discharges into the March West and White Fen IDB system.

Certain conditions may determine which receiving watercourse is chosen and may require an inter-catchment transfer. The design of the respective water level and flood risk management system is based on the area and land use that it serves. The change of land use can also, but not on this occasion, have an adverse impact on payments received from ratepayers. Therefore, an inter-catchment transfer requires the approval of both the March West and White Fen IDB and March Sixth DDC.

In order to assist further discussion and the issuing of consents the Commissioners are asked to consider whether they would permit inter-catchment transfers and provide instruction on how they would wish us to proceed.

(b) *The disposal of treated foul water effluent*

Members may be aware that the nearest adopted foul water sewer is at Hostmoor Avenue, to the south of Cobblestones, with all existing properties up to and beyond Westry Hall disposing of treated foul effluent water via septic tanks or direct into open watercourses via private water recycling plants.

In view of this some developers have requested that the disposal of such effluent is discharged into the local watercourses and NOT into an adopted sewer.

When such discharges from one or two properties are proposed it is possible to justify receiving "additional" water, particularly if a connection to an adopted sewer is some distance away and not viable in economic terms. However in addition to transferring the "additional" water, which places an increased "load" on the receiving systems and the ratepayer, other issues associated with the disposal of treated foul effluent water from non-adopted systems include the increased risk of pollution and odours as a result of "spills", possibly due to the lack of maintenance of the units; and potential detrimental effect on the water environment etc.

Whilst it is accepted that there is some distance between the proposed sites and the nearest adopted foul water sewer it is considered that the number of properties involved may make the installation of a new foul water sewer preferable. This would also be of benefit to future development in the area.

In order to assist further discussion and the issuing of consents **the Commissioners are asked to consider whether they would require the installation of a new connection into the existing foul water sewer system or would continue to consent such discharges, provided they met their requirements, and provide instruction on how they would wish us to proceed.**

Development on land to the north east of Woodville, Wisbech Road, March – Frenchies (MLC Ref No 031); Mr & Mrs French (MLC Ref No 073); PMJ Services Ltd & Spartan Land Division (MLC Ref No 159) and Spartan Group Holdings Ltd (MLC Ref No 164)

Planning applications have been submitted to the District Council and enquiries received in respect of the re-development of the former Woodville Business Park, (Frenchies) with eight dwellings. This site is immediately to the south of the residential development on land to the north of Woodville Drive (MLC Ref Nos 166 & 167), as detailed below. These developments have both been made individually despite being adjacent sites and from the same Agent.

It is proposed that both surface and treated foul effluent water is discharged from the individual sites into the private watercourse that bisects both sites and the adjacent March Food site, to the east.



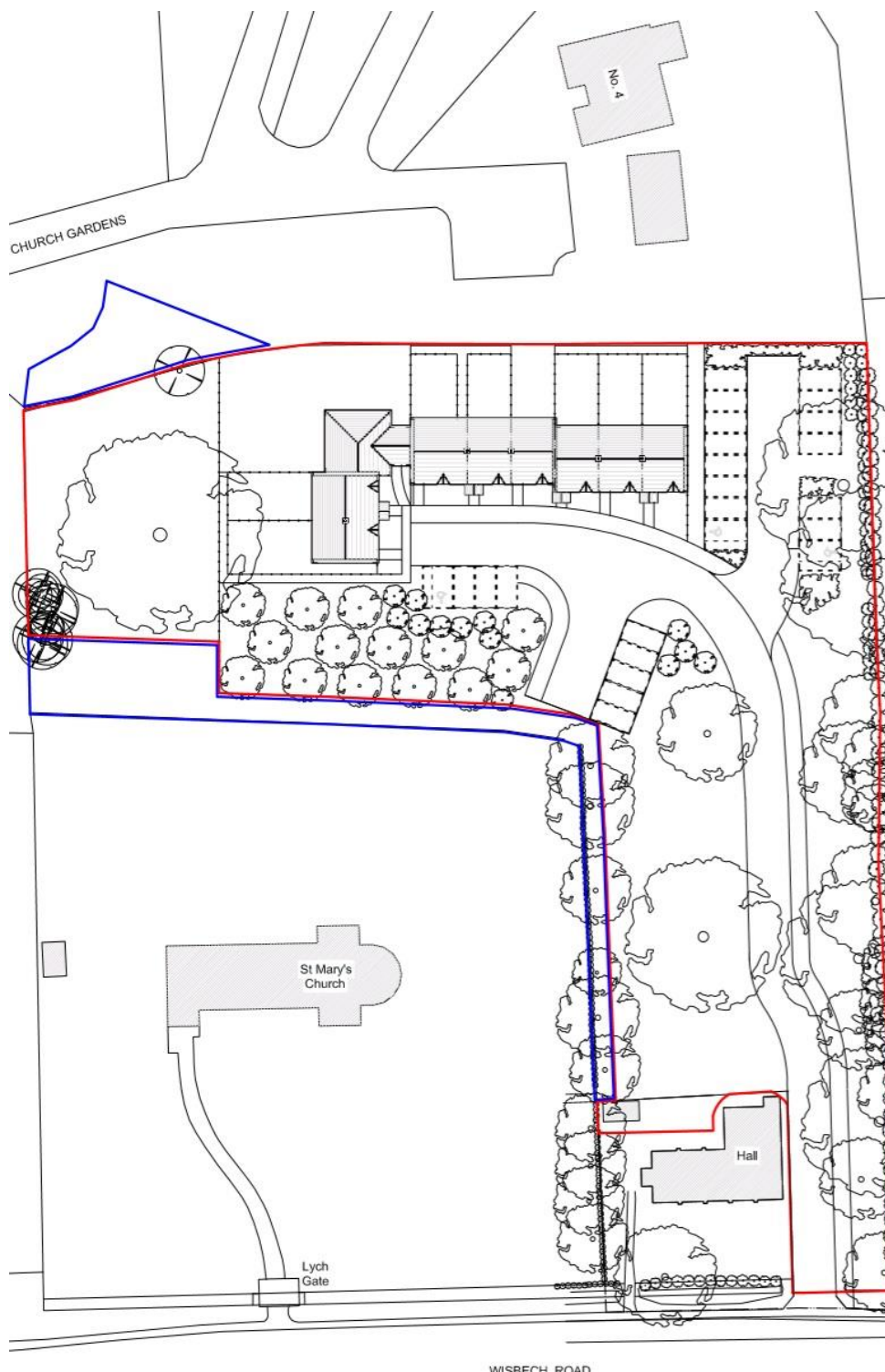
Extract from Haswell Associates Ltd's Drawing No. 2003/01

Residential Development on land north of Woodville, Wisbech Road, March – Prudential Property Investment Managers Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 065 & 078); Grosvenor Partnership 3 LLP (MLC Ref No 142) and Guy James Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 166 & 167)

Further to previous meeting reports, a Reserved Matters planning application, FDC Ref No F/YR19/0602 (MLC Ref No 166), was submitted to the District Council in May 2019.

The County Council, in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), is currently objecting to the attenuated discharge of surface water and the disposal of treated foul effluent water into the open watercourse that forms the southern boundary of the site which is believed to flow into the neighbouring March Sixth DDC system.

According to its Public Access webpage the District Council has recommended an extension of time until the end of May to enable discussion with the IDB to resolve any drainage issues.



Extract from Headley Stokes Associates' Block Plan Drawing No. 1752-8-26

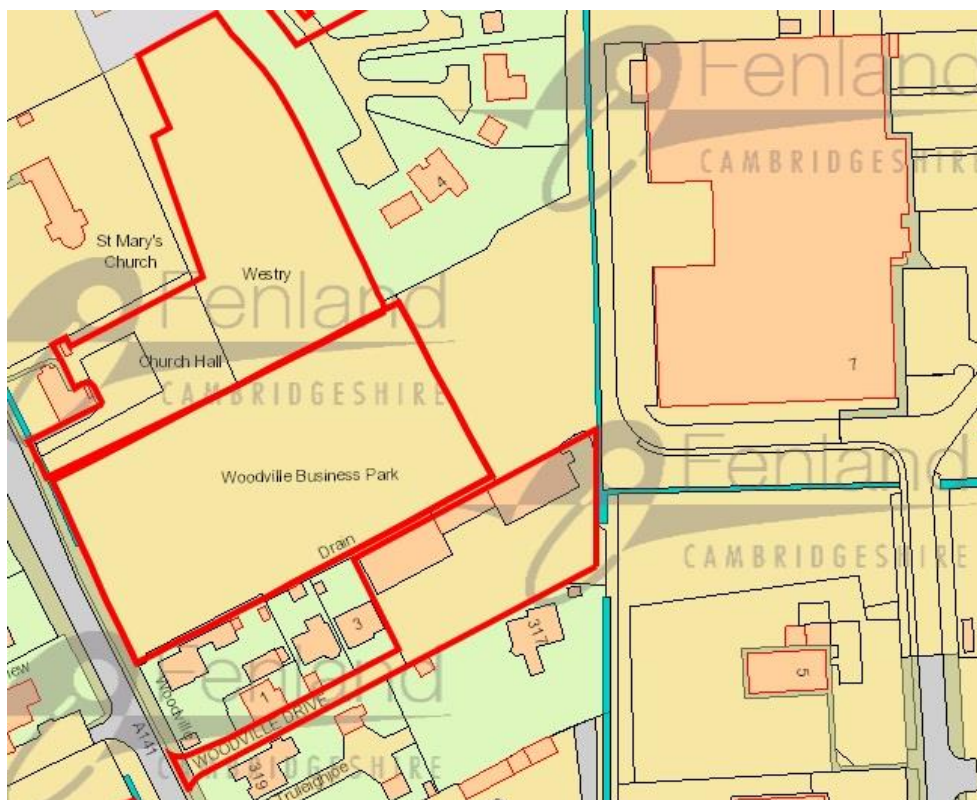
The Planning Application form advises that surface water will be disposed of to soakaways with treated foul effluent water discharging to a mains sewer.

