MANEA AND WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Telephone: DD (01354) 602003

E-mail: enquiries@middlelevel.gov.uk
www.middlelevel.gov.uk

Middle Level Offices
85 Whittlesey Road
MARCH
Cambs
PE15 0AH

19th January 2022

Mr Chairman, Lady and Gentlemen,

Meeting of the Commissioners – 2nd February 2022

I enclose the Agenda for the Meeting of the Commissioners on Wednesday 2nd February 2022 at 11:30 at The Lamb and Flag Public House, Welney, following the meeting of the Finance Committee.

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 whether or not you will be attending the meeting as soon as possible.

Yours truly

D C THOMAS

Clerk to the Commissioners

To the Manea and Welney District Drainage Commissioners

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

   Members to declare any interests relating to the Agenda.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

   To confirm the Minutes of the Meetings of the Commissioners held on 3rd February 2021 and 25th June 2021.

   (Copy pages 11-29)

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

5. Appointments – 2022/2023

   a) To appoint the Chairman of the Commissioners
   (Present Chairman – J E Heading Esq)

   b) To appoint the Vice Chairman of the Commissioners
   (Present Vice Chairman – R M C Sears Esq)

   c) To appoint the Finance Committee
   (Present Finance Committee comprises Miss A J Morris, Cllrs C J Crofts and W Sutton, Messrs J E Heading, P Jolley and R M C Sears).

6. Resignation of Mr C F Hartley

   The Clerk will refer to a letter dated 15th November 2021 from Mr Hartley informing the Commissioners of his resignation.

   (copy page 30)

7. Land Drainage Act 1991

   The Clerk will report that Fenland District Council have re-appointed Councillors C Marks and W Sutton to be Commissioners under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

8. Joint Maintenance of the Old Croft River – Upwell IDB
Overhanging Trees – Copes Hill Farm

Further to minute C.895, the Clerk to report.

9. Ouse Washes Section 10 Reservoir Middle Level and South Level Barrier Bank Works

Further to minute C.896, the Clerk will refer to a Newsletter from the Environment Agency dated December 2021.

(Copy pages 31-32)

10. Potential Amalgamation Discussions – Manea & Welney DDC, Sutton and Mepal IDB and Upwell IDB

Further to minute C.898, the Chairman to report.

11. Old Diesel Building

Further to minute C.899, the Chairman to report.

12. Clerk's Report

The Clerk advises:-

i) COVID-19 Actions

That due to the risk of COVID-19 mutations appropriate measures are being put in place, revised and reviewed as per government advice and using activity-based risk assessments.

ii) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That a seventh Chair's Meeting was held on the 2nd November 2021.

The meeting covered a wide variety of matters likely to affect IDBs. A summary of the key points and resolutions follows;

a) The MLC Chair introduced the meeting and took the opportunity to warn those present that government were pushing for land in this area to be set aside to mitigate the impacts of climate change. In this respect there was concern that the data underpinning this move was out-of-date and inadequate and that there was a risk that no proper account would be taken of the storage effects of the land as it is currently managed compared to how it might react if managed as wetland.

b) To better fit in with the farming calendar the annual safety audits carried out by Cope are to be moved to January and February. In response to a question from the floor, Chairs were advised that it is ultimately the Board and not the MLC's responsibility to manage safety at Board owned assets, although the MLC will assist where they can.

c) Chairs considered that it was considered important that IDBs and the MLC have a policy on climate change. It was felt likely that this will become increasingly important as pressure mounts for action to be taken. In this respect the Clerk advised that the MLC intended to carry out a baseline assessment of its carbon footprint which would then be used to underpin plans for reductions in CO2 release and for mitigation. This model would be made available to those IDBs which wished to follow a similar path. Once what could be reasonably achieved has been defined a policy to steer implementation would be produced. Obviously, the aim will be to achieve net zero or as close to it as can be realistically and practically be achieved.

d) The Chief Executive outlined the work of WRE, including the regional reconciliation of water supply just carried out, the proposals for two new reservoirs (one in Lincolnshire and one in Cambridgeshire) and the future plans for water security providing a 1 in 500 year level of drought tolerance for potable water supply. On this latter point he advised that he had been pushing hard for the needs of agriculture to be taken into account, noting that wet farming and environmental targets for farming would require extra water in this region. Also, he considered that separating agricultural need from environmental need was an error and failed to recognise the close tie between the two.

e) It was reported that it seemed increasingly likely that despite lobbying MPs and Defra it will be the case from the 1st April 2022 that IDB's will lose access to red diesel for anything other than powering generators and for heating. This will increase costs and will present problems with the use of contractors who also work for agriculture which will have an exemption, hence can continue to use red diesel in plant.

f) On member training it was agreed that the MLC would set up a Zoom type seminar running several of the ADA video training sessions back-to-back. All members of all MLC administered IDBs would be invited and attendance will be recorded. This was seen as the most efficient way of delivering the training that Defra expects members to have undertaken.

g) For the next round of IDB meetings, the MLC website secure pages will be used for Board meeting documents. Members will be sent links to the appropriate webpage with a password. The documents can then be downloaded whenever it is convenient to do so. **MEMBERS WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO FOLLOW THIS ROUTE RATHER THAN REQUIRE PAPER COPIES OF DOCUMENTS**. In exceptional circumstances – for example for those members without email addresses - a paper copy of the relevant documents can still be printed off, bound and sent out. The use of the Microsoft Teams software is also to be explored for future years.

h) GDPR was discussed and it was resolved that for internal matters, or where working with partner organisations all email addresses will be visible to allow members to see who has knowledge of the matter under discussion. All external communications will normally be blind copied unless there is a need to show the address or the address is already known (for example when a member is passing on a query he or she has received themselves). It was also agreed that the website could continue to show names and primary contact numbers as long as addresses were not identified.

iii) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the 84th Annual Conference of the Association was held on Wednesday the 10th November 2021.

The Conference was once again held virtually and was split into two parts; the Conference in the morning and AGM in the afternoon. It is expected that, whilst in future years it is hoped to return to a face-to-face format, the clear separation between conference and AGM is likely to be retained.

Speakers this year included Rebecca Row MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State – Defra), Dieter Helm (economist) and Lord De Ramsey (then President of ADA).

Topics covered included the challenges of climate change and the need to step up to the plate in delivering on the aim to achieve a net zero target as soon as possible, the importance of partnership working and the importance of agriculture in feeding the nation. The latter included the need to better educate the population, who clearly desire to move forward on delivering climate change and ecological objectives, but do not fully appreciate the role of agriculture, its real impacts or even properly understood where and how food is sourced. One example given that challenged a common assumption that agriculture was bad for the environment was that recent monitoring of CO_2 release had shown that a well irrigated peat field of onions released less CO_2 than adjacent dry grassland.

In his speech Lord De Ramsey announced that he was stepping down as President and that his place would be taken by Henry Cator. He was warmly thanked by ADA for his many years of service and was presented with a painting by an artist which it is known he admires. Henry spoke about how pleased he had been to be invited to take over the role and that he looked forward to working with ADA to meet the future challenges of the industry.

The AGM that followed gave an update on the work of ADA, noting the likelihood that, despite vigorous lobbying, the expectation was that from 1st April 2022 IDBs would no longer be able to use red diesel for anything other than heating or to run generators. This will impact on costs and will provide challenges to the continued use of agricultural contractors. The passing of the Environment Bill was touched upon which will release barriers to the formation of new IDBs and will also provide opportunities for IDBs to explore extending their boundaries if it was clearly beneficial to do so. Innes Thomason spoke on the work of ADA and the consultations ADA had responded to, including proposals to extend beaver introduction and a water abstraction licencing charging review amongst other things. Finally, it was reported that the ADA Board had agreed to a 1% rise in subscriptions for the 2022/23 year and noted that with inflationary pressures a higher increase should be expected next year.

b) Annual Conference

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities will be held on Wednesday the 9th November 2022, venue to be decided.

c) Meeting of the River Great Ouse Branch

That the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association will be held on Tuesday the 1st March 2022.

d) ADA response to publication of EFRA Flooding Inquiry Report

That ADA have responded to the Government EFRA report into the winters flooding, which has the headline conclusion that the lack of clear flood-resilience targets is leaving England at risk of 'playing catch-up' with climate change.

Encouragingly, in addition to recognising these challenges, EFRA have also clearly stated that in light of ever more frequent and severe storms, there is an urgent need to provide long-term funding for the maintenance of existing and new flood defences, to match capital commitment together with a need to examine the mental health impacts of severe flooding, calling for an action plan to address this alongside the economic and physical effects.
ADA's response is attached (Copy pages *) and the full EFRA report can be found via the following link; https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5801/cmselect/cmenvfru/170/170.pdf.

e) Updating IDB Byelaws

Further to minute C.834, ADA has advised that there was an error in the Model Byelaws relating to a Penalty Notice which referred to s37 of the Criminal Justice Act 1982, which was actually repealed on the 1.12.2020 by the Sentencing Act 2020. Consequently, Defra has amended the Penalty Notice attached to the byelaws to include the correct reference. This Penalty Notice is not part of the Byelaws and, as such, is a simple correction. There is no requirement either to readvertise, or seek Defra approval and the version now uploaded to the website is the corrected one.

iv) Environment Act

In November 2021 Defra announced that the Environment Act became law. The stated aim of this Act is to improve air and water quality, tackle waste, increase recycling, halt the decline of species, and improve the natural environment. However, the Act also includes powers (specific to IDBs) which amend the Land Drainage Act 1991, addressing the technical issue of missing or incomplete data, which is preventing existing internal drainage boards from expanding and new ones from being established. Defra have stated that they will be working on the associated secondary legislation over the coming year and will be engaging with IDBs through ADA on this.

v) Smart Level System/District Wide Telemetry Bid

Further to minute C.900(vii) the Clerk will report that when looking at the cost of telemetry there will be a number of factors that will impact upon cost. Prior to placing an order, a site survey needs to be undertaken; the average cost for this is in the region of £200.

The Chairman felt that this information would assist the Board in coming to a decision and instructed surveys at the Board's 3 pumping stations.

We have now received quotations for the telemetry and below are the figures for installing and configuring telemetry at your stations.

To assist you, the information below is the total cost for the Board using ATU900 outstations.