According to the relevant page on the District Council's webpage the application is "Pending consideration"

Development at 5 St Martin Avenue, March - FACT Community Transport (MLC Ref Nos 041, 047, 127, 140 & 168)

Further to previous meeting reports, an enquiry was received from FACT Community Transport concerning the ownership of an adjacent watercourse and works that it intended to carry out to improve the drainage of its car park, which utilises soakaways that have proven to be inadequate, by discharging into the aforementioned watercourse.

Copies of previous letters sent in response to planning applications associated with the site, one of which advises on the likely poor performance of soakways, were sent together with copies of the documents associated with the pre-application consultation procedure. No further correspondence or instruction have been received.



Extract from Fenland District Council's Public Access webpage
showing the location of the three planning application sites and the FACT Ltd premises

Development Contributions

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

March to Wisbech Transport Corridor

Previously known as the Re-opening of the March to Wisbech Rail-line - Scheme No 398128 (Wisbech Rail) (MLC Ref No 162)

Further to the Commissioners' 2018 meeting report initial discussions have been undertaken with representatives from Mott MacDonald, the engineering consultant working on behalf of

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA), on behalf of the Risk Management Authority/Authorities (RMA) involved. Initially involving generic guidance and advice on the respective assets but also;

- The Framework Schedule, referred to in the incoming letter, is an agreement between Mott MacDonald and CCC but does not appear to include the RMA involved.
- None of the RMA involved were listed as stakeholders in the "Project Management Group".
- Early engagement is encouraged and
- The consent of the respective RMA may be required under its Byelaws in respect of Board infrastructure and assets and also under various Acts including Section 23 of the 1991 Land Drainage Act.

From the more detailed layout plans provided in early December the only impacts on the Commissioners' system are potential improvements along Elm Road with the Flaggrass Hill and Longhill junctions, as shown on the following extracts.

The plans were the subject of an internal consultation with the Chairman of the RMAs involved just before Christmas. The covering correspondence advised that:

"The proposals are currently at the Feasibility Stage and feature many unknowns, however some initial guidance has been given by us, but Mott MacDonald has been advised that a more definitive response will be made to them on the Boards behalf in the New Year. Therefore, I shall be pleased if you will review and consider the relevant drawings and provide any comments that you may have. If there are any items that you consider inappropriate and that may place the proposals at risk please let me know.

During discussions with the Clerk he advised that the Board's respective policy statements advise that:

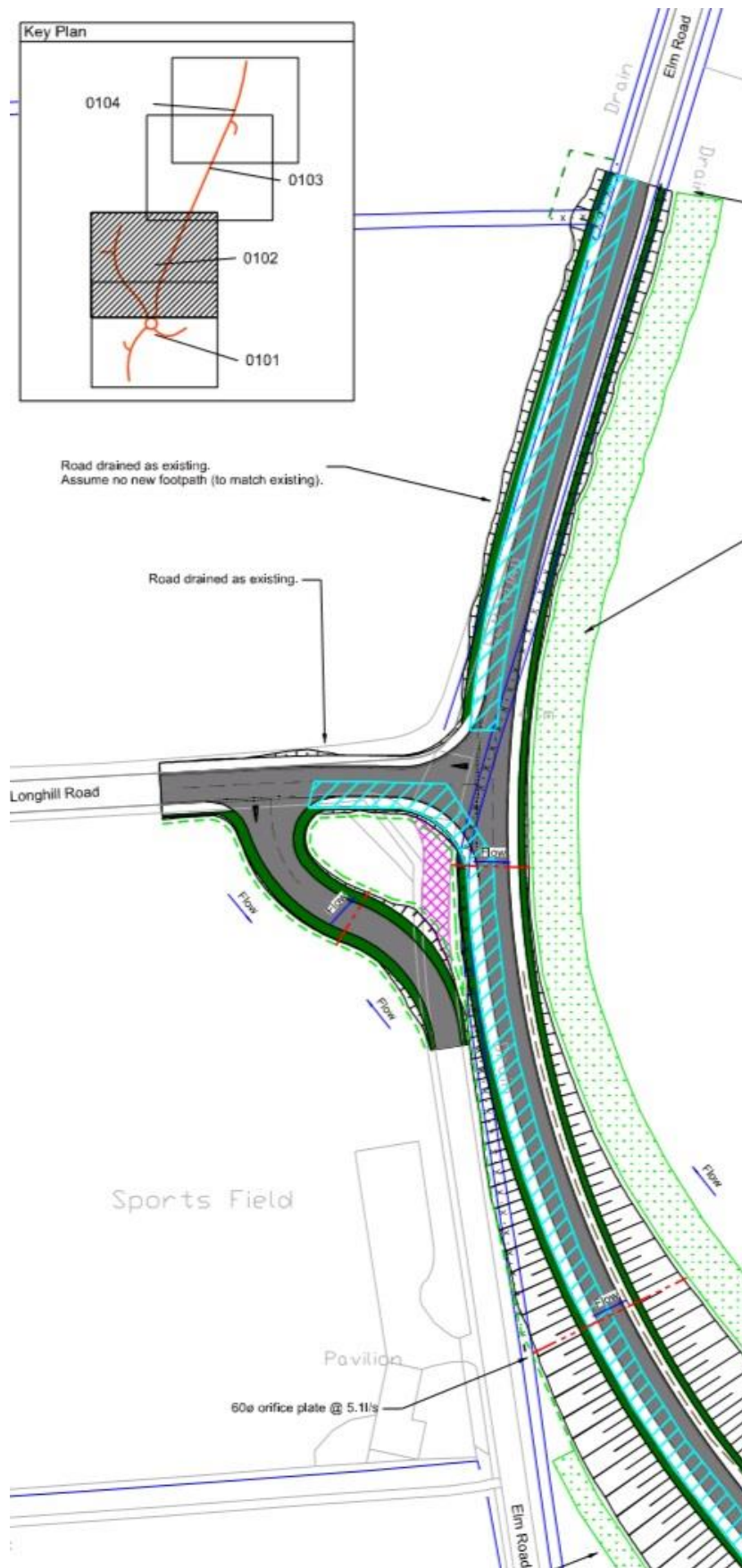
The Board will:

- (i) Co-operate and share information with relevant authorities in the exercise of their flood and costal erosion flood risk management functions.
- (ii) Seek to work with all relevant local organisations in carrying out its flood and costal erosion management functions and environmental obligations.

As a result, it is considered that any discussions will have to be at the relevant Boards expense and that it would be against the Boards own policy to insist that the project be the subject of a Pre-application consultation as previously suggested."



Extract from Mott MacDonald's Drawing No. 398128-MMD-00-XX-DR-D-0101 Rev. P01
showing the potential revised layout at Flaggrass Hill



Extract from Mott MacDonald's Drawing No. 398128-MMD-00-XX-DR-D-0102 Rev. P01 showing the potential revised layout at Flaggrass Hill

The designs are currently at a preliminary stage and are subject to change. The current proposals feature several relatively small attenuation features and structures. It is suggested that the prospective final solution may depend upon several items some of which are outside of the Commissioners' control but it is suggested that one larger and appropriately placed feature would be of more benefit to the Commissioners and easier to maintain than the current proposals.

No subsequent correspondence has been received but it is understood that the latest report prepared by Mott MacDonald and outlining the next steps in transforming this project was presented to the Combined Authority at the beginning of March. Its contents have yet to be assessed.

Should the proposal proceed it would be beneficial, in order to aid further discussion, to receive the Commissioners' views on potential improvements to their systems in this area.

Fenland District Council (FDC)

FDC Liaison Meeting

A meeting was held at the end of March. Issues discussed included navigation related matters, notes on the LLCR, the Wisbech Garden Town, the FRM for The Fens project, the Future High Street Fund bid for March etc.

Another meeting is currently being organised but will have to be delayed until the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) working restrictions are lifted.

Emerging Local Plan 2019-2040

'Live' Timetable for Production of the Fenland Local Plan (October 2019)

No.	Stage	Description	LDS Target	Actual dates
1	Consult on a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) scoping report	The SA scoping report sets out the sustainability objectives proposed to be used to appraise the economic, social and environmental effects of the emerging Local Plan policies. The SA scoping report is subject to consultation.	N/a	Consultation 11 th October to 21 st November 2019
2	Public participation (Regulation 18)	Opportunity for interested parties and statutory consultees to consider the options for the plan before the final document is produced. This stage may involve one or more public consultation rounds. We intend two rounds for the new Local Plan.	October 2019 & May 2020	Issues and Options Consultation Document Cabinet 18th September Consultation 11 th October to 21 st November 2019
3	Pre-Submission Publication (Regulation 19)	The Council publishes the Local Plan which is followed by a 6 week period when formal representations can be made on the Local Plan.	February 2021	
4	Submission (Regulation 22)	The Council submits the Local Plan to the Secretary of State together with the representations received at Regulation 19 stage.	May 2021	
5	Independent Examination Hearing	Held by a Planning Inspector into objections raised on the Local Plan.	From the day it is 'submitted'	
6	Inspector's Report	This will report whether if the Plan is 'Sound' or 'Not Sound'. The Inspector may make recommendations to make the plan 'Sound'.	January 2022 (estimate – could be earlier or later, and subject to the examination)	
7	Adoption of DPD (Local Plan)	Final stage, the Council will formally need to adopt the Local Plan and it will then be used in making planning decisions.	February 2022 (estimate - could be earlier or later, and subject to the examination)	

Fenland District Council is preparing a new Local Plan for the period 2019-2040 which, when adopted, will replace the current Fenland Local Plan (May 2014). The Local Plan is an important document which will “determine what the district will look like in the future and how it will become an even better place to live, work and visit.”

Issues & Options Consultation

Between 11 October and 21 November 2019, the Council undertook a Public Issues & Options Consultation, held a ‘Call for Sites’ exercise, requested nominations for Local Green Spaces, and invited views on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.

The consultation was in a questionnaire type format most of the content of which did not directly relate to navigation, water level and flood risk management matters or questions are not relevant to our duties and functions.

Where the questions raised were not specifically relevant to us but may be related to issues upon which we would like to make a remark we made a “comment”.

Question 8: Renewable Energy

A comment was made concerning the location of the nearest appropriate grid connection and the potential detrimental effect that the export cable/main connecting into it may cause for example, channel crossings, transport routes and associated remedial works, the formation/uprating/reconstruction of access culverts/roads, and other works to accommodate specialist construction machinery and associated infrastructure the impacts of which are not generally considered as part of the planning process.

Question 11: Minimise Carbon Losses from Wider Activities

Should the Local Plan:

11a) Set out a specific policy on the loss of peat-based soils, and the carbon impacts of it?

Guidance was given concerning the Lowland Agricultural Peat Taskforce when launched by Defra and the East Anglian Fens peat pilot managed by Natural England.

Question 12: Other Proposals to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Question 22: Transport

12b) Should the Local Plan make provision of cycle and footways, which are designed in a way so that they become the natural choice to use for short journeys, rather than the car?

The response advised that, where possible, footpaths, cycleways, street lighting, and/or other street furniture should be positioned outside of any protected watercourse and the associated maintenance access strip.

Question 13: Design and Amenity

13c) Are there any specific local issues which need to be addressed through design policies?

Issues specifically referred to were the retention of on-site open watercourses and the provision of adequate maintenance strips beside water level and flood risk management systems, including protected watercourses, within the development’s design.

Question 14: Optional Standards

14a) Do you think the Local Plan should include any of the following optional standards (subject to need and viability testing)? If so why?

ii) Water efficiency of new homes

The implementation and management, including enforcement, of water efficiency measures for residential, business and other users of potable water. Proposals should include suitable schemes which minimise the need to abstract water from the Main River system to ensure that it is available for other potential water resource uses ie agricultural irrigation, biodiversity, navigation, leisure and tourism etc.

Question 16: Gypsy and Travellers & Question 17: Park Homes and Houseboats

16b) What other suitable locations for Gypsy and Traveller pitches are there?

17) Is there a need for moorings for houseboats or sites for caravans in Fenland? Any evidence to support your comments would be welcome, or suggestions as to how such need could be identified in Fenland

In respect of the Middle Level Commissioners' interests, comment was made that in addition to the normal caravans and "bricks and mortar" sites, suitable locations may need to be considered for "house boats".

Question 24: Natural Environment

How do you think the Local Plan should protect and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment?

The Conservation Officer advised that the Plan should include recreational and wildlife spaces being created as part of new residential developments and the incorporation of relevant biodiversity measures.

Question 26: Flood & Water Management

Do you have any views on how new development could reduce flood risk?

Our comments included but were not limited to the following:

- The extent of the Environment Agency's (EA) Indicative Floodplain and the constraint that this imposes on "growth" in the District.
- All relevant development proposals must be discussed with the relevant RMA including the appropriate Internal Drainage Board at the earliest opportunity, preferably at the pre-application stage.
- In addition to the requirements of the NPPF and associated technical guide, all applications for relevant developments must include a drainage strategy to demonstrate that:
 - (a) Suitable consideration has been given to the disposal of both surface and treated waste water flows and should detail any mitigation required;
 - (b) Appropriate arrangements have been made for developments adjacent to watercourses; and
 - (c) Issues of long-term ownership, funding and maintenance of the water level and flood risk management system are addressed.
- All proposals should have regard to the guidance and byelaws of the relevant RMA including the Internal Drainage Boards. Where appropriate the contents of hydraulic models and studies, such as the Middle Level Strategic Study must be considered.

Question 27: Any Other Issues

Is there anything else you would like to raise – has anything been missed, or are there any general comments you would like to make?

It was suggested that the retention and improvement of the rivers, their settings and associated corridors in the District for navigation, environmental, leisure and tourism through

the provision of related facilities together with the provision of a Water Space Strategy should be considered.

Question 28: Your Priorities

28b) Please identify any other top priorities.

The response advised that the Middle Level Commissioners and associated Boards'/Commissioners' priorities were:

- To fund, maintain, protect and improve existing and make further provision of viable and appropriate water level and flood risk management infrastructure and systems to reduce the likelihood of harm to people and damage to the economy, environment and society.
- The implementation and management including enforcement of water efficiency measures for residential, business and other users of potable water.
- The retention and improvement of the rivers, their settings and associated corridors in the District for navigation, environmental, leisure and tourism through the provision of related facilities.
- To maintain, protect and improve the existing and make further provision of net gains to achieve environmental benefits to the waterways in the district.

Question 29: Neighbourhood Planning

The Council was advised that the "Neighbourhood Area" designation should not unduly affect the Middle Level Commissioners and associated Boards/Commissioners adding that even though a neighbourhood area may have been designated, compliance with the provisions of the appropriate Acts and the relevant RMA's byelaws would still be required.

The comments received during the consultation have been reviewed and a Key Issues Report has been prepared which summarises the main issues and points of view raised. The report is accompanied by full transcripts of individual's comments. The views expressed in response to the Issues & Options Consultation Document will inform the preparation of the Draft Local Plan.

Level 1 SFRA & WCS documents

Royal Haskoning DHV has been appointed to update the Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Water Cycle Study (WCS) for Fenland District Council as part of the evidence for the new Local Plan.

An Inception Meeting has been held and an information request is currently being processed.

Response to 2020 Revision of Local Validation Guidance

During February comments were sought on its Local Validation List which details the documents that are required to 'validate' planning applications.

A similar response to that sent to Cambridgeshire County Council in April 2019, see below, was issued to the District Council for consideration. However, rather than the more promising response received from the County Council the District Council simply advised that:

“The project group have met to consider your comments, and concluded that they relate to the quality of information submitted, and therefore sits with the decision making process rather than the validation process.”

Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)

Cambridgeshire Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) document

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

2019 revision of the Local Validation Guidance List & Local Validation Check List for planning applications for the County Council’s own development & for waste development

A report detailing the proposed revisions and the public responses which included responses from various interested parties including the Commissioners, several Parish and Town Councils, and various County Council departments went before the County Councils on 16 May.

A copy of the report can be found on the Council’s webpage by using the following link and searching for “Review of the Local Information Requirements for the Validation of Planning Applications”:

https://cmis.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/ccc_live/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/232/Committee/8/Default.aspx

However, the relevant items, as far as the Middle Level Commissioners and relevant associated Boards/Commissioners are concerned, are summarised below.

“3.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

3.10 Middle Level Commissioners – Middle Level Commissioners have made a number of comments:

1. The contents of the Middle Level Commissioner’s response of 2017 remain relevant.
2. The Commissioners are pleased to note that the reference in the introduction on page 2 of the 2019 LVL Guidance notes to the use of relevant and competent technical specialists and encourage this.
3. The commissioners and associated boards promote meaningful preapplication advice and work with CCC colleagues to ensure that any issues concerning flood risk, water level management, navigation and environmental issues are dealt with prior to the planning application process, which offers more certainty in the decision making process. The Middle Level Commissioners would be pleased if applicants and/or agents could be advised to contact the Middle Level Commissioners for advice within their jurisdiction. A web site link is given to their pre- and post-application procedure: <https://middlelevel.gov.uk/consents/>.
4. The Commissioners request that applicants and/or agents are reminded that should planning approval be given by Cambridgeshire County Council, to remind the applicant(s) agent(s) that any matters requiring consent under the requirements of the Land Drainage Act, the Highways Act, the Water Industry Act, the Flood and Water Management Act and/or the Middle Level Act 2018, which relates to navigation related issues, must be complied with before any work is commenced on site.
5. It is requested that any drawings that are submitted to County Council be to a recognised engineering scale including a scale bar and advice on what size of paper the drawing should be printed on.