At Purls Bridge, a marginally cheaper more limited ATU800 could be used, however it is recommended that the ATU900 option is chosen here as it includes significant later expansion facility, hence if the Commissioners wished to add additional information points to the telemetry at a later date, there would be spare capacity there. It also helps by standardising the new systems across all districts by having identical unit which can be easily swapped should repair or replacement is needed. It is planned that the MLC will carry at least one spare unit in this regard.

Commissioners are asked to confirm that you are content for an order to be placed on the expectation that 50% of the cost of the gross figure shown will be covered by Local Levy grant from the EA. Please note also that the figure includes five years of subscription to mobile data and online access. The cost of hosting and maintaining the online system is currently £20 per site per month, but as part of this contract the Board would effectively only be covering half this cost.

Quotation (including £1,200 five-year data and internet subscription);
Purls Bridge and Glen House £4,475.57 each site.
£8951.14 before 50% grant in aid subsidy.

vi) National Drainage Show & Floodex 2022

That the National Drainage Show & Floodex 2022 will be held at ExCel, London on the 23rd and 24th November 2022.

vii) Water Resources East (WRE)

Further to minute C.862(v)the Clerk will report that WRE have had a productive and fruitful year despite COVID and have managed to lever many millions of funding for studies and initiatives which in the long term should benefit this area by recognising the importance of agriculture to the water resource supply chain and by seeking ways to integrate water resources, flood risk management and environmental objective delivery together. For the 2020/2021 year (should the Commissioners continue to wish to support the work of WRE and contribute accordingly) the calculated figure will be £125.00. Please note that ADA have developed a new band based charging structure, hence the change from the previous year's figure.

The Commissioners are asked to approve this payment.

13. Consulting Engineers' Report, including Planning and Consenting Matters

To consider the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

(Encl 1)

14. Pumping Stations

To consider the recommendations of the Finance Committee.

15. District Superintendent’s wages, pension contributions and Future Labour Requirements

To consider the recommendations of the Finance Committee.

16. Capital Improvement Programme

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

(Copy page 33)

17. Conservation Officer’s Newsletter

The Clerk to refer to the Conservation Officer’s Newsletter, previously circulated to the Commissioners.

18. District Superintendent’s Report

To consider the Report of the District Superintendent.

(Copy pages 34-36)

19. Maintenance Works in the District

(i) 2021/2022
(ii) 2022/2023

20. 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.

21. Environment Agency Precept

The Clerk to report.

22. 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 £278.96 (£817.92 less £538.96 received on account) (inclusive of supervision) has been received from the Environment Agency for the financial year 2020/2021 based on the Commissioners’ actual expenditure on maintenance work for that financial year and the sum of

£547.16 in respect of 80% of the Commissioners' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2021/2022.

23. Association of Drainage Authorities Subscriptions

The Clerk will report that ADA has increased subscriptions by 1% for 2022. The subscription for 2021 was £642.

24. Contribution from Developers

The Clerk will report that contributions towards the cost of dealing with the increased flow or volume of surface water run-off and treated effluent volume have been received.

(See Confidential Papers)

25. Health and Safety

Further to minute C.913, the Chairman will refer to the report received from Cope Safety Management following their visit to the District on 25th October 2021 and report thereon.

(Copy pages 37-40)

26. Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Commissioners – 2020/2021

a) To consider the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2021.

(Copy pages 41-45)

b) To consider the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2021.

(Copy pages 46-54)

27. Defra IDB1 Returns

The Clerk will refer to the completed IDB1 form for 2020/2021.

(Copy pages 55-64)

28. Review of Internal Controls

To consider the system of Internal Controls.

29. Risk Management Assessment

a) To give consideration to the Commissioners' Risk Management Policy.

b) To review the insured value of the Commissioner's buildings.

(Copy page 65)

30. 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.

31. Payments to 31st December 2021

The Clerk to report on payments made up to 31st December 2021.

(Copy pages 66-67)

32. Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2022/2023

To consider estimates of revenue expenditure and levy and rate requirements in respect of the financial year 2022/2023, and the recommendations of the Finance Committee.

(Copy pages 68-69)

33. Date of Next Meeting

To agree the date for the Meeting

34. Any Other Business

MANEA AND WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

At a Meeting of the Manea and Welney District Drainage Commissioners hosted at the Middle Level Offices, March on Wednesday the 3rd February 2021

PRESENT

J E Heading Esq (Chairman)	J H Hawes Esq
R M C Sears Esq (Vice Chairman)	M E Heading Esq
N Cook Esq	Mrs A J Langley
M D R Fairey Esq	C W Sears Esq
C F Hartley Esq	W Sutton Esq

N V M Walker Esq

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

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

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from P D Hawes Esq, P Jolley Esq and Councillor C Marks.

C.890 Declarations of Interest

Mr Hill 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.

The Chairman and Mr M Heading declared an interest in the planning applications (MLC Ref Nos 573, 579 & 594) received for A & E G Heading Ltd.

The Chairman, Messrs Hartley and Heading and Councillor Sutton declared interests (as Members of the Middle Level Board) in the payments made to and any matters concerning the Middle Level Commissioners.

The Chairman declared an interest (as a Director) in the payments made to and any matters concerning the Association of Drainage Authorities.

Councillor Sutton and Mr Hartley declared interests (as Members of Upwell IDB) in the payments made to and any matters concerning the Upwell IDB.

Councillor Sutton declared an interest in any planning matters as a member of Fenland District Council.

C.891 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Commissioners held on the 5th February and 26th June 2020 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

C.892 Appointments – 2021/2022

a) Appointment of Chairman

Mr Heading informed the Commissioners that he would be looking to stand down as Chairman but would be happy to continue if required.

RESOLVED

That J E Heading Esq be appointed Chairman of the Commissioners.

b) Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED

That R M C Sears Esq be appointed Vice Chairman of the Commissioners.

c) Appointment of Finance Committee

RESOLVED

That the Finance Committee be constituted as follows, viz:-

C J Crofts Esq	Mrs A J Langley
J E Heading Esq	R M C Sears Esq
P Jolley Esq	W Sutton Esq

C.893 Land Drainage Act 1991

Mr Hill reported that Fenland District Council had re-appointed Councillors C Marks and W Sutton to be Commissioners under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

C.894 Anglia Farmers

Further to minute C.820, Mr Hill advised that although the running of the remainder of the Anglia Farmers electricity contract had continued to be monitored it had been difficult to address some of the issues due to the restrictions caused by COVID-19.

In view of this, the Middle Level Commissioners' resolved to remain with Anglia Farmers for a further contract period post 30th September 2021 and to continue to monitor the performance of Anglia Farmers over the new contract period.

Mr Hill reported that in addition it was proposed that quotes for 'green energy' be included, with a view to moving over to this form of power supply if the cost differential is marginal. Mr Hill further reported that the need to show that IDBs carbon footprint is being actively managed over future years is expected to increase with the Environment Agency setting themselves the target of being carbon neutral by 2030.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners remain with Anglia Farmers for a further contract period post 30th September 2021 and agree to obtaining quotations for renewable energy.

C.895 Joint Maintenance of the Old Croft River – Upwell IDB
Overhanging Trees – Copes Hill Farm

Mr Hill reported that, in agreement with the Landowner, any overhanging branches or trees that were restricting drain maintenance works have now been removed by the Middle Level Commissioners' workforce on a rechargeable basis to Manea and Welney DDC and Upwell IDB and also that the Upwell IDB planned to pile a section of the property frontage on the northern (Upwell IDB) side of the watercourse this year.

The Chairman referred to the current arrangements with Upwell IDB for the joint maintenance of the Old Croft River and the good relationship he had with the Upwell IDB Chairman which allowed for straightforward matters to be dealt with as part of routine maintenance.

He reported on the progress of the development to the north west of The Grange and south west of New Road, Welney and that little works had been started yet. He reported that the required development contribution had been received for the site and following consideration of a recommendation from the Clerk to split the contribution on a 50/50 basis with Upwell IDB, in recognition of the joint maintenance arrangements for the Old Croft River, he had agreed and 50% of the receipt had been transferred to Upwell IDB.

He further reported that he had given the matter further consideration and following discussions with the Upwell IDB Chairman an agreement had been reached that the development contributions should be kept by the Board in whose area the development was situated. He further considered that it was probably the right time to fully review the whole joint maintenance arrangements.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee:-

Proposed Residential Development to the north west of The Grange and south west of New Road, Welney (MLC Ref Nos. 559 and 567)

That the Chairman be authorised to discuss further with the Clerk and the Chairman of Upwell IDB the splitting of development contributions between the Commissioners and Upwell IDB for developments which drain to the Old Croft River and also the maintenance arrangements for the watercourse with a view to agreeing new proposals for the future maintenance of the watercourse which will be presented to both Upwell IDB and the Commissioners.

(NB) – Councillor Sutton and Mr Hartley declared interests (as members of Upwell IDB) and did not take part when this item was discussed.

C.896 Ouse Washes Section 10 Reservoir Middle Level and South Level Barrier Bank Works

Further to minute C.857 Mr Hill referred to Newsletters from the Environment Agency dated April, May, July, August, September, November and December 2020.

The Chairman reported that works had been progressed as well as conditions would allow, with the autumn and recent rainfall putting them under pressure with flooding which was likely to mean some works would need to be re-done. He further reported that because of these issues the Environment Agency were currently estimating that the works could be extended by up to 2 years.

C.897 Replacement of Tractor and Flail Mower

Further to minute C.858 Mr Hill reported that the Boards old tractor and flail was sold via auction on ebay for £36,600 with ebay fees of £250.

The Chairman reported that following the approval orders were placed and the new tractor/mower combination had been delivered and was working well. He considered that this enhanced combination unit combined with the abilities of the District Superintendent was providing a significant benefit to the Commissioners in both the amount and quality of the works which were being completed.

In response to Councillor Sutton, Mr Hill confirmed the VAT position in relation to the sale of the Commissioners' old tractor and flail mower.

C.898 Potential Amalgamation Discussions – Manea & Welney DDC, Sutton & Mepal IDB and Upwell IDB

Further to minute C.859, the Chairman reported that it had not been possible to hold further meetings but that it was important, as all three boards were dependent on the Old Bedford River and Welches Dam pumping station, for there to be continued discussions with each other and the Environment Agency concerning the maintenance of the river and pumping station.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman and Vice Chairman continue discussions with Sutton & Mepal and Upwell IDBs Chairmen and Vice Chairmen.