6. The Commissioners are pleased to note that the reference in the introduction on page 2 of the 2019 LVL Guidance notes to the use of relevant and competent technical specialists and encourage this.
7. The Biodiversity Survey and Report (Paragraph 4) includes reference to the Middle Level Biodiversity Manual (2016), on page 5 - this remains current on 10 April 2019.
8. The Statement of Sustainable Design and Construction (Paragraph 5) includes or the provision of both a foul drainage strategy and water conservation strategy, on pages 6 and 7. This is supported but it is suggested that the latter should be applied County wide and not just applied to the South Cambridgeshire District Council's area.
9. The Flood Risk Assessment (Paragraph 7) gives a list of application types that is appropriate to provide a Flood Risk Assessment for. The last bullet point (on page 8) refers to developments of: "Less than 1 hectare within flood zone 1 which has critical drainage problems as notified by the Environment Agency." Unless the area is identified within a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment) the Environment Agency are unlikely to be involved. Drainage is the responsibility of several stakeholders, including Internal Drainage Boards and your Council's Flood Risk and Biodiversity Team. The latter are more likely to be aware of and have to resolve "critical drainage problems". It is reassuring to note and we applaud the inclusion of a reference and a link to our "Planning Advice and Consent Documents" webpage on page 9.
10. Additional Plans and Drawings (including cross-sections where required). (Paragraph 22), the inclusion of the section detailing other plans and drawings and suggesting suitable scales for these is noted and supported."

"4.0 Consideration of the Consultation responses

4.10 Middle Level Commissioners –

1. Noted with thanks. No changes required.
2. Pre application advice - References to Middle Level guidance will be retained, so no changes required.
3. References to Middle Level guidance are retained and it is recommended that the Middle Level Commissioners are added to the list of other bodies who provide pre-application advice.
4. Consent under the requirements of the Land Drainage Act is covered when necessary by informative at decision stage.
5. Drawings - This is covered by national guidance, so no changes required.
6. Technical specialists' reference - Noted with thanks. No changes required.
7. Biodiversity survey - Noted with thanks. No changes required.
8. Statement of Sustainable Design and Construction - This is already covered across all districts based on the relevant adopted policy guidance. The reference to South Cambridgeshire is only made as their requirements are stricter through adopted policy. Therefore no changes are required.
9. Flood Risk Assessment - Officers acknowledge that drainage is the responsibility of several stakeholders and have noted the acceptance to the Middle Level Commissioners planning advice pages. This will be retained on the new guidance and therefore no further changes are required.
10. Additional Plans and drawings - Noted with thanks. No changes required."

A copy of the Planning Committee Minutes can be viewed via the following link by searching for "Minutes – 16th May 2019":

https://cmis.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/ccs_live/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/232/Committee/8/Default.aspx

The final published versions of both the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and the Local Validation List and Guidance Notes can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/planning-applications/submitting-a-planning-application/>

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Flood & Water (C&P FloW) Partnership

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

Future Meetings

Following the successful "joint" approach future meetings will involve both the Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership (CFRMP) and Peterborough Flood & Water Management Partnership (PFLoW). The MLC are stakeholders in both partnerships.

Draft National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy for England

A public consultation on the draft FCERM Strategy for England document was held between May and June 2019.

Members of the partnership generally considered that amongst other matters the consultation could have been more ambitious; sought greater RMA involvement; and that surface water flooding should have been included.

Following the consideration of the responses it is intended to publish the final national FCERM strategy for England in 2020.

Local FRM Strategy

Both the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Strategies are due to be reviewed soon and may be a joint Cambridgeshire and Peterborough response.

The Environment Agency's Joint Assurance Group

This group provides support to the RMAs on the delivery of Grant-in-Aid (GiA) funded projects and meets on a monthly basis to discuss business cases.

Partnership members generally agreed that it would be beneficial to understand what the EA, in its role as the approval body, would like to see in business cases and requested suitable good examples that could be used as guidance.

The EA advised that:

- (i) The lack of sharing of suitable business case examples may be for GDPR/commercially sensitive/economic reasons and advised that whilst the EA cannot 'circulate' these, other RMAs can.

- (ii) Due to the specialist nature of projects within The Fens it may not be possible to find enough suitable projects.

Property Flood Resilience Pathfinder Project

A £700k grant bid was made by a consortium of LLFAs. Confirmation of a successful bid is awaited.

Further details on the project can be found in Flood Resilience Community Pathfinder Evaluation Final Evaluation Report October 2015.

Further information can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/29-million-extra-funding-to-boost-action-on-making-homes-more-resilient-to-floods>

Riparian Responsibilities

In order to raise awareness of and instigate discussion on an issue that causes difficulties for RMAs, including the Boards, primarily due to increased workload and costs, the County Council's Flood Risk and Biodiversity Team prepared an "Issues and Options Briefing Note" seeking changes to current practices that are inefficient and create inconsistency across the county in the use of public resources to address the issues associated with riparian assets. The document is currently being considered by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.

Cambs County Council Capitally Funded Highway Drainage Schemes

Schemes have been assessed and prioritised based upon level of flooding reported, ie high priority - is property flooding or risk to life, or low priority - is highway only flooding, and will be developed to provide estimated costs and prioritised to be delivered to available budget. There is an annual highway drainage budget of £1m, which needs to cover all staff, investigation, design and construction costs and, therefore, not all the schemes will be delivered in the current financial year.

The majority of investigation and design is delivered through Skanska or its supply chain, and managed by the County's Highways Projects team. Priority and funding are confirmed by its Asset Management team.

There are currently 22 schemes ongoing within the County, six of which are within the Fenland district but none are within the Board's area.

District Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) & Water Cycle Study (WCS) documents

Most of the SFRA and WCS documents are considered old and have not been updated as initially intended. All will require reviewing as supporting evidence when the respective District Council's Local Plans are updated.

A 'joint' County-wide document was suggested but was not considered possible due to the differing states of the various Local Plans across the County.

No reference was made to the funding arrangements for the provision of the updated documents.

Good Governance for Internal Drainage Board Members

In March and April 2019 ADA ran a series of five Good Governance Workshops for IDB Members. The recordings from these events are available as a series of training modules via the ADA website.

A copy of the slides used at the presentation can be found at the following link:

https://www.ada.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Good_Governance_Workshop_Slides_2019.pdf

Public Sector Co-operation Agreements (PSCA)

Following a problem encountered within North Level District IDB which required close liaison with Peterborough City Council, in its role as the Highway Authority, the possibility of arranging PSCAs with IDBs and Councils was raised but has not yet been concluded.

Updates on Highways England (HE) Scheme

The former areas 6 and 8 now form the East Region and the new term contractor is Ringway. The previous short-term Asset Support Contracts (ASC) have been replaced by a 15-year Road Investment Strategy (RIS) contract in order to ensure a consistent long-term approach.

Anglian Water Services Limited (AWSL) Price Review 2019 (PR19)

OFWAT like what is being proposed but not the associated costs. AWSL contends that it is trying to be "proactive and not reactive". **Note: In order to reduce charges on its customers AWSL currently appears reluctant to incur any unnecessary additional costs beyond what it is obliged to accept.**

Requests have been made for suitable applications to be submitted to its project funding programme. It is hoped that a meeting with AWSL's Flood Partnership Manager will be arranged soon.

Fenland Flooding Issues Sub-group

Meetings were held in April and October 2019. The meeting due to be held during April was postponed until the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) working restrictions are lifted.

No new "wet spots" have been identified within the Commissioners' district

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.

Consulting Engineer

1 June 2020

March Sixth (315)\Reports\June 2020

March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners

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
Norwood p/s	Pumping station 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
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	0.6	5	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.0	52.6
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0	0.0	0.0	80.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	6.6	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.6
Drainage Channels														
		7.2	5	0	0	0	17	10	0	0	80	0	40	159

Updated at meeting 18.06.2019

Pumping station works - £7,000 for 2019/2020

weedscreen repairs, £7,000 2024/25

auto weedscreen cleaner moved to 2028/29 - £80,000

March 6th DDC

Biodiversity Action Plan Report 2019-20

Note on 2019-20 report

The ADA-led process to review and update existing IDB BAP guidelines and metrics is in motion with a national meeting scheduled for April 2020 (now an online meeting). 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

An updated Biodiversity Action Plan Map of the District is attached here. There is also an update on renewed efforts to eradicate mink in the Middle Level (as part of a wider national initiative).

Due to Coronavirus guidance on social distancing and contact, barn owl monitoring, which is undertaken with volunteer support, may not take place for the 2020 breeding season. Reports of owls in this time would be helpful in understanding how they are faring across the region.

March 6th remains an appealing district for wildlife with the drains well-managed, a process that should continue in the same way. Signs suggest key BAP species occur in the district while the drains and banks also provide opportunities for species such as brown hare, green sandpiper and little egret. The lake formed on the landfill site near node 20 is an interesting feature with some good habitat.

Invasive Species

There was no sign of invasive aquatic plants during surveys but, as ever, observations should continue. Floating pennywort continues to cause problems in the Ouse valley between Huntingdon and the Earith area, up to the Ouse Washes. As such all drainage boards are urged to be vigilant and report any sightings (confirmed or suspected) to the Conservation Officer. An ID poster produced for navigators (but relevant to all) in 2019 will be attached to this report, it can be printed and shared or copies are available from Head Office.

The non-native invasive American mink continues to be found in the Middle Level and adjacent catchments – the Twenty Foot River is a particular hotspot with several trapped and others filmed over winter 2019-20

As of autumn 2019, a coordinated Middle Level Mink project has started using new rafts and 'smart' traps, 7 mink have since been caught using the new technology. An additional 10 mink have been trapped at private sites since October. Following significant investment from the Ely & Downham Group of IDBs in the issue it has been suggested that Internal Drainage Boards of the Middle Level may be interested in supporting renewed efforts to eradicate mink from their drains and helping ensure the survival of our native Water Vole (and other wildlife). 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).

An IDB guide to Invasive Species will be circulated later in the year.

Recommendations

Per Appendix 1 and following sightings in the District, Mink Traps are available for purchase via the Conservation Officer at a cost of £210.68. The CO will arrange installation and any training needed.

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@middlelevel.gov.uk / 07765 597775

Photos



American mink (top) and otter (bottom) photographed in February 2020 on the Twenty Foot River adjacent March 6th DDC. Both species potentially use the Board's drains.

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 plan has been produced and will be reviewed annually.</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 opportunities to carry out this action were identified 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>Priority ditches identified in the 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 Conservation Officer	<i>No enquiries received.</i>
4	Control invasive species	4.1	Report any sightings of non-native invasive species immediately to the Conservation Officer and control as appropriate	Conservation Officer, Environment Agency, Plantlife, Wildlife Trust	Ongoing	Reports to Conservation Officer	<i>No invasive non-native plants recorded</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	2012	Review of reedbed areas carried out	<i>No new areas of reedbed over 0.5ha present.</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 formal approaches were received during the period.</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>Reeds or other vegetation were not cut during bird nesting season.</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>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 application for flood storage areas or reservoirs received.</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>None</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 opportunities of this type occurred during the period.</i>
3	Support appropriate habitat creation as part of gravel pit restoration	3.1	Support inclusion of wetland habitats such as wet woodland, wet grassland, scrub and open water in gravel pit restoration schemes	Aggregates companies, local authorities, RSPB, WWT, Wildlife Trust	Ongoing	Number of schemes involved with	<i>No gravel pit schemes currently active.</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 (discuss special circumstances with the Conservation Officer) and follow the ADA water vole mitigation guide	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	Measures incorporated in management plans	<i>Water vole friendly ditch maintenance practices were adhered to.</i>
		1.2	Publicise good practice for rat control near drainage ditches	Conservation Officer, Wildlife Trust	Ongoing	Good practice publicised	<i>Good practice for rat control was publicised via the Environmental Officers newsletter issue 5.</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	(a) <i>No opportunities identified. Many of the District drains are too narrow for this measure to be practical.</i> (b) <i>No measures taken.</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 for this measure were identified 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>Informal presence/absence surveys were carried out by the CO and will be re-visited each year.</i>

		3.2	Provide data on water vole to the relevant Biological Records Centres	Conservation Officer, CPBRC, NBIS	Ongoing	Data sent via Conservation Officer annually	<i>Records passed on.</i>
4	Control mink as necessary	4.2	Carry out mink control as part of the Middle Level programme and <u>report all sightings</u> to the Conservation Officer	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	(a) Number of trapping days (b) Number of mink caught	<i>Mink are active on the Twenty Foot River adjacent the District. See note on new mink traps and recommendation in report.</i>

Otter Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
Conservation Officer	Improve otter habitat	1.1	Identify and maintain existing key bushes and trees near watercourses likely to be important for otters		2012 and ongoing	Sites identified and listed in management plans	<i>Key bushes and trees identified on the Biodiversity Action Plan 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>None 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>Otters being drowned in illegal eel nets remain a concern. Members are requested to be watchful for suspicious activity and report it to the Conservation Officer on 07765 597775 immediately.</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 2 bat boxes at appropriate sites, e.g. pumping stations	Bat Conservation Trust	2015	Number of bat boxes sited	<i>One bat box previously installed at Norwood PS.</i>
		1.2	Pollard suitable trees to provide bat roosts		Ongoing	Number of trees pollarded	<i>Any key trees identified on the Management Plan map.</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>To be considered</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>Checks will be made when possible.</i>
		2.2	Pass bat box information to CPBRC and NBIS	Conservation Officer, CPBRC, NBIS	2015 onwards	Data via Conservation Officer annually	<i>Data passed on.</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>Limited opportunities</i>
		1.2	Leave kingfisher fishing perches where possible (e.g. occasional branch)	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	Number of perch sites left	<i>Many drains have suitable natural perches for kingfishers.</i>
2	Collect records of kingfisher breeding between March and July	2.1	Note sightings of potential breeding kingfisher and pass information to CPERC via the Conservation Officer	Conservation Officer, CPERC	Ongoing	Data sent via Conservation Officer annually	<i>Occasional sightings and signs of activity but nesting unlikely.</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 2 barn owl nest boxes in suitable locations	Wildlife Conservation Partnership	2015	Number of nest boxes provided	<i>One barn owl box was previously installed at Norwood Farm in 2012.</i>

		1.2	Pollard suitable trees to provide natural nest sites	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	Number of trees pollarded	<i>Any suitable trees will be identified on the management plan map.</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. (b) Number of nest boxes used	<i>Checks will be made when possible.</i>
		2.2	Pass barn owl box information to CPBRC and NBIS	Conservation Officer, Wildlife Conservation Partnership, CPBRC	2015	Data sent via Conservation Officer annually	<i>Data sent.</i>

Procedural Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
1	Provide training on IDB BAP and conservation management of drainage channels for all relevant staff by 2013	1.1	Establish programme of 1-day courses for IDB staff and members	Conservation Officer, Wildlife Trust, Natural England, other specialists	2013	(a) Number of courses held (b) Number of Board members / staff attending courses	(a) 0 (b) Any Board members able to attend the next IDB BAP meeting on 2nd December 2020. would be very welcome.
		1.2	Establish suitable training for contractors' staff	Conservation Officer, Contractors	2013	Contractors attended training course	No courses specifically run for contractors during the period.
2	Take biodiversity into account when planning and undertaking capital works	2.1	Consult with the Conservation Officer and choose the best possible mitigation solutions for biodiversity, e.g. fish-friendly pumps	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	(a) Number of capital schemes undertaken (b) Number of schemes commented on	No schemes commented on.

MIDDLE LEVEL **COMMISSIONERS**

Telephone: (01354) 602965
(07765) 597775

Email: peter.beckenham@middlelevel.gov.uk

Website: www.middlelevel.gov.uk



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. 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).



**middle level
commissioners**

**Invasive Non Native
Species Alert**

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



Site Safety Inspection Record

March 6th D.D.C

Date of site visit

12/09/2019, 08:59

Address of inspected premises

Grand ford House,
Wisbeach Road,
March,
PE15 0AA

Name of Advisor

Mat Dean

Time of arrival at site:

13/09/2019, 08:58

Audit Name

March 6th D.D.C

Completed on



13/09/2019, 11:34




Disclaimer

This record does not imply that the conditions are safe and healthy, or that the arrangements for welfare at work are satisfactory in all other respects.

March 6th D.D.C

- 2 -

Inspection Record	
An opening meeting was held with	Daniel West
1	Introduction. March 6th DDC covers an area of approximately 329 ha and comprises 1 pumping station with a weed screen. The pump is electric powered. The Board has no direct employees and are responsible for the operation of the pumping station only, any equipment or drain maintenance is undertaken by either Middle Level or contractors. If contractors are used, it should be ensured they are competent and have appropriate liability insurance. 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 Board's responsibility to ensure appropriate measures are taken to ensure that Board members, contractors and anyone else who could be affected by the Board's undertakings are not placed at risk of injury or illness, this can be achieved by complying with relevant legislation and best practice.
2	You informed that plans are in place to concrete the area within the pumping stations grounds as the current slabs and ground is uneven and posed a slip and trip hazard. This is highlighted later in the document as a photographic risk assessment.
3	Lone Working was discussed, whilst there is nothing formal in place to document lone working procedures i.e. call in's when attending structures they are undertaken.
4	A fire extinguisher was observed in the pumping station building, this had a sticker which displayed the last inspection date of 1988. It is understood that the building and site are seldom occupied and if persons are in attendance it is for a short duration. It would be beneficial to confirm with your insurance company as to their stance on the provision of fire extinguishers at the premises.
5	It was pleasing to observe "Do's and Don'ts" and the public liability insurance certificate on display in the pumping station.
Photographic Risk Assessment	
Photographic Risk Assessment 1	
Location/ Task/Activity	Norwood pumping station / ground within fencing uneven, sloping etc.
Nature of hazard	Hazard is persons slipping, tripping or falling whilst traversing the area
Recommended remedial action	As discussed, concrete area providing handrail for decent and ascent
Applicable legislation	Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
Level of Risk	Low
 	
<div> <div>Photograph 1</div> <div>Photograph 2</div> </div>	
13/09/2019, 09:29	
Photographic Risk Assessment 2	
Location/ Task/Activity	Norwood pumping station / discharge side / no barrier near which point
Nature of hazard	Hazard is persons falling from height into the water course
Recommended remedial action	Provide barrier around winch area

Applicable legislation	Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Work at Height Regulations 2005		
 <p>Photograph 3</p>			
Level of Risk	Low		
	13/09/2019, 10:29		
Photographic Risk Assessment 3			
Location/ Task/Activity	Gravity outfall / over grown foliage not allowing sight of steps or stable footings		
Nature of hazard	Hazard is persons falling into open water course		
Recommended remedial action	Trim down foliage to allow sight of steps		
Level of Risk	Low		
	13/09/2019, 09:29		
Person informed			
Signature of person informed			
Signature of person informed 1			
Signature of person informed	Daniel West	13/09/2019 10:33	
Advisor's signature	Mathew Dean	13/09/2019 11:07	
Departure time	13/09/2019, 12:32		
Photographic Risk Assessments closed out during the visit.	None		

Photographs



Photograph 1



Photograph 2



Photograph 3

March 6th D.D.C

- 5 -

March 6th IDB

SUMMARY OF PHOTOGRAPHIC RISK ASSESSMENTS

Site Safety Inspection 13th September 2019

Ref.	Location	Risk Level	Brief Description	Action
1	Norwood pumping station	L	Ground within fencing uneven, sloping etc. Hazard is persons slipping, tripping or falling whilst traversing the area. As discussed, concrete area providing handrail for decent and ascent.	
2	Norwood pumping station	L	Discharge side / no barrier near which point. Hazard is persons falling from height into the water course. Provide barrier around winch area.	
3	Gravity outfall	L	Over grown foliage not allowing sight of steps or stable footings. Hazard is persons falling into open water course. Trim down foliage to allow sight of steps.	