C.899 Old Diesel Building

Further to minute C.861 the Chairman reported on a meeting with representatives of Manea Parish Council to discuss the old pumping station building and although they appeared supportive of proposals for the preservation of the building, the subsequent COVID-19 restrictions had not allowed for any further meetings. He reported that it had been possible to get an outline estimate to repair the roof which, due to its construction, was likely to be in excess of £20,000.00 on top of which would be expenditure to remove/replace the doors to the station.

Councillor Sutton raised the point that if, because of costs now nothing was able to be done, the Commissioners were likely to have future costs for the demolition of the building as it would deteriorate. He queried if the costs now could be shared with Manea Parish Council. The Chairman confirmed this was a possibility but would be dependent on the final costs to make the building weatherproof.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee that the Chairman take any necessary action to get the roofing material analysed and to continue discussions with Manea Parish Council.

C.900 Clerk's Report

Mr Hill advised:-

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 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 this 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.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners continue with the current arrangements.

That a sixth Chair's Meeting was held virtually on the 26th November 2020.

Topics discussed included the Middle Level Commissioners' Chief Executive giving; an update on COVID-19 actions and responses, the change of MLC Chairman from Marc Heading to Jonathan Brown, updates on the Technical Services Department review (which aims to address the delays in responding to planning and consenting matters) and an update on the work of WRE. He also advised that Defra had commented positively on the Good Governance Guide published by ADA and that on the back of this feedback ADA were currently working on a Environmental Good Governance Guide. It was also noted at this meeting that Agricultural and Environmental Bills were passing through Parliament, the later including clauses benefitting IDBs, allowing them to expand their boundaries or for entirely new IDBs to be created, which was welcomed by the Chairmen as a positive step forward. Paul Burrows spoke on the work of the Environment Agency covering topics such as carbon baselining, national strategies, the tactical plans (which are securing much needed grant allocation for the area) and the need to continue to grow partnership working. He also spoke for Brian Stewart, the RFCC Chairman, who unfortunately was suffering from a poor broadband connection. On behalf of Brian, he advised that following the re-shaping of the local RFCC, there were two extra EA nominated positions available and that in this respect he wanted to propose that an Ex-officio seat be created for the incumbent Chair of the Great Ouse branch of ADA. This is likely to be Marc Heading who is expected to take over from Harry Raby in the spring. The new post will inject a direct link to farming which is of course the major business sector covered by this RFCC. The meeting finally turned to the future amalgamation of IDBs which it was generally agreed are likely to increase over time as succession planning has to be addressed.

iii) Applications for byelaw consent

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

Name of Applicant	Description of Works	Date consent granted
Loyd Homes Limited	Formation of estate road, footpath and permeable driveways and erection of temporary fencing	29th January 2020
Andrew Russell	Installation of 15 no field underdrain drains in district drains between	5th March 2020

Points 62 and 68 near Witcham
Farm in Byall Fen

RESOLVED

That the action taken in granting consents be approved.

iii) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the 83rd Annual Conference of the Association was held virtually on Wednesday the 11th November 2020.

The conference this year was held in two distinct and separate parts, with the morning session comprising of key speakers and questions and the afternoon the AGM.

Key speakers in the morning were;

David Cooper, Deputy Director for Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Policy (Defra) – who first thanked the IDBs for the work they do and then endorsed the efforts being made to improve governance through the publication of the 'Good Governance Guide' and the work in hand on 'Good Environmental Governance'. He then went on to speak about the ambitious aims of government, the record investment agreed by treasury for the next six year funding cycle and the Agriculture Bill that if passed will facilitate the creation of new IDBs and allow existing IDBs to expand districts. He finished by stating that the key was to educate people and to work together to share good practice.

Chris Stoate, Head of Research (Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust) – who spoke about the Allerton Project which was a carefully implemented scheme to directly measure the impacts of controlling headwaters using measures such as leaky dams. This work consisted of schemes on similar upland sub-catchments where a direct comparison could be made between interventions and non-interventions. The results were very promising with downstream peak flows being reduced by around a quarter where the most effective measures were installed. Chris accepted that there were challenges surrounding maintenance and that the choice of natural materials and design was key. He also noted that in the locations chosen any failed leaky dam materials would get caught on stream bends well before any risk of being washed downstream into urban areas.

Toby Willson, Executive Director of Operations (Environment Agency) – who is soon to leave the EA reflected on the target to be carbon neutral in less than a decade and in doing this noted that the equivalent carbon release linked to pumping alone from the February event this year was equivalent to that of 1200 houses. He went on to point out that the onus in on us to act now and that if we fail to do so it will be our children and grandchildren who will face the consequences.. He acknowledged the hugely influential role of ADA's voice in the development of national strategies and the work being done in partnership with IDBs to be more resilient. He finished by setting out three challenges.

1) To develop true partnerships where all organisations are working unified towards the same goals.
2) To achieve net zero carbon emissions, asking specifically what the IDBs were doing towards this?
3) To develop and implement strategies to attract young people into the industry.

Questions were taken from the floor and were wide ranging from asking why there was so little information being shared on the development of ELMs to why it was necessary in one location for the EA to undertake an environmental check before removing a dead tree from across a watercourse.

A more formal question and answer session ended the morning, the panel being made up from, Julia Beeden from Cambridgeshire County Council, Emily Clarke from Anglian Water, John Curtin from Environment Agency, David Jenkins from Wessex RFCC, Innes Thompson from ADA and David Thomas from the Middle Level Commissioners. When asked a question David Thomas, your Clerk, took the opportunity to advise of the importance and value of the work being undertaken by WRE and also to point out to Toby Wilson that he absolutely agreed with the sentiments of partnership working and also the key aims of the EA but noted that true partnership working was a two way street and that there were still areas of policy development that ADA were not being involved with sufficiently. Toby accepted that the EA were not perfect and that more work needed to be done on this.

The AGM in the afternoon followed the usual format of recording appointments and electing office holders. It was noted that Robert Caudwell would be coming to the end of the normal Chair's term of office and that this would be reviewed next year. The formalities over a lively question and answer session followed which seemed to work very well and may influence how future conferences are arranged.

b) Annual Conference

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities will be held in London on Wednesday the 10th November 2021.

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 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) Floodex 2021

That Floodex 2021 will be held at The Peterborough Arena on the 7th and 8th April 2021.

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

Further to minute C.862(vi) Mr Hill reported that 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.

v) Capital Funding Projects

That at the spring 2020 budget it was announced by Government that they would provide the Environment Agency with a settlement of £5.2billion for capital funding projects over the next 6 years, from April 2021 to March 2027, to better protect 336,000 properties. This includes both homes and non-residential properties and presents a significant increase over the current 6-year programme. It is noted that the definition of non-residential properties includes shops, businesses, industrial sites, schools, hospitals, etc. and the new arrangements also facilitate funded improvements to habitat and the environment.

In response to this the Environment Agency have issued new partnership funding rules which go alongside this increased funding programme. The new rules are considered critical to delivering the called for better protection to the target of 336,000 properties, but will also allow:

- updated payments which will now account for inflation and be based on new evidence on the overall impacts of flooding, such as mental health
- increased payments for flood protection schemes which also create a range of environmental benefits
- more funding for flood protection schemes which also protect properties that will later become at risk of flooding due to climate change
- a new risk category which will enable schemes that prevent surface water flooding to qualify for more funding

vi) What is Good Governance

That Defra have provided a summary of “What is Good Governance?”:-

- Good governance is about the processes for making and implementing decisions. It’s not about making ‘correct’ decisions, but about the best possible process for making those decisions - and therefore good governance, share several characteristics. All have a positive effect on various aspects of Boards including consultation policies and practices, meeting procedures, service quality protocols, officers’ conduct, role clarification and good working relationships.

- Boards should implement decisions and follow processes that make the best use of the available people, resources and time to ensure the best possible results for their community – and try to serve the needs of the entire community while balancing competing interests in a timely, appropriate and responsive manner. A community’s wellbeing results from all of its members feeling their interests have been considered by Boards in the decision-making process. This means that all groups, particularly the most vulnerable, should have opportunities to participate in the process.

- People should be able to follow and understand the decision-making process. This means that they will be able to clearly see how and why a decision was made – what information, advice and consultation Boards considered, and which legislative requirements (when relevant) Boards followed. This means that decisions are consistent with relevant legislation or common law and are within the powers of the Acts.

- Anyone affected by or interested in a decision should have the opportunity to participate in the process for making that decision. This can happen in several ways – community members may be provided with information, asked for their opinion, given the opportunity to make recommendations or, in some cases, be part of the actual decision-making process.

- Accountability is a fundamental requirement of good governance. Boards have an obligation to report, explain and be answerable for the consequences of decisions it has made on behalf of the community it represents.

vii) Smart Level System/District Wide Telemetry Bid

That a Local Levy Bid has been submitted that, if successful, will offer a contribution of half the cost of installing telemetry at pumping station sites. This will allow early warnings of pump or weedscreen failure and remote operation.

RESOLVED

That costings be provided for consideration at the next meeting of the Board.

viii) Fens Biosphere

Further to minute C.842, Mr Hill referred to the leaflet from Cambridgeshire Acre.

C.901 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

The Commissioners considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

The Chairman referred to the pumping figures which highlighted the extend of the rainfall during December. He reported on the Cranbrook/Counter Drain (CCD) FRM Strategy and the importance of the channel and Welches Dam pumping station to the Commissioners. He referred to ongoing concerns raised concerning the maintenance of the Old Bedford River and the importance for all the Boards who evacuate water to the Old Bedford River to be fully involved in discussions concerning the future maintenance of the system.

In response to Councillor Sutton concerning corrugated pipes within the District, the Chairman reported that all structures were inspected on a regular basis and that he was not currently aware of any specific problems.

RESOLVED

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

ii) Cranbrook/Counter Drain (CCD) FRM Strategy

a) That approval be given for the use of Middle Level Commissioners' staff on the Strategic Level Project Board and Steering Group, on behalf of the Commissioners.

b) That the Chairman, or Vice Chairman (whichever was available) be approved to represent the Commissioners on an External Stakeholders Group, on behalf of the Commissioners.

c) That the representative Middle Level Commissioners' staff liaise with the Chairman on all aspects being considered in order for the requirements of the Commissioners to be taken into account.

(NB) – Councillor Sutton declared an interest (as a member of Upwell IDB) and did not take part when this item was discussed.

(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest in the planning applications (MLC Ref Nos 573, 579 & 594) received for A & E G Heading Ltd.

C.902 Pumping Stations

Mr Hill reported that the Chairman had instructed that an investigation be carried out into the options for electrifying Glen House pumping station. As part of this the Middle Level Commissioners will seek to get funding allocated within the EA Grant-in-Aid system for this and will look at the options both for simple electrification and also for electrification and pump replacement with Eel and Fish friendly pumps. He also reported that the latter option will need to be considered as the Clerk believes that the Eel Regulations were likely to require it. Mr Hill advised that both options and costs will be presented to the Commissioners at the next meeting for consideration; the Clerk will also contact Andy Don (Environment Agency Liaison Office) to clarify the Environment Agency's position on the Eel Regulations and this site and that as this is an engineering project cost recoverable fees will be payable.

The Chairman reported that Glen House pumping station was the Commissioners' main station with the four diesel powered pumps dealing with about 90% of the Commissioners' pumping capacity and noting the possibility of Grant-in-Aid being available he hoped that this scheme could be carried out with in the next five years. Consideration had been given to converting all four pumps to electricity but concerns over the ability to get the required power supply to the site had been raised and the additional cost of providing power by a generator had been considered unviable. It had therefore been decided the best option was to convert two of the pumps to electricity, having a 2 x diesel, 2 x electric combination and, with this in mind, two of the diesel pumps had been dedicated for ongoing pumping to ensure the most effective use of the engines ahead of the scheme progressing.

RESOLVED

That the actions of the Chairman be approved.

C.903 District Superintendent's wages, pension contributions and Future Labour Requirements

The Chairman reported on the discussions and the recommendations of the Finance

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners approve the recommendations of the Finance Committee:-

i) That the basic pay of the District Superintendent for 2021/2022 be increased as indicated on the Supplementary Schedule, together with the proportionate increase in overtime rates.

ii) That the Commissioners' pension contribution remain unchanged at 6% for 2021/2022, as from 1st April 2021, but be increased to match the rate paid by the District Superintendent up to a maximum of 10%.

C.904 Capital Improvement Programme

The Commissioners considered their future capital improvement programme.

Mr Hill reported that the Capital Improvement Programme would be updated when further information became available concerning Grant-in-Aid applications. The Chairman reported that he considered the works van should be kept for a further year and replaced in the 2022/23 financial year.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee that, subject to the amendment to the van replacement, the Capital Programme be approved in principle and kept under review.

C.905 Conservation Officer's Newsletter

Mr Hill referred to the Conservation Officer's Newsletter, dated December 2020, which had previously been circulated to the Commissioners.

C.906 District Superintendent's Report

The Commissioners considered the Report of the District Superintendent.

RESOLVED

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

ii) That the Chairman thank the Superintendent for the quality of his Report and for his services over the preceding year.

C.907 Maintenance Works in the District

The Chairman reported that he considered it important for the Commissioners to continue with a comprehensive annual maintenance programme and the aim, following the weather patterns over the previous two years will be to look to get as much work completed by early autumn as possible.

He reported that the Commissioners' maintenance policy had been implemented and it was proposed to continue this programme during the coming year. He informed the Commissioners that due to the high levels of rainfall and the condition of a number of private watercourses it had been necessary to maintain levels in the District system lower than normal to maintain flows throughout the whole District. This had caused a number of slips which, if there was a danger of water being held up, would be dealt with now or if not would be dealt with as part of the normal maintenance programme.

He referred to the need to balance environmental/conservation duties with flood defence/drainage requirements in order to ensure the Commissioners retained the ability to evacuate water to protect people and property from flooding.

In relation to the high rainfall during December he referred to the culvert at March Road, Manea, which, following major development upstream, was no longer of sufficient size to properly convey water and that this had been causing concerns during the event.

He also referred to water conveyance issues through the tunnel under the railway in the vicinity of Willow Farm, the tunnel being a ‘pinch-point’ and considered it necessary to inform the railway concerning this problem.

Mr Walker understood that the recent works to the railway bridge had not been completed and the contractor would be returning so there could be an opportunity to address this matter when they returned.

<u>RESOLVED</u>

i) To continue with the Commissioners’ annual maintenance programme in 2021/2022.

ii) That the Clerk be requested to write to:-

   a) the Highways Authority to advise that the pipe under March Road at Manea was no longer of sufficient size and needed replacing to avoid flooding problems in the area.

   b) the relevant railway authority to again raise the Commissioners’ concerns over the lack of maintenance to the tunnel under the railway running track in the vicinity of Willow Farm and the need for it to be increased in size to convey flows better to avoid the possibility of localised flooding.

<u>C.908 State-aided Schemes</u>

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.

Mr Hill reported that the proposals for the electrification of 2 pumps at Glen House pumping station would be progressed with the Environment Agency and linked with the possibility of further accessing funding for schemes for the replacement/refurbishment of structures, through the Environment Agency Tactical Plans, which could assist if the Commissioners were required to become involved with the replacement of the culvert at March Road, Manea

<u>RESOLVED</u>

That the Chairman be authorised to take any actions he considers appropriate to progress the future availability of grant funding for schemes promoted by the Commissioners.

C.909 Environment Agency – Precept

Mr Hill reported that it was anticipated that the RFCC would not increase the precept payment for 2021/2022. The precept paid for 2020/21 was £75.297.

C.910 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

Mr Hill reported that the sum of £103.03 (£634.62 less £531.59 paid on account) (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency based on the Commissioners' actual expenditure on maintenance work for the financial year 2019/2020 together with the sum of £538.95 in respect of 80% of the Commissioners' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2020/2021.

C.911 Association of Drainage Authorities
Subscriptions

Mr Hill reported that the Clerk had been advised that subscriptions for 2021 will remain unchanged at £642.

RESOLVED

That the requested ADA subscription for 2021 be paid.

(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest as a Director of ADA

C.912 Contribution from Developers

Mr Hill reported that a contribution towards the cost of dealing with the increased flow or volume of surface water run-off and treated effluent volume had been received.

C.913 Health and Safety

a) Further to minute C.876, the Chairman referred the Commissioners to the report received from Cope Safety Management following their visit to the District on the 5th March 2020.

The Chairman reported that the Commissioners had appointed Cope Safety Management as Health and Safety consultants and that they had carried out site visits and made recommendations, all of which had been actioned. He further reported that Cope Safety Management were scheduled for a further inspection this Friday 5th February 2021.

He informed the Commissioners that, following the last meeting, he had purchased a Smart Phone for the District Superintendent and he had now downloaded the "What Three Words" app.

Mr Hill reminded the Commissioners that it is responsible for ensuring it is compliant with all Health and Safety legislation and is adequately insured. In view of this, all points for action raised by its' Health and Safety consultant should be implemented so as to avoid the Commissioners' insurance policy from becoming invalid.

B.914 Special Circumstance Policy on Tendering

Mr Hill referred to the policy that had been produced and advised the Commissioners that there had been issues for some IDBs during the COVID-19 pandemic in respect to meeting their normal policy on numbers of valid tenders or quotations. It was intended that this policy would only apply in special conditions such as these and that to invoke the policy the Chairman would need to record what the special circumstance was before it could be used.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners formally adopt this policy.

C.915 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Commissioners – 2019/2020

a) The Commissioners considered and approved the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2020.

b) The Commissioners considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2020.

C.916 Defra IDB1 Returns

Mr Hill referred to the completed IDB1 form for 2019/2020 which the Commissioners noted and approved.

C.917 Review of Internal Controls

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

C.918 Risk Management Assessment

a) The Commissioners considered and expressed satisfaction with their current Risk Management Policy

b) The Commissioners considered and approved the insured value of their buildings.

C.919 Exercise of Public Rights

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

C.920 Payments to 31st December 2020

The Commissioners considered and approved payments amounting to £373,132.30 which had been made between the 1st April and the 31st December 2020.

(NB) – The Chairman, Messrs Hartley and Heading and Councillor Sutton declared interests (as Members of the Middle Level Board) in the payments made to the Middle Level Commissioners.
(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest (as a Director of ADA) in the payment made to the Association of Drainage Authorities.

(NB) – Mr Hartley and Councillor Sutton declared interests (as Members of Upwell IDB) in the payment made to Upwell IDB.

C.921 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2021/2022

The Commissioners considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2021/2022 and were informed by Mr Hill that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by special levy on local billing authorities would be respectively 72.15% and 27.85%.

The Chairman referred to the budget proposal which was for a small increase but that the Commissioners should take account of the higher than average pumping required in the last two years and the Commissioners Capital Improvement Programme.

He further commented that the Commissioners needed to ensure that their income kept pace with inflation and that they were properly funded to meet the ever increasing demands placed upon them.

The Chairman referred to the review carried out by the Finance Committee and their recommendation to setting a 41.0p in the £ rate.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners approve the recommendations of the Finance Committee:-

i) That the estimates be approved.

ii) That a total sum of £194,525 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 £140,271 and £54,254 respectively.

iv) That a rate of 41.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.

v) a) That a Special levy of £33,994 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.

b) That a Special levy of £20,260 be made and issued to the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk.

vi) That the seal of the Commissioners be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levies referred to in resolution (v).

vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levies by such statutory powers as may be available.

C.922 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.923 Date of next Meeting

The Chairman referred to the June meeting, which would revolve around an Inspection of the District and he did not see any benefit from having a virtual meeting, particularly as the main finance matters had been deal with at this meeting.

Mr Hill reported that if the Commissioners were not able to meet there would be the need for a virtual meeting to review the financial statements and Annual Return.

RESOLVED

i) That the Chairman be authorised to make arrangements for a meeting (following which the District Inspection will be held) in June 2021 should COVID-19 restrictions be lifted to allow.

ii) That a Meeting of the Commissioners will be held on Wednesday the 2^{nd} February 2022 and the Chairman be authorised to make the necessary arrangements.