March Sixth DDC SSI Feb 20

Site Safety Inspection Record

Complete

Name of organisation: March Sixth DDC
Date of site visit <input type="checkbox"/> 24th Feb, 2020 ⌚ 12:00 PM GMT
Address of inspected premises Norwood Pumping Station
Name of Advisor Simon Cross
Time of arrival at site: <input type="checkbox"/> 24th Feb, 2020 ⌚ 11:50 AM GMT
Audit Name March Sixth DDC SSI Feb 20



Audit

An opening meeting was held with Daniel West	
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>It was pleasing to see remedial actions have been taken since the previous visit, as follows:</p> <p>Norwood Pumping Station. The access around the pumping station building and weed screen has been significantly improved with the provision of concrete walkways, steps and metal handrails.</p> <p>Norwood discharge point. A metal barrier has been provided at the winch operating area to reduce the risk of a fall from height into the water.</p> <p>Gravity Outfall. Overgrown foliage has been removed to provide better sight of the steps leading down the embankment, it should be ensured this is maintained.</p>	
<p>2</p> <p>Norwood Pumping Station. An additional concrete plinth has been provided in front of the weed screen to provide an operating area for weed clearing and to store the cleared weed, however this is now above the height of the metal toe guard on the top of the weed screen. If practicable, re-position the toe-guard to reduce the risk of a slip under the existing edge protection. In addition, it is recommended that the upper metal rail is re-positioned, together with the provision of an intermediate height rail, suitably positioned to provide suitable protection from falls into the water whilst still allowing manual clearing of weeds using a crane.</p>	
<p>3</p> <p>Gravity Outfall. Whilst access to the outfall has been improved, a risk of a fall into the water is still possible. It is recommended that a suitable edge protection barrier is provided.</p>	
<p>4</p> <p>It was reported that Cope Safety Management have undertaken to provide a generic risk assessment and safe system of work for Pumping Station Operations. Once received, it should be ensured all relevant personnel are made aware of the risks and control measures and confirmatory signatures obtained.</p>	

Photographic Risk Assessment

Signature of person informed

Signature of person informed 1

Signature of person informed	
	Daniel West 24th Feb, 2020 1:07 PM GMT
Advisor's signature	
	Simon Cross 24th Feb, 2020 1:07 PM GMT
Departure time 📅 24th Feb, 2020 ⌚ 1:10 PM GMT	
Photographic Risk Assessments closed out during the visit. 13.9.19 Refs 1-3	
Number of outstanding Photographic Risk Assessments	0 From 0 to 99

March 6th IDB

SUMMARY OF PHOTOGRAPHIC RISK ASSESSMENTS

Site Safety Inspection 13th September 2019

Ref.	Location	Risk Level	Brief Description	Action
1	Norwood pumping station	L	Ground within fencing uneven, sloping etc. Hazard is persons slipping, tripping or falling whilst traversing the area. As discussed, concrete area providing handrail for decent and ascent.	Closed 24.02.20
2	Norwood pumping station	L	Discharge side / no barrier near which point. Hazard is persons falling from height into the water course. Provide barrier around winch area.	Closed 24.02.20
3	Gravity outfall	L	Over grown foliage not allowing sight of steps or stable footings. Hazard is persons falling into open water course. Trim down foliage to allow sight of steps.	Closed 24.02.20



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, MCQI 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 H&W activities.

Ref	Issue	Recommendation
d)	Quality of advice	Review the provision of H&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 H&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

March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners

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 March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners 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 March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners on application to:

The Clerk
March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners
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:



D C Thomas - Clerk to the Commissioners

Date of Announcement:

29th August 2019

Annual Internal Audit Report 2018/19

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked, and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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

21/06/19 - 24/06/19

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Mr. Hayden

Signature of person who

carried out the internal audit

Mr. Hayden
- Whiting & Partners

Date

24/06/2019

*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).

March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners

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	Year ended 31/03/2017	Year ending 31/03/2020
C	Year ended 31/03/2019		
D	Year ended 31/03/2019	Year ended 31/03/2018	Year ending 31/03/2021
E	Year ended 31/03/2019		
F	Year ended 31/03/2019	N/A – no petty cash	N/A – no petty cash
G	Year ended 31/03/2019	Year ended 31/03/2017	Year ending 31/03/2020
H	Year ended 31/03/2019	Year ended 31/03/2017	Year ending 31/03/2020
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 24-6-2019

PARTNERS

Philip M. Haydon FCA
Mark N. Haydon CMA
James D. Coker FCA
Paul H. Smith FCA

Andrew P. Bennett FCA
Christopher D. Bennett FCA
Ian E. C. Papp FCA
Christopher J. Papp FCA
Barbara Webster CMA

Matthew D. Burt FCA
Tina J. Burt FCA
Mark J. Day FCA
Andrew S. Bennett FCA
Karl Clayton FCA

MEMBERS

Richard A. Adams JCT
Jonathan P. Adams JCT
Stephen D. Miller CMA
Paul M. Johnson FCA

REGISTERED MEMBERS
and Firms

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Early R. Edmunds

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Peterborough

Swansea

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Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2018/19

We acknowledge as the members of:

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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			We should not the authority
	Yes	No	Not	
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 ensure 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	NOT	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:

18/06/2019

and recorded as minute reference:

C.963

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

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2018 £	31 March 2019 £	
1. Balances brought forward	94,132	93,111	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	10,361	9,713	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	996	1,493	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 (employee and employer), 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	12,378	12,323	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	93,111	91,994	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	97,038	93,300	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	544,700	544,700	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 PMLB).
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. NB: 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

1st June 2019

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

18/06/2019

as recorded in minute reference:

C.965

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

[Signature]

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2018/19

In respect of **March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners – DB0050**

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: B, D, H and J. The annual internal audit report will inform the authority's response to assertions 2 and 6 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

23/08/2019

* Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews for 2018/19 in Auditor Guidance Note AGN02. 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

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Janet Frostick

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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. Manea & 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

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 foodreports@defra.gsi.gov.uk
- National Flood and Coastal Risk Manager (Strategic Delivery), The Environment Agency, Horizon House, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AH via rachel.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 £.

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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 shares. 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. FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL	4,079
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
Total	4,079

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		5,634
2. Special Levies		4,079
3. Higher Land Water Contributions from the Environment Agency		1,043
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 RMAs		0
7. Loans		0
8. Rechargeable Works		0
9. Interest and Investment Income		335
10. Rents and Acknowledgements		0
11. Other Income		115
Total income		11,206
EXPENDITURE		
12. New Works and Improvement Works		0
13. Total precept to the Environment Agency		1,050
14. Watercourse maintenance		4,531
15. Pumping Stations, Sluices and Water level control structures		2,500
16. Administration		3,656
17. PSCAs		0
18. Rechargeable Works		0
19. Finance Charges		0
20. SSSIs		0
21. IDB Biodiversity and conservation (other than item 20 expenditure)		348
22. Other Expenditure		238
Total expenditure		12,323

EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS		
23. Profits/(losses) arising from the disposal of fixed assets		0
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		(1,117)
24. Developers Funds income not applied in year		47,722
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 Plan Yes ☒ No ☐

If 'yes' is the Biodiversity Action Plan available on your website? Yes ☒ No ☐

What year was your Biodiversity Action Plan last updated? 2019

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

When was biodiversity last discussed at a Board meeting (date)? 18/06/2019

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)

☐

Co-opted members

☐

Directly employed staff

☐

Contracted persons or consultants

☒

Environmental Partners/NGOs

☐

Other (please describe)

☐

Asset Management

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

ADIS

☐

Paper Records

☒

Other Electronic System

☒

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?

4

How many pumping stations does the Board operate?

1

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

0.32 cumecs

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health, safety and welfare	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Communications and engagement	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please describe)	<input type="checkbox"/>

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?	9
Seats available to appointed members under the Land Drainage Act 1991.	4
Number of elected members on the board at year end.	7
Number of appointed members on the board at year end.	2
Mean average number of elected members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year.	4
Mean average number of appointed members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year.	0

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	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newsletters	<input type="checkbox"/>
Web site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meetings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Shows/events (including open days/inspections)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Notices	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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

0%

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

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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

Signature

S. Ablett

Date

18/9/19

Name in BLOCK LETTERS

MISS SAMANTHA ABLETT

Designation

ASSISTANT TREASURER

Email address

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 finding 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.

- 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.