MANEA AND WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

At a Meeting of the Manea and Welney District Drainage Commissioners hosted at the Middle Level Offices, March on Friday the 25th June 2021

PRESENT

J E Heading Esq (Chairman)	M E Heading Esq
R M C Sears Esq (Vice Chairman)	P Jolley Esq
N Cook Esq	Mrs A J Langley
M D R Fairey Esq	C W Sears Esq
C F Hartley Esq	W Sutton Esq
J Hawes Esq	N V M Walker Esq

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

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

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from P D Hawes Esq and Councillor C Marks.

C.927 Standing Orders

Further to minute C.886, Mr Hill reported that ADA have obtained agreement from Defra for the flexibility which allowed the Commissioners to choose how they wished to hold meetings during the pandemic to become permanent. This change will allow remote attendance or fully virtual meetings to take place in future should that best meet the Commissioners' particular requirements at that time.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners adopt the revised Standing Orders.

C.928 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

The Commissioners considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

RESOLVED

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

C.929 District Superintendent's Report

The Commissioners considered the Report of the District Superintendent.

RESOLVED

That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved and that the Superintendent be thanked for his services over the preceding year.

C.930 Conservation Officer's BAP Report

The Commissioners considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

C.931 Annual Governance Statement – 2020/2021

The Commissioners considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended on the 31st March 2021.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Commissioners, for the financial year ending 31st March 2021.

C.932 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2020/2021

The Commissioners considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2021 as required in the Audit Regulations.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Return, on behalf of the Commissioners, for the financial year ending 31st March 2021.

C.933 Date of next Meeting

The Chairman reminded the Commissioners that the next Meeting of the Commissioners will be held on Wednesday the 2nd February 2022 at the Lamb and Flag Public House, Welney at 11.00am.

Bexwell Hall
Bexwell
Norfolk
PE38 9LZ
15/11/2021

Dear John,

Following my recent standing down from The Middle Level I am afraid I have to do the same with The Manea & Welney Board. As I explained at that meeting I have found it increasingly difficult to hear clearly enough to follow or contribute to the meetings adequately and I even struggled with the zoom meetings with the volume at maximum. I have tried with little success with a variety of hearing aids and have to accept that this is not going to improve in the future.

I have thoroughly enjoyed being involved with Manea & Welney. I am available of course if there are any future local issues to assist if they require my historical recollection.

Yours sincerely,

Environment Agency

Ouse Washes:
Middle Level Barrier Bank raising works

December 2021

The Middle Level Barrier Bank is the bank of the Ouse Washes reservoir extending from Earith to Welmore Lake Sluice. The work we are doing is to comply with recommendations made by the reservoir Inspecting Engineer to complete the works under the Reservoirs Act 1975.

Year 5 progress

We have now finished the bank works for 2021. Once again, this year we faced a season of wet weather which has caused delays to the current construction programme. We expect to finish the overall bank raising works in 2022.

We have removed the temporary bridge at Mepal. The bridge was used during the project to avoid using local roads to deliver most of the material direct to the workface.

We have completed the bank works between Sutton Gault and Mepal. The public footpath will remain closed to give the grass time to establish.

We have installed four of the five bird hides at the RSPB Reserve, and we will install the final bird hide during 2022. For information about using the hides over the winter please contact RSPB Ouse Washes Reserve directly.

Year 6 works

Below is the anticipated programme of work for 2022.

There is a small section of bank raising work between Welches Dam and the railway bridge to do in 2022. This will take approximately 2 weeks to complete. We will also repair any damage sustained through the winter.

- April – June Ecological surveys and grass cuts full length of the Middle Level Barrier Bank
- June Start construction of the demountable flood barrier in Welney
- June – July Haul road repairs
- July - Oct Repair any flood damage sustained during the winter
- July – Oct Finish the bank raising work between Welches Dam and the railway bridge and install the final bird hide at the RSPB Reserve.
- October Project completion with grass maintenance to continue for 2 years

During late autumn and winter the haul road floods, which restricts access for maintenance vehicles. When we carry out the haul road works, we will bring in some material to raise the haul road in sections to help alleviate the problem in the future.

We will continue to keep you updated on the progress of the project.

Public footpath and bridleway access

The following footpaths will remain closed whilst we wait for the grass to grow, the grass will be monitored throughout the winter and spring period, and we will keep you updated as to when we can open these areas.

Middle Level Barrier Bank - where it is closed?

- Sutton Gault to A142, Mepal
- A142, Mepal to Welches Dam

Floodline 0345 988 1188 Incident Hotline 0800 80 70 60

- Welches Dam to railway bridge
- Railway bridge to Welney

Closures are clearly signposted.

Virtual room exhibition

During June, July, and August 2021, we opened a virtual exhibition room to provide an alternative way for community members and interested parties to get an update on the project and next steps. We had over 2,000 visitors view the exhibition.

Although the exhibition was closed in August there is plenty of information accessible from our Citizen Space page on this link:

https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/east-anglia-c-e/ouse-washes-section-10-works/

or click the link below to see how the Ouse Washes works:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eRFHm9n2-jY

Other works in the Ouse Washes area

Over the winter period the Environment Agency will be undertaking periodic maintenance at Welches Dam Pumping Station which will be carried out within the site.

Only commercial vans and 4x4's will be required to carry out this work.

The pumping station will remain operational during this time.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about this project, please contact our Public Liaison Officer: Monica Stonham via email ousewashesprojectea@gmail.com or call

07534 457348.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list to receive future updates about this scheme, please contact us through the email address.

Thank you for taking the time to read this update.

Stay up to date and visit our information page for the most up to date information
https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/east-anglia-c-e/ouse-washes-section-10-works/

The project is being carried out by JacksonHyder on behalf of the Environment Agency with support from:

Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners

Capital Improvement Programme (2022/2023)

		PREVIOUS YEARS	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2032/33	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
Glenhouse 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	0	250.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	250.0
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	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 Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	20	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0	35.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Purls Bridge 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	0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.0
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	70.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	70.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	John Deere Tractor - *purchased April 2020 - £111,480*	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	85.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	85.0
	Herder Cavalier Flail Mower - *purchased June 2020 - £71,100*	0	4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	65.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	69.0
	Citroen van - *purchased 13/03/2015 - £8,753*	0	12	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.0
Drainage Channels		0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Refurbishment of inlets/outfalls	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		0	**36**	**345**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**150**	**0**	**0**	**15**	**546**

Consideration for:

Electrification/refurbishment at Glenhouse pumpinh station

Replacement of Citroen van

District Superintendents Report 2021/22

After the excitement of the preceding year, 2021 looked to be starting where 2020 left off. January recorded 106mm of rain, to become the wettest month of the year. With 41.5mm and 40mm respectively, February and March were wetter than average, and pretty chilly too. All change for April and the 4mm recorded came on the last two days of the month, so it was a good job I hadn't laid money on it becoming the first month recorded with no rainfall at all. The cold start to the year had made bankside vegetation slow to start, early mowing finally commenced on April 9th. With no rainfall, the first cut through the District was soon completed, and a couple of odd lengths which hadn't been cut the previous year were seen to, as well. Once the temperature rose so did the height of the grass, very quickly, and for the rest of the year there were few days when there wasn't mowing to be done, or later in the year weed cutting. In an unusual moment of carelessness, I managed to sever the armoured cables to the RSPB pumps at Purls Bridge with the mowing bucket, and at the time of writing am liaising with an electrician to rejoin and seal them. I will then return the cables to a much more robust pipe for their protection. Having our own mowing bucket has really paid dividends this year, I was able to slip into all manner of awkward areas as soon as they were harvested, which removed the problem of access with the 360, and the associated haulage costs. The final cut with the mowing bucket was made on December 22nd.
The contractors 360 arrived in the District on September 27th, starting behind Burgess Farm, and with the harvest allowing easy access to all parts of the District, was able to make good progress on the maintenance work, arriving at Welches Dam and finishing on October 19th. Indeed there was only one very short section which had to be left due to a standing maize crop, this was dealt with by our machine later in the year. Reed cutting during the summer with the Districts own machine allowed the 360 to work very much more quickly hence the short time it was required in the District. All 32kms of District drains were mowed during the year and 30kms were visited by either our mowing bucket, the contractors 360, or both. As a result I believe the District drains to be in as good a condition as they have ever been since I began in 2013.
The Drain levels were kept high for the summer as usual, the pumps being switched off at both stations on March 24th, remaining so until Glen House pumps were switched on to gently draw the level down on August 16th. During the summer I was able to have an excellent working relationship with Amanda Greenslade, who was managing the Old Bedford River levels for the EA. We spoke at least on a weekly basis, and she resisted the efforts of the bank works project manager to lower the river level below the seasonal norm. Sadly, Amanda has moved on to a different post for 2022, and one can only hope her successor will be as efficient.
Heavy rainfall, amounting to 47mm fell in a very short time during the night of October 19/20th, this resulted in a number of properties in Manea being flooded for the second, or in some cases third, time in less than a year. None of the flooding was caused by problems in the District water courses, problems appearing to be as a result of a lack of maintenance and mismanagement of assets by Anglian Water and County Highways. On the evening of November 3rd, Manea Parish Council organised a public meeting attended by myself and our Chairman, as well as representatives from Anglian Water, Cambs County Council and Fenland District Council. I took the tractor and mowing bucket along at the request of the PC, as it seems that very few members of the public have little or any knowledge of the Board, our responsibilities and activities. M & W DDC was generally thanked for it's work, and insight to what we do, other bodies did not fair too well in the rather heated public debate.

On June 16th contractors arrived to remove the weedscreen cleaner from Glen House for a major overhaul, believed to be the first since it was installed in 1997. Damage to the trolley wheels early in the year had rather hastened this work to be ordered. The refurbished machine was returned on

September 8th and after a few minor troubles with switch settings, the weedscreen cleaner has settled down to reliable service.
Following the removal of the accumulated weedpile in January, I have been managing the subsequent waste on a regular basis, barrowing it to the other side of the yard and burning it when dry and safe to do so. I continue to do the same at Purls Bridge.
I fitted a new oil tank to the Purls Bridge weedscreen cleaner and appear to have finally rid us of the gremlins in that machine, although a tine has now fallen off of the grab basket. The missing tine makes little difference to the efficiency of the basket, and despite efforts to find it with a powerful magnet, it will need to be replaced at some time during the coming year.

All the pumps are in good order, requiring little attention above regular maintenance. A battery set failed in November, new batteries were quickly obtained and fitted. The heat, and more probably vibration, inside the acoustic cabinets seems to prematurely shorten the expected life of the starter batteries on the Glen House pumps. I am still running pump Numbers 2 & 3 in preference and holding 1 & 4 more in reserve. The two Purls Bridge pumps have needed no attention other than greasing bearings during the year.

The Berlingo van required some attention to the suspension prior to the MOT test, but as usual has been a reliable and efficient vehicle, well suited to my needs. It had covered 33,827 miles by the end of 2021. It has averaged 48.6mpg since new.

The John Deere tractor has been faultless during the year, requiring one service by Ben Burgess technicians in June. The tractor fuel consumption is 10.1lts/hour.

The Herder Cavalier mower has proved to be a reliable, flexible and highly efficient machine. A very minor oil leak was traced to a seal in a control valve on the pump block, taking longer to trace than repair. A new rubber flap was fitted to the rear of the flail head after a piece of rusty metal split it when mowing at the Wimblington Road junction. New tensioner tips were fitted to the mowing bucket in the autumn as they had worn past their safe limit.
A dredging bucket is on order from Herder, due to be delivered in the Spring, which will further increase my ability to carry out small drain maintenance and emergency works quickly and efficiently.

Mink trapping has continued throughout the year, I am now in close contact with Tony Martin from Pymoor, who is heavily involved in the East Anglian project to tackle the mink issue. The board now has two Remoti traps, which can be left in isolated locations without the need for a daily check as they trigger a text message if the trap is activated. I continue to use older style traps at Glen House and report all trappings to Peter Beckenham at MLC as well as Tony, who takes the bodies from me for genetic analysis as part of the wider project. During 2021 ten mink were caught in the District.
Vermin control is carried out at both pumping stations, by bait traps and the enthusiasm of my Border terrier.
I monitor all Badger activity, and am pleased to report that despite their wide presence in the District there are few problems caused to the watercourse.

Once again I have observed very good numbers of breeding birds, mammals and fish within the District, indeed I found a small but healthy Pike in the mowing bucket at the very end of the system on Fodder Fen. Observing such predators as Barn, Tawney, Little and Long Eared owls, Kestrel, Hobby, Stoat, Weasel and Pike, shows that the general health of the wildlife throughout the District is in pretty good order as such species are the best barometer of habitat health. There is a big increase in the number of deer making use of the scrubby margins and game cover within the District, Muntjac, Chinese water deer and Roe are all to be seen. The past year seems to have been a good one despite the late start for Pheasant, Partridge and Hare, all of which are seen in good numbers.

Spilling over from the Washes are an ever increasing number of Common Crane, who travel in their slow lazy flight to spend time in the fields, apparently doing no more than standing around looking impressively large.

Outside of District work, I have managed a small amount of both Brass and Dance band playing this year, although currently it has all stopped again. We had a four week old arrive into our foster care during February, and returned to family in October. A tiny premature newborn arrived later in October and looks likely to be with us for some time due to numerous health issues.

As always I thank our Chairman for his gentle guiding hand over the past year, and other board members for their support too. I believe we are in good shape to take whatever mother nature decides to throw at us during 2022, and look forward to it.

Site Safety Inspection Record

Manea and Welney IDB.

Complete

Site Safety Inspection

Name of organisation:	Manea and Welney IDB.
Date of site visit	25 Oct 2021 08:50 BST
Address of inspected premises	Glenhouse Pumping Station. Fifty Road. Bedford Bank. Welney Wisbeach Cambs PE14.9TB.
Name of Advisor	Martin Clark
Time of arrival at site:	25 Oct 2021 08:50 BST
Audit Name	Manea and Welney IDB.

Audit

Inspection Record

An opening meeting was held with

Andy Maddams.

Have there been any accidents since our last visit?	No

None recorded.

Have there been any new starters since our last visit?	No

None recorded.

1

An opening meeting was held with Andy and it was pleasing to note that the automated weed screen cleaner has been subjected to a complete overhaul.
In addition to the above the site signage has been improved and clearly states that automatic machinery operates on site. Site security and general housekeeping was observed to be at a good standard.

2

No significant issues were raised by Andy, lone working was discussed and it was understood that Andy now has the what three words app downloaded on his phone for use in the event of an emergency and communicates his whereabouts on those occasions when lone working.
It was understood that the old pump house is not used by the IDB anymore and this was observed to be securely locked at the time of the visit.

3

Photographic risk assessments raised during the previous visit on 05.02.21 were observed to have been addressed and the relevant entries on the photographic risk assessment index will be amended accordingly,

4

Future visits were discussed with Andy and it was agreed that if possible manual weed cleaning operations around the sluices would be observed to ensure that current risk assessments and safe systems of work are suitable and sufficient for the operations being conducted,

Photographic Risk Assessment

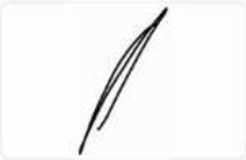
Signature of person informed

Signature of person informed 1

Signature of person informed

Signed on behalf of Andy Maddams by advisor.
25 Oct 2021 17:30 BST

Advisor's signature



Martin Clark
25 Oct 2021 17:30 BST

Departure time 1 Oct 2021 11:00 BST

Photographic Risk Assessments closed out during the visit.

05.02.21 1, 2

Number of outstanding Photographic Risk Assessments **0**
From 0 to 99

MANEA AND WELNEY DDC
SUMMARY OF PHOTOGRAPHIC RISK ASSESSMENTS

NO OUTSTANDING PHOTOGRAPHIC RISK ASSESSMENTS

SSI 25 10 21

Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners

Notice of conclusion of the audit

Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2021

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 Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners for the year ended 31st March 2021 has been completed and the accounts have been published.

2 The Annual Governance & Accountability Return is available for inspection by any local government elector of the area of Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners on application to:

The Clerk
Manea & Welney 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 Board

Date of Announcement: 30th September 2021

Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21

MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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During the financial year ended 31 March 2021, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2020/21 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	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
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.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
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.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2019/20, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. *(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2019/20 AGAR tick "not covered")*			✓
L. If the authority has an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000, it publishes information on a website/ webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the Transparency code for smaller authorities.			✓
M. The authority, during the previous year (2019-20) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations *(evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).*			
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2019/20 AGAR *(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).*	✓		

O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

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: 21/06/2021 24/06/2021 25/06/2021

Name of person who carried out the internal audit: Whiting & Partners

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

Date: 25/06/2021

*If the response is 'no' please 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).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2020/21

We acknowledge as the members of:

MANEA & WELNEY 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 2021, that:

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

	Yes	No	N/A	
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.				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 must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

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

25/06/2021

and recorded as minute reference:

B.944

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

Chairman John F Heading

Clerk [signature]

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2020/21 for

MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2020 £	31 March 2021 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward	513,928	548,939	*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	189,556	189,924	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	7,889	41,471	*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	30,085	33,930	*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	132,349	329,272	*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	548,939	417,132	*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	586,310	459,703	*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	2,511,532	2,607,628	*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 2021 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 25th May 2021

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

25/06/2021

as recorded in minute reference:

B.946

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

John E Heading

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2020/21

In respect of **MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS – DB0046**

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 2021; 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 2020/21

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:

NONE

3 External auditor certificate 2020/21

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 2021.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature	PKF Littlejohn LLP	Date	28/09/2021

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

Whitings
Chartered Accountants LLP
The Old School House, Dartford Road
March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 8AE
t: 01354 652304
e: march@whitingsllp.co.uk
w: whitingsllp.co.uk

MNH/BB/MM053
08 October 2021

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

Dear Messrs. D Thomas, R. Hill, and S Ablett,

MLC administered Internal Drainage Boards - Internal Audit 2020-2021

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 2021, we are pleased to provide you with the following recommendations to be considered for implementation. We have included some general points and some points which are related to specific boards.

General points

1. **Annual Return – Guidance notes**
   We note that there has been a subtle change within the guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020/21 from what was shown in 2019/20. Previously the guidance stated that "the authority **should** receive and note the annual internal audit report **if possible** before approving the annual governance statement and the accounts" this has been replaced by "the authority **should** receive and note the annual internal audit report before approving the annual governance statement and the accounts". As such whilst we are satisfied that all of the administered boards have previously and remain compliant in this matter, due to this not being something that the boards **must** comply with, we would strongly urge a review of the wording within any future AGAR's to ensure that, should this requirement come into force, you are able to adjust your plan of works in plenty of time. We would also request that should this take affect you contact us at your earliest convenience, so that we may tailor our own work programmes accordingly.

2. **Asset Valuations and Insurances**

We note that there are a number of boards which have had revaluations within the year on their pumping station assets and that these are now valued in excess of what has been included within the insurance valuations and the accounts/annual return. We appreciate that the accounts/annual return value must remain at cost/deemed cost however we would suggest that as soon as the results of these valuations come to light you seek to change the insurance valuation accordingly, we understand that in many cases these amendments are carried out at the point of annual renewal.

In some individual cases it is noted that residential properties have been revalued during the audited year, but the underlying insurance values have not been increased. We recommend that, as with pumping station assets, the insurance valuation is increased to reflect the current market value and thereby ensure that such assets are adequately insured.

Finally, it is noted that, whilst a large proportion of boards have taken the option to revalue for insurance purposes their pumping station and residential assets during the year, there are some boards that have not followed suit. We have seen elsewhere that such revaluations have sometimes resulted in significant uplifts in value, and as such we would suggest that any remaining boards that have yet to carry out such an exercise do so at the earliest convenience.

We would recommend that in the absence of specific information to the contrary suggesting need for earlier review, that a revaluation exercise be performed for insurance purposes at least every 5 years on all major Board assets.

Client Comment:

All Boards are asked concerning valuations for insurances and it is a Board decision. Depending when the meeting is held and when the valuation is completed depends when the instruction can be given. However, once approved we look to update policies at that time. Where applicable, we are also looking into the viability of having certain values index linked but note that these will still need monitoring on a routine basis.

3. Employee Benefits - Vehicle Usage, and VAT recovery

In 2020 a high-level tax case was brought by HM Revenue & Customs against Coca-Cola European Partners Great Britain Limited relating to vehicles provided to employees of Coca-Cola and whether these 'dual purpose' vehicle should be classed as a van or a car for benefit-in-kind (BIK) and other taxation purposes. Typical example of such a vehicle being a double-cab pickup as operated by some boards.