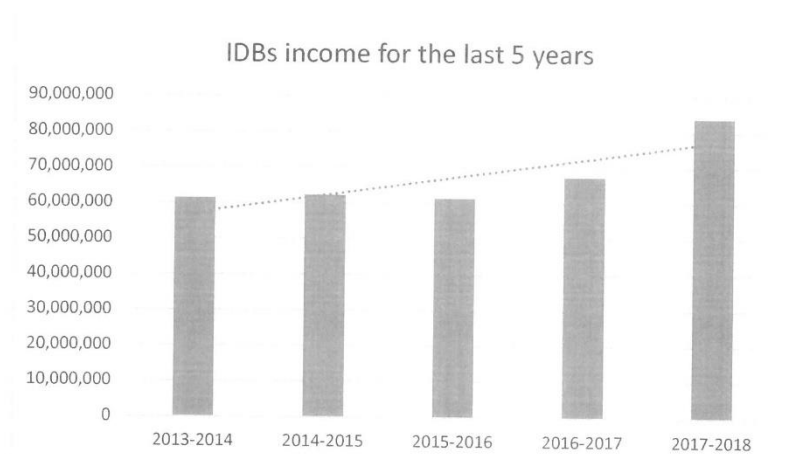
16. Based on the responses, there are some positive results. It is showing that majority of IDBs are making good use of their websites as a platform to share important information as a way of being transparent. It is also showing that majority of IDBs have adopted good guidance and best practices such 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.

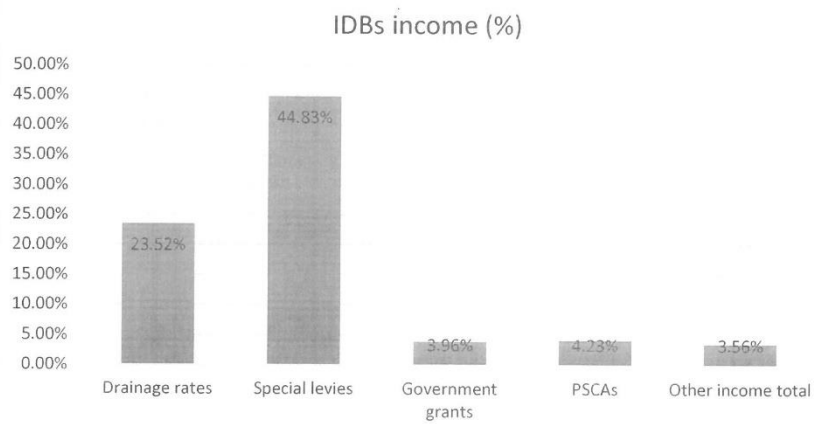
Trend in funding

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.

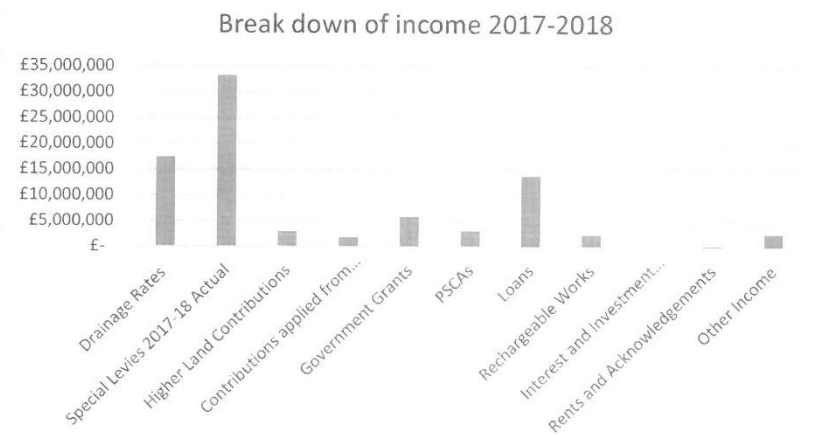


20. 80% of the sector's income comes from special levies (paid by local authorities) and drainage rates (paid by landowners within the internal drainage district). The remainder comes from a variety of sources including government grants and rental income as demonstrated below.

Income 2017 - 2018

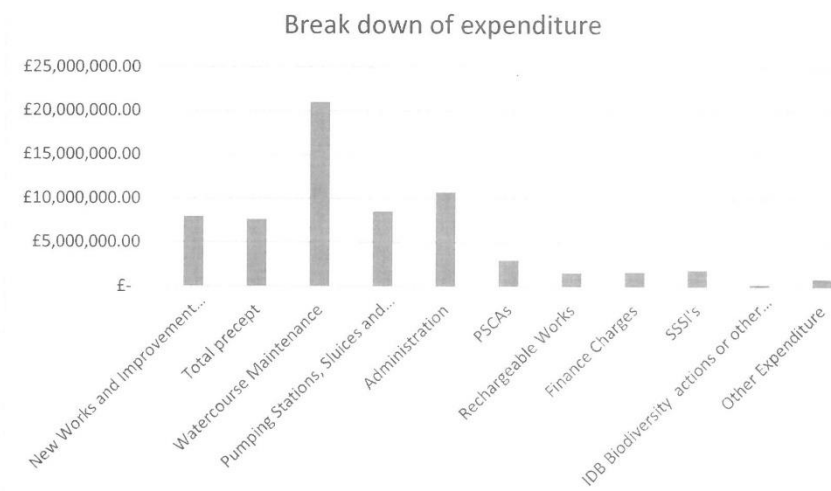
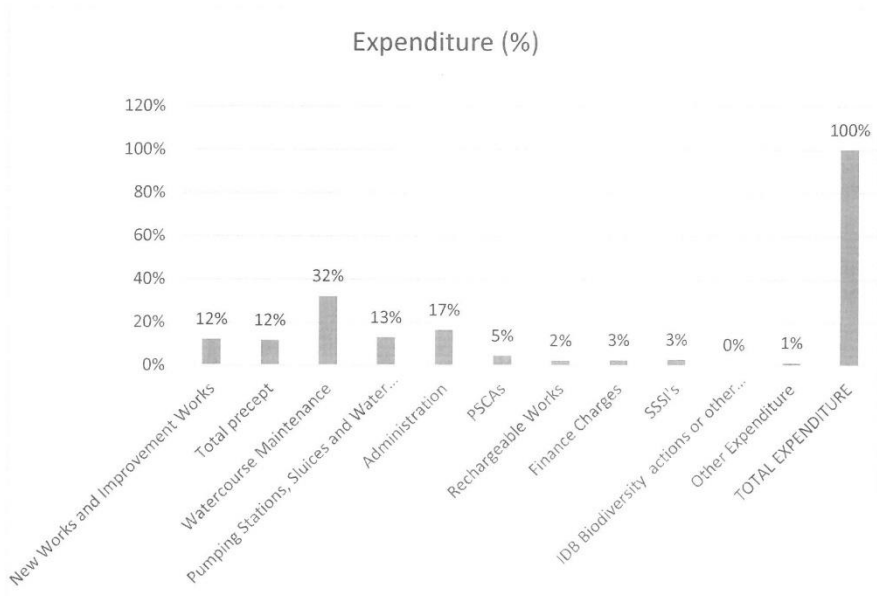


Breakdown of income



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

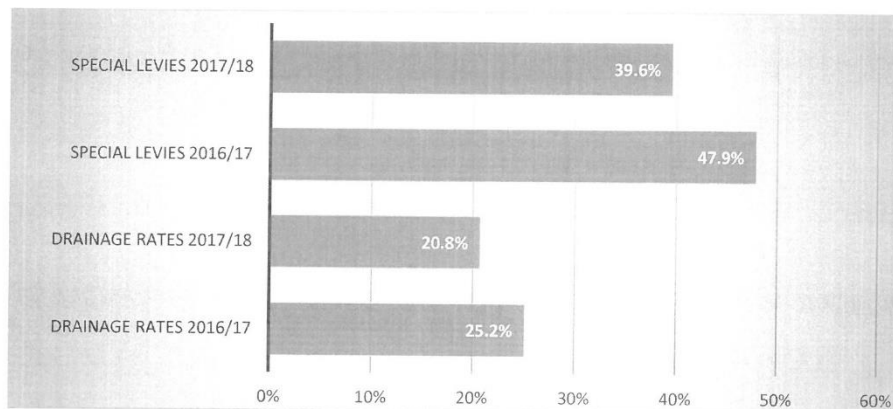
Expenditure



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	Pevensy 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

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET MONITORING 2019/2020

	<u>Approved budget</u> <u>2019/2020</u> £	<u>Actual to</u> <u>31.12.2019</u> £	<u>Forecast to</u> <u>30.03.2020</u> £	<u>Remarks</u>
1 Insurances	500	406	410	
2 Drainworks (including Environmental measures)	8,000	4,163	8,000	- Includes provisions to end of year:- 2,000
3 Repairs and renewals	1,900	1,598	2,500	- Includes provisions to end of year:- 650
4 Electricity	1,300	95	1,300	- Includes provisions to end of year:- 1,200
5 Administration charges, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	4,175	1,402	4,300	- Includes for new H&S arrangements
6 Environment Agency - Precept	1103	1,103	1103	
7 Imp[rovement works	6600	6,575	6600	
	23,578	15,342	24,213	
LESS Deposit Accounts interest, etc	10,432	9,412	10,131	
	13,146	5,930	14,082	

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

(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:

Admin\BrendaM\Word\Policies\financialregulations\riskmanagementstrategy – m6

- 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	Clerk/ Engineer
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

MARCH SIXTH DDC
INSURED VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS

PUMPING STATION

As At
31st March 2020

NORWOOD PUMPING STATION

544,000.00

544,000.00

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

We acknowledge as the members of:

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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 2020, 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.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
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.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
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.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority’s accounts.</i>
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.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>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.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
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.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
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
			<i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

*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 must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

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

DD/MM/YY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chairman

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

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

AUTHORITY WEBSITE ADDRESS

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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

Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Weed control and drain maintenance 2018/19, consideration of the CPIER report, planning and development applications)	909.30
Environment Agency - Precept	551.44
Middle Level Commissioners - Electrical condition report (Account from CMS Electrical)	108.00
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2019	663.60
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees - Development contributions (Shire Homes and Building Services Ltd)	156.39
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	145.15
Middle Level Commissioners -Fit replacement pump to top bearing (Account from Wrights)	351.88
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit Fee (2018-2019 accounts)	240.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution to Eel Research	50.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages and telephone charges	1,029.73
Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2018-2019 accounts)	522.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	405.82
Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution (Environmental Officer)	347.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board reports, planning and development applications)	474.52
B J Plant Hire Ltd - Work in connection with Pumping Station steps and footpath	7,890.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	145.15
Middle Level Commissioners - Provision of Health & Safety services - COPE Safety Management Limited	160.00
Davies Contracting Ltd - Drain maintenance	1,560.00
T. & J. Alterton - Flail mowing	182.60
Environment Agency - Precept	551.44
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	78.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Chemical weed control of District drains	597.29
R J Dale - Flail mowing	1,291.44
Davies Contracting Ltd - Drain maintenance	395.22
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	145.15
Middle Level Commissioners - Preparation of highland water claims	99.64
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	54.06
Association of Drainage Authorities (River Great Ouse branch) - Subscription 2019-2020	6.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fit rusted weedscreen to floor, weld to plate and fit new handrail (Account from Yarmouth Steel)	747.23
Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal	40.00
T. Alterton - Pumping station duties 2019-2020	685.00
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply	670.19
	21,253.74

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2020
GENERAL FUND

2020 Mar-31	Expenditure during the year:-		2019 Apr-01	Balance brought forward	44,271.50
	Precept	1,102.88	2020 Mar-31	Rate income & Special levy	9,713.45
	Insurances and Rates	405.82		Interest on Deposit Accounts	199.23
	Repairs & Renewals	1,922.96		Highland Water contributions -	1,057.08
	Fuel	654.12		Development Charges Account	2,444.00
	Drainworks	4,972.22		Development Charges Account -	
	Contractors Charges	685.00		Weedscreen deck, steps, path and	
	Administration charge, Audit fee,			handrail	6,575.00
	printing, stationery, advertising etc	4,100.91		Repairs to weedscreen	429.66
		12,741.03			7,004.66
	Improvement works:-				
	Weedscreen deck, steps, path				
	and handrail	6,575.00			
	Balance carried forward	44,271.01			
		64,689.92			64,689.92

BALANCE SHEET

Capital Section

Liabilities

Capital Provisions Account 544,700.00

Assets

Pumping Station (Valuation) 544,000.00
Land - Twenty Foot 700.00
544,700.00

Revenue Section

General Fund 44,271.01
Development Charges Account 40,431.53
Sundry Creditors 4,813.68

Ratepayers' Account 0.00
Value added Tax - Refunds due 745.20
Sundry Debtors 0.00
Balance in hand -
Barclays - Treasurer's Account 87,936.94
National Savings - Treasurer Account 499.56
Labour Account 334.52
88,771.02
634,216.22

634,216.22

March Sixth Internal Drainage Board**Summary of Bank Reconciliations as at 31st March 2020****Treasurers Account 2019/2020**

1st April 2019		31st March 2020	
Balance brought forward	92,470.82	Payments made during the year	21,253.74
31st March 2020			
Receipts during the year			
Clerk's collection account	16,311.00		
Interest on deposit accounts	<u>408.86</u>	Balance carried forward	87,936.94
	16,719.86		
	<u><u>109,190.68</u></u>		<u><u>109,190.68</u></u>

National Savings - Treasurers Account 2019/2020

1st April 2019		31st March 2020	
Balance brought forward	495.59	Payments made during the year	0.00
31st March 2020			
Interest on deposit accounts	3.97	Balance carried forward	499.56
	<u><u>499.56</u></u>		<u><u>499.56</u></u>

Labour Account 2019/2020

1st April 2019		31st March 2020	
Balance brought forward	333.36	Payments made during the year	0.00
31st March 2020			
Interest on deposit accounts	1.16	Balance carried forward	334.52
	<u><u>334.52</u></u>		<u><u>334.52</u></u>

Barclays Bank PLC**Clients Premium Account**

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2020	87,936.94
Less unrepresented cheques	0.00
O/S lodgement	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	<u><u>87,936.94</u></u>

Labour Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2020	334.52
Less unrepresented cheques	0.00
O/S lodgement	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	<u><u>334.52</u></u>

Cash balances as at 31st March 2020**Barclays Bank PLC**

Clients Premium Account	87,936.94
Clients Labour Account	334.52

National Savings

Investment Account per passbook	499.56
<u>Total reconciled cash balances per accounts</u>	<u><u>88,771.02</u></u>

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 for

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2019 £	31 March 2020 £	
1. Balances brought forward	93,111	91,994	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	9,713	9,713	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	1,493	3,545	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 gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
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	12,323	20,549	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	91,994	84,703	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	93,300	88,771	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	544,700	544,700	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 2020 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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

29/05/2020

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

DD/MM/YY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

March Sixth DDC
Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return
Financial year ended 31st March 2020

			<u>Per Annual Return</u>
Line 1	Balances brought forward		
	General Fund	44,271.50	
	Development charges account	47,722.17	
		91,993.67	91,994
Line 2	Rates and Special Levies		
	Agricultural rates	5,634.45	
	Special Levies	4,079.00	
	Penalty	0.00	
	Costs	0.00	
	Write-off	0.00	
		9,713.45	9,713
Line 3	Total other receipts		
	Interest		
	General fund	199.23	
	Development charges account	214.76	
	Consent applications	0.00	
	Highland Water	1,057.08	
	Discharge contributions	2,073.58	
		3,544.65	3,545
Line 4	Staff costs		
	Wages/salaries	0.00	
	National insurance contributions	0.00	
	Pension costs	0.00	
	Travelling expenses	0.00	
		0.00	0
Line 5	Loan repayments		
	PWLB - Principal	0.00	
	PWLB - Interest	0.00	
		0.00	0
Line 6	All other payments		
	Precept	1,102.88	
	Rates, insurances, telephones	405.82	
	Repairs and renewals	1,922.96	
	Fuel	654.12	
	Drainworks	4,972.22	
	Administration	4,100.91	
	Development charges fees	130.32	
	Contractors charges	685.00	
	Improvement Works	6,575.00	
		20,549.23	20,549
Line 7	Balances carried forward		
	General Fund	44,271.01	
	Development charges account	40,431.53	
		84,702.54	84,703
	Reconciliation		
	Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6	84,702.54	

MARCH SIXTH DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET PROPOSAL 2020/2021

	<u>Approved budget</u> <u>2019/2020</u> £	<u>Actual</u> <u>2019/2020</u> £	<u>Budget proposal</u> <u>2020/2021</u> £	<u>Remarks</u>
1 Insurances	500	406	475	A - Includes: Drain cleansing 1,629 Flail mowing <u>1,228</u> 2,857
2 Drainworks (including Environmental measures)	8,000	5,657 ^A	8,000 ^B	B - Includes: Engineer's items 5,395 District Labour 705 Contribution/fees/misc. <u>1,900</u> 8,000
3 Repairs and renewals	1,900	1,923	6,500 ^C	C - Includes for: Pump top bearing replacement 5,000
4 Electricity	1,300	654	1,300 ^D	D - New supply contract with increased unit rates - medium term provision not changed for 2020/21
5 Administration charges, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	4,175	4,101 ^E	4,350 ^E	E - Includes for new H & S arrangements
6 Environment Agency - Precept	1103	1,103	1130	
7 Imp[rovement works	6600	6,575	0	F - Includes developmet charges - 5% maintenance contribution. 1,057 weedscreen deck/steps refurbish 6,575
	23,578	20,419	21,755	
LESS Deposit Accounts interest, etc	10,432	10,705 ^F	3,299 ^G	G - Does not include development account or general fund balances towards cost to replace pump thrust bearing.
	13,146	9,714	18,456	

March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners

Rate and levy requirements

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

- a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 58.01%
- b) Proportion to be borne by Special levy issued to Fenland District Council – 41.99%.

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £376.

In 2020/2021 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levy would raise £648.

Revenue cash balance in hand on 31st March 2020 - £44,271.

The estimated net expenditure for the Commissioners Revenue and Capital Programmes in 2020/2021 is £18,456 and equivalent to:-

- a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 28.50p and
- b) a Special levy on Fenland District Council of £7,750

In 2019/2020 a rate of 15.0p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £4,079 on Fenland District Council.

Members should give consideration to the appropriate level of balances and future years rate requirements when setting the rate.

D C THOMAS

Clerk to the Commissioners

June 2020