This case was ruled in favour of HMRC where the use of three of its vehicles (2 Volkswagen Kombis and a Vauxhall Vivaro) should be treated as cars, rather than vans for tax purposes. The Vauxhall had been modified in a number of ways and an additional row of seats and windows were added along with a bulkhead to ensure goods being transported could not enter the passenger area. Both the VW Kombi vehicles were fitted with rear seats and additional racking was required by the driver for business use, for the Kombi version 2 this required a rear seat to be removed for racking. The Court of Appeal ruled that the vehicles were not sufficient to differentiate between them and therefore they should all be treated on a similar basis for BIK purposes, each vehicle was multi-purpose and capable of transporting goods or passengers, but neither type of vehicle was 'primarily' suited to the carrying of goods as required by current taxation legislation s.115(2).

At this point in time (drafting late June 2021) no updates to the tax rules have been issued by HMRC in the light of the ruling and therefore we are unable to determine whether the current vehicles owned by each board and allocated to an employee will be classed as a van or car. And until HMRC include any such updates and guidance we are unable to determine whether the vehicles held by each board will be liable for a van or car BIK on employees where the vehicle is not operated as a depot-based Pool vehicle. This case also has potentially wider implications relating to recovery or not of VAT on the vehicle when purchased and in commercial settings capital allowances.

Client Comment:

We are aware of this position and have also been checking with HMRC but as yet they have not issued guidance that can be passed onto Boards. There are significant tax implications, both for employer and employee and will continue to monitor the position.

4. Provisions

We are pleased to note that, in the main; provisions for amounts owing to and owed from applicable boards, are being monitored and written back should the underlying potential asset/liability be extinguished. There are still odd cases where provisions are "brought forward and carried forward" that relate in excess of the standard life of debt, being 6 years. On review in some cases whilst the underlying rationale of these balances are reasonable, we would question whether payments could still be enforced if chased, aside from in relation to development contributions. As such we would encourage continued review of provisions as a whole, with special consideration being made to aged provisions that have existed for a number of years.

We would recommend that any such old debts or provisions (part from development contribution provisions), say over 3 years old, be presented at the Board meeting annually and approved.

Client comment:

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

5. Risk Management Policy and procedures

We noted in the 2019 most boards undertook a substantial risk management assessment process in 2014 leading to formal acceptance in April 2015 which is now subject to a brief review each year which is duly recorded formally in the board minutes. After recommendation in the prior year's management letter, we are pleased to note that this processed has been carried out again for 2020 - 21.

The COVID-19 pandemic is, hopefully, the greatest challenge many of us will face in our lifetime. In the face of adversity there is also opportunity to embrace this emerging "new normal" and such an event should allow us to take a step back and look at the policies and procedures that underpin the organisation. With this in mind we would urge greater breadth of coverage of policies and procedures to include consideration and action points in relation to areas such as climate change, global pandemics, and disaster action & recovery – at the time of writing we are not aware of such bigger policy being in existence.

It may also be helpful to revisit and enhance appreciation by way of visual colour coding of the RAG rating numbers to better differentiate between the varying levels of risk and consequence. We would expect to see low risk items being colour coded green, middling items colour coded yellow and high-risk items in red.

Risk Management Policy and procedures - continued

<u>*Client comment:*</u>

Risk management is an evolving matter and we will continue to look at emerging risks and having effective policies concerning these and although no formal policies are in place at this time the matters you have mentioned have been under consideration. With regards to the existing policy, consideration will be given to updating the matrix when either next revised or reviewed.

6. Website Publication

We note that there has been, for a number of years, significant information available to the public. We note that for some boards the latest information does not appear to have been updated, for example in one case the 2019/20 payments list was still published when the 2020/21 payments list should have been displayed. We would recommend that all items are updated promptly on the website once the meeting has been carried out.

<u>*Client comment:*</u>

Every effort is made to update the relevant pages of all authorities in an efficient and timely manner and in accordance with the regulations. It should be noted that the JPAG requirements for display appear to differ from those of audit requirements so while not necessarily aligning both requirements could be met. (This matter is being looked into for further guidance).

7. Capital works

Currently the definition of capital works is limited to new items e.g., a new culvert but works involving a repair or maintenance will be wholly written out in the year even though there may be a not insignificant element of improvement involved.

8. Capital assets

Following on from item 7 above it follows those assets may be unrecognised in the Accounts of the Boards and not appear in their Assets register. In view of greater Government and public interest and concern for environmental and climate change factors, should the 'value' of the basic drainage system be recognised beyond the pumping stations and equipment? This may be important in future years in order to factoring a fair proportion of potential future national Government funding.

Capital assets - continued

Client comment:

Comment has been noted. While Boards own pumping facilities and their footprint they do not (generally) own the watercourses, designating the arterial system for maintenance. This is probably a matter that could be discussed on an "industry wide" level, maybe through ADA by its policy and finance committee to ensure, if recognised, would provide a uniform approach across the country.

9. Budget figures

We note that Budget figures are prepared annually in advance, but we note these are not updated in the late Autumn even when notable variances may have occurred for various factors. Whilst not necessary to do so for all boards, we suggest that Chairmen of individual Boards are given opportunity to request updated Budgets after the half year point for the remainder of the year and distribute to Board members if they feel it appropriate due to circumstances to date or anticipated during the year.

Client comment:

As part of the finance regulations, we are required to carry out a budget monitoring exercise during the course of the year. For those Boards that have a relevant meeting, this is reviewed by the Board at their autumn/winter meeting. For all other Boards the monitoring exercise is completed as at the end of the calendar year, at this point the majority of the drain maintenance works have been completed, as would be any planned maintenance works at pumping stations. The expenditure to-date is then forecast to the end of the financial year and compared to the budget and initially sent to the chairman for review. Depending on the outcome of the monitoring exercise depends on whether it is considered appropriate to hold an emergency meeting. However, it is likely that if there were an extraordinary event the Board would be aware "in real time" and appropriate action taken at that point. It is not policy to update budgets depending on levels of expenditure but to use these as comparative to analyse variances of actual expenditure against.

Specific Points

Sutton and Mepal IDB

See item 2 above – residential property value

Hundred of Wisbech IDB
See item 6 above

Conington & Holme IDB
See item 9 above

Client comment (Conington & Holme IDB):

The "overspend" against budget related to additional drain maintenance works that were required and a breakdown at the pumping station which occurred after the monitoring exercise had been completed. These events were managed at the time and appropriate action taken when setting the following years rate.

Waldersey IDB and Hundred of Wisbech IDB – Joint Pumping Arrangement
As in previous years it is noted that there is a discrepancy between debtor held in Waldersey IDB and the creditor held in Hundred of Wisbech IDB; due to the substantial rainfall pattern in late 2020-21 this amount was more significant than normal

Waldersey IDB – Debtor	38,459.99
Hundred of Wisbech IDB - Creditor	47,997.84
Difference	**9,537.85**

This difference arises due to the accounts of Hundred of Wisbech IDB being completed before Waldersey IDB, therefore a provision having to be included within the former's books before more accurate figures become available. The difference is adjusted in the following year's Accounts for Hundred of Wisbech but in the short term could be considered slightly misleading.

We note that there have been discussions to potentially amalgamate the two boards, this would eradicate the anomaly. However, in the absence of this, we wonder whether there is scope to bring the meetings and account preparation periods in line to address this issue.

Waldersey IDB and Hundred of Wisbech IDB – Joint Pumping Arrangement - continued

Client comment (Waldersey IDB and Hundred of Wisbech IDB – Joint Pumping Arrangement):

These costs relate to the contribution for the costs of the shared pumping facility and at the time of production of the year end accounting statements discussions were taking place concerning potential changes to the contribution as a result of changes in land use. A new proposal had been put forward which was broadly approved by the Hundred of Wisbech Board, whose meeting is held first. In completing their accounting statements they requested that, due to the impact of the winter rainfall event the new proposal be used in calculating the contribution. When the Waldersey Board held it's meeting no changes had been approved at therefore the existing contribution calculation was used in their accounting statements. With regards to the Hundred of Wisbech creditor, these "old balances" will be written back during this financial year. There are no current plans to change meeting dates so there will remain a creditor/debtor position in both sets of accounts although now settled, this should be cleared, generally a year in arrears.

Other Matters

As you will already be aware our firm underwent a change of business name from Whiting & Partners to Whitings LLP, with effect from 1 October 2021. As the world and our practice move forward, even in these challenging times towards a "new normal", we have also decided to rebrand and change our look to promote this.

As provided for under the clauses of our existing Terms of Business ongoing engagements under our standard Whiting & Partners Terms and Conditions remain unchanged and have rolled over seamlessly into Whitings LLP; these are available on our new and improved website www.whitingsllp.co.uk

We are immensely proud of the work we continue to do with you at Whiting and we would like to take this opportunity to thank your staff involved in our audit for their assistance and cooperation in achieving substantial completion by the stated target deadlines, especially in light of the operational challenges posed to us all by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Yours sincerely,

Whitings LLP

Whitings LLP

Internal Drainage Boards in England

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Annual Report for the year ended
31 March 2021

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 2021 a copy must be provided to:

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

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

Please round all cash figures down to nearest whole £.

MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Section A – Financial information

Preliminary information on special levies issued by the Board for 2021- 22

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

Special levies information for financial year 2021-22 (forecast)	
Name of local authority	**2021-22 forecast £**
1. FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL	33,994
2. KINGS LYNN & WEST NORFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL	20,260
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
Total	54,254

Section A – Financial information (continued)

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31 March 2021

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 2021 £
INCOME		
1. Drainage Rates		136,993
2. Special Levies		52,931
3. Higher Land Water Contributions from the Environment Agency		626
4. Contributions received from developers/other beneficiaries		1,362
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		511
10. Rents and Acknowledgements		0
11. Other Income		2,372
Total income		**194,795**
EXPENDITURE		
12. New Works and Improvement Works		0
13. Total precept to the Environment Agency		75,297
14. Watercourse maintenance		69,244
15. Pumping Stations, Sluices and Water level control structures		39,899
16. Administration		16,578
17. PSCAs		0
18. Rechargeable Works		0
19. Finance Charges		0
20. SSSIs		0
21. IDB Biodiversity and conservation (other than item 20 expenditure)		465
22. Other Expenditure		3,407
Total expenditure		**204,890**

EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS		
23. Profits/(losses) arising from the disposal of fixed assets		36,598
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		**26,503**
24. Developers Funds income not applied in year		50,729
25. Grant income not applied in year		7,445

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?)........................... 2021

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

When was biodiversity last discussed at a Board meeting (date)?............................. 25/06/2021

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?

41

How many pumping stations does the Board operate?

3

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

5.12 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 ☐
Finance ☐
Environment ☐
Health, safety and welfare ☐
Communications and engagement ☐
Other (please describe) ☐

No training has been provided for board members during the year ended 31st March 2021.

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

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

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

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

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

Has your Board adopted the following governance documents?

Standing Orders ....Yes ☒ No ☐

Have the Standing Orders been approved by Ministers ....Yes ☒ No ☐

Byelaws ....Yes ☒ No ☐

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

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

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

Financial Regulations...Yes ☒ No ☐

Register of Member's Interests...Yes ☒ No ☐

Anti-fraud and corruption policy.. Yes ☒ No ☐

Board membership and attendance

How many Board members (in total – elected and appointed) do you have on your IDB?	16
Seats available to appointed members under the Land Drainage Act 1991.	5
Number of elected members on the board at year end.	13
Number of appointed members on the board at year end.	3
Mean average number of elected members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year.	9
Mean average number of appointed members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year.	2

Have you held elections within the last three years?..Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

Did elections comply with the requirements specified by the Secretary of State under Regulation 28 of the Land Drainage (Election of Drainage Boards) Regulations 1938?......................... Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A ☒

Complaints procedure

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

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

Public Engagement

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

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

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

0.6%

Section B: NOTES

Guidance and Best Practice

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

Board membership and attendance

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

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

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

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

Section C – Declaration

MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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

Signature	SJ Ablett
Date	27/09/2021
Name in BLOCK LETTERS	MISS SAMANTHA ABLETT
Designation	ASSISTANT TREASURER
Email address	Sam.ablett@middlelevel.gov.uk

MANEA & WELNEY DDC
INSURED VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS

PUMPING STATIONS

	As At 31st March 2022
PURLS BRIDGE PUMPING STATION	735,000.00
GLEN HOUSE PUMPING STATION	1,530,000.00
OLD GLENHOUSE PUMPING STATION	300,000.00
WELCHES DAM	5,000.00
	2,570,000.00

MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Payments 2020/2021 (1st April 2020 - 31st December 2020)

Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	253.78
C J Mason - Puncture repair (Works van)	34.80
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, work in connection with asset surveys, together with insurance valuation of all pumping stations, byelaw consent applications and review of the consultation document regarding the Norfolk CCC M & W Local Plan)	1,164.60
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of Acetal gears (Glenhouse pumping station)	312.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to weedscreen cleaner (Purls Bridge pumping station)	658.32
Ratatak - Pest control (April - June 2020)	84.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Road tax - AU15 XHB	260.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery and Health and Safety contract	8,997.34
Bloom & Wake Garage Ltd - Derv	51.40
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	18.04
Bloom & Wake Garage Ltd - Derv	36.75
Ben Burgess Coates - Purchase of new John Deere Tractor - AO20 NWL	133,775.96
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	18.48
Wave - Metered water supply	23.86
N L Hydraulics - Hydraulic hose, adaptors and oil	72.62
Environment Agency - Precept	37,648.50
British Telecom - Telephone charges	105.12
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	18.48
Middle Level Commissioners - Bank charges for same day payment for new tractor	15.00
Mastenbroek Environmental Ltd - Purchase of new Herder Cavalier flail mower and mowing bucket	85,320.00
C J Mason - Puncture repair (Works van)	18.00
Middle Level Commissioners -Insurance charge for tractor and flailmower whilst in transport at sea	900.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	277.27
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	18.48
Ratatak - Pest control (July - September 2020)	84.00
Ben Burgess Coates - 100 hour service of John Deere Tractor - AO20 NWL	379.61
Association of Drainage Authorities - Contribution to Water Resources East	62.53
Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd - Pipe assemlbly and fan	978.67
Wave - Metered water supply	11.85
FJS Services Ltd - 20 litres of Adblue	26.22
FJS Services Ltd - Manufacture and supply frame, hook and bracket for signage for John Deere tractor	186.29
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	18.48
Upwell IDB - Transfer of 50% developmemnt contribution receipt - Sea Structural Engineer	2,433.02
British Telecom - Telephone charges	105.12
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	18.48
Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2019-2020 accounts)	906.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	277.27
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages and telephone charges	7,466.65
C J Mason - Inspect van on lift, for fire damage, remove lodged grass and mud from under vehicle	24.00
Ratatak - Pest control (October - December 2020)	84.00
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	18.48
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit fee (2019-2020 accounts)	480.00
Wave - Metered water supply	11.97
Middle Level Commissioners - Ebay fees for sale of tractor	250.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	2,559.42
Environment Agency - Precept	37,648.50
Fen Group - Drain Maintenance	13,464.00
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	8.01
Cambridgeshire County Council - Annual rent (Right of access)	100.00
British Telecom - Telephone charges	105.12
HMRC - VAT payment for quarter to 30th September 2020	5,469.75
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	122.10
C J Mason - Diagnostics, repairs to sensor and supply of headlight bulb	142.54
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	13.50
N L Hydraulics - Hydraulic hose	29.58
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Supply (Glenhouse pumping station)	645.94
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Supply (Purls Bridge pumping station)	3,053.89
Anglia Farmers - Diesel	192.55
Anglia Farmers - Levy charge	0.50
Anglia Farmers - Electricity metering charges	339.68
Anglia farmers - Spares for repairs	40.79
District labour	23,244.03
NEST Pension Contributions	2,046.96
	373,132.30

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Payments 2021/2022 (1st April 2021 - 31st December 2021)

Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery and Health and Safety contract	8,956.44
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	1,166.10
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to automatic weedscreen cleaner (Glenhouse Pumping Station)	1,817.17
Middle Level Commissioners - Pump repairs (Purls Bridge Pumping Station)	804.15
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,041.62
Ratatak - Pest control (April - June 2021)	84.00
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	12.00
Wave - Metered water supply	11.72
Environment Agency - Precept	37,648.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Preparation of highland water claims	18.89
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	12.15
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	12.15
Ben Burgess Coates - 750 hour service of John Deere Tractor - AO20 NWL	940.78
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	282.07
Mastenbroek Environmental Ltd - Seal kit	26.17
Ratatak - Pest control (July - September 2021)	84.00
Wave - Metered water supply	11.91
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	12.15
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of mink rafts, traps and remoti units (Account from Norfolk Rivers)	600.00
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	13.25
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	12.15
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery	7,470.08
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	3,311.67
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	526.50
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit fee (2020-2021 accounts)	960.00
FJS Services Ltd - 3 Hex bolts	7.20
AJS Farming - Rates refund	248.68
Environment Agency - Precept	37,648.50
Ratatak - Pest control (October - December 2021)	84.00
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	12.15
Wave - Metered water supply	12.04
Mastenbroek Environmental Ltd - 1.3 metres of rubber strip	82.42
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	282.07
FJS Services Ltd - 28 repair washers and a 10mm fuel hose	7.65
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	12.39
Fen Group - Drain Maintenance	7,567.80
Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2020-2021 accounts)	927.00
Cambridgeshire County Council - Annual rent (Right of access)	100.00
FenFlow Ltd - Overhaul of automatic weedscreen cleaner (Glen House pumping station)	28,740.79
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Supply (Glenhouse pumping station)	607.53
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Supply (Purls Bridge pumping station)	1,890.31
Anglia Farmers - Diesel	310.79
Anglia Farmers - Gas oil	8,012.02
Anglia Farmers - Electricity metering charges	344.65
Anglia farmers - Spares for repairs	285.14
District labour	20,860.22
NEST Pension Contributions	1,961.15
	175,840.12

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS
Rating Estimates 2022/2023

		Approved Estimates 2021/2022	Probable Actual 2021/2022	Estimated 2022/2023		Estimated 2023/2024	Estimated 2024/2025
1 CHANNEL MAINTENANCE		13,500	18,500	13,500		13,750	14,000
2 LABOUR		34,500	34,500	38,000		38,750	39,500
3 REPAIRS AND RENEWALS		10,500	9,000	10,500		10,500	10,750
	Pump overhaul	15,000	15,000	15,000		15,000	15,000
4 FUEL		20,000	20,000	27,500		28,000	28,500
5 RATES, INSURANCES & TELEPHONES		3,300	3,500	3,750		4,000	4,250
6 ADMINISTRATION		17,500	17,300	17,775		17,775	18,000
7 TECHNICAL SERVICES		3,000	2,000	3,000		3,000	3,000
8 E. A. PRECEPT		75,297	75,297	77,297		79,250	81,200
9 PLANT REPLACEMENT		0	23,951	24,000		0	0
		192,597	**219,048**	**230,322**		**210,025**	**214,200**
INCOME		**1,390**	**24,843**	**24,887**		1,000	1,200
Net Expenditure	191,207	**191,207**	**194,204**	**205,435**		**209,025**	**213,000**
Rate Requirement		**0.4100**		**0.43250**		**0.4395**	**0.4478**
Increase on previous year budget				**5.49%**		**1.61%**	**1.90%**
AV 475,617							
Gen. Fund balance	open		232,507	232,856			
Rates raised		*Rate set - 41.00*	194,553	205,435	0.4325 p		
net expenditure			194,204	205,435			
closing balance			**232,856**	**232,856**			

Manea & Welney 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 2022/2023 is:-

a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 72.04%

b) Proportion to be borne by Special levy issued to:-

Fenland District Council -	17.57%	
Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk –	10.39%	27.96%

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £3,420.

In 2022/2023 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levy would raise £4,750.

Estimated revenue cash balance in hand at 31st March 2022 - £230,000

The estimated net expenditure for the Commissioners Revenue and Capital Programmes in 2022/2023 is £205,435 and equivalent to:-

a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 43.25p and

b) a Special levy on Fenland District Council of £36,146
a Special levy on Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk of £21,372

In 2021/2022 a rate of 41.00 in the £ was set, together with Special levies of £33,994 on Fenland District Council and £20,260 on Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk to raise £194,525.

The Commissioners should give consideration to the future level of balances required when setting the rate for 2022/2023.

D C THOMAS

Clerk to the Commissioners

January 2022