<u>CHURCHFIELD AND PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD</u>

Telephone: DD (01354) 602003

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

Middle Level Offices
85 Whittlesey Road
MARCH
Cambs
PE15 0AH

25th February 2022

Mr Chairman and Gentlemen

<u>Meeting of the Board 7th March 2022</u>

I enclose the Agenda for the Meeting of the Board to be held at The Crown Lodge, Outwell at 7.00pm on Monday 7th March 2022.

Please telephone or e-mail to confirm <u>whether or not you will be attending the meeting</u> as soon as possible.

Yours truly

D C THOMAS

Clerk to the Board

<u>To the Chairman and the Members of the Churchfield and Plawfield Internal Drainage Board</u>

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

   Members to declare any interests relating to the Agenda.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

   To confirm the Minutes of the Meetings of the Board held on 8th March 2021 and 25th June 2021.

   (Copy pages 10-30)

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

5. Election of Board Members

   The Clerk will report that the term of office of the Members of the Board will expire on 31st October 2022 and will submit the proposed register of electors which is applicable to the 2022 election.

6. Anglian Water – Culvert at Points 35-36

   Further to minute B.1116, the Clerk to report.

7. Contraventions of Byelaws

a) Access Strip – Points 48-49

   Further to minute B.1117(b) the Clerk to report.

b) Development on land to the east of Church Field, south west of 54 Well Creek Road and east of Baldwins Drove, Outwell – Mr J Vickers (MLC Ref No. 604)

   Further to minute B.1117(c) the Clerk to report.

8. District System Sections 42-40

Further to minute B.1118, the Clerk to report.

9. Flooding and Drainage Matters at Upwell Health Centre Car Park, land east of New Road, south of Townley Close, north of Listers Road, Upwell (MLC Ref No 602)

Further to minute B.1119, the Clerk to report.

(This matter is covered in the Consulting Engineer's Report)

10. Sulivans Dam

Further to minute B.1120, the District Officer to report.

11. 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 CO_2 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) Applications for Byelaw Consent

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

Mr C Crofts	Retrospective installation of culvert approx 4m long and 150mm dia – private watercourse off Lowside	06/04/21
Miss Y Parfett	Installation of permanent precast concrete headwall and outfall pipes to serve the menage water system.	20/07/21
UK Power Networks	Installation of underground 125mm plastic twin walled rigi duct to house electricity cable – Points 14 and 15 at Justdogz Kennels	10/8/21

iv) 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 was held on Tuesday the 1st March 2022.

d) Updating IDB Byelaws

Further to minute B.1074, 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.

v) 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.

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.

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

To consider the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

(Encl 1)

13. Capital Improvement Programme

To review and approve the Board's future Capital Improvement Programme.

(Copy page 31)

14. District Officer's Report

To consider the Report of the District Officer.

(Copy pages 32)

15. Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

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

(Copy pages 33-41)

16. District Officer's Fee

a) To give consideration to the District Officer's fee for 2022/2023

b) To give consideration to the appropriate reimbursement of the out-of-pocket expenses of the District Officer for 2022/2023.

17. 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.

18. Environment Agency – Precept

The Clerk will report that at the Environment Agency Flood Defence Committee Meeting, the Committee voted to adopt an indicative 2% increase in the precepts of IDB's for the next 6 years commencing from 2022/23, with the ability to revisit annually should exceptional circumstances indicate this is required.

The Committee voted for a 0% increase (for exceptional circumstances) above the indicative 2% increase for the year ending 31st March 2023 – total of a 2% increase in the level of precept on IDB's for the year ending 31st March 2023.

The precept for 2021/2022 was £2,838.37

19. Association of Drainage Authorities
Subscriptions

The Clerk will report that ADA has increased subscriptions by 1% for 2022 from £565 to £571.

20. Health and Safety

Further to minute B.1133, the Chairman will report.

21. Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2019/2020

a) The Clerk will report that in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations all members received a copy of the Annual Accounts for the year ended the 31st March 2020 before the 30th June of that year and approved the Accounts for the purposes of the Regulations.

b) To consider the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2020.

(Copy pages 42-46)

c) To consider the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2020.

(Copy pages 47-55)

22. Annual Accounts of the Board - 2020/2021

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

23. Defra IDB1 Returns

The Clerk will refer to the completed IDB1 form for 2020/21.

(Copy pages 56-65)

24. Review of Internal Controls

a) To consider the system of Internal Controls.

b) To consider the appointment of the Internal Auditor and the proposed Audit Strategy and Audit Plan for 2022-2024

25. Risk Management Assessment

To give consideration to the Board's Risk Management Policy.

26. Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

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

27. 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.

28. Payments

The Clerk to report on payments made;

a) 2020/2021 (1st February – 31st March 2021)

b) 2021/2022 (1st April 2021 – 31st January 2022)

(Copy page 66)

29. 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.

(Copy pages 67-68)

30. Date of Next Meeting

31. Any Other Business

CHURCHFIELD AND PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Churchfield and Plawfield Internal Drainage Board hosted at the Middle Level Offices, March on Monday the 8th March 2021

PRESENT

S A Calton Esq (Chairman)	C J Crofts Esq
D J W Boyce Esq (Vice Chairman)	M D R Fairey Esq
G D Boyce Esq	D J Lunn Esq

Miss Lorna McShane (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Peter Beckenham (Conservation Officer) were in attendance.

The Chairman introduced Mr Michael Fairey of Alderney Livestock Co Ltd to his first meeting of the Board.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from P Allen Esq, D Cowling Esq, A Robb Esq, Councillors K Harrison, R Melton and C N T Rose.

B.1112 Declarations of Interest

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

Councillor Crofts declared an interest in any planning matters as a member of Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk and in minute no. B.1141.

Mr D J W Boyce declared an interest in minute nos. B.1126 and B.1141.

B.1113 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 9th March and 26th June 2020 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1114 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2019/2020

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

RESOLVED

(i) That in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations the minutes record that approval of the accounts was given on 26th June 2020.

(ii) That the Chairman was authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2020.

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

B.1115 Board Membership

Further to minute B.1079, Miss McShane reported that Mr Michael Fairey representing Alderney Livestock Co Ltd had accepted the invitation to become a Member of the Board.

B.1116 Anglian Water - Culvert at Points 35-36

Further to minute B.1082, the District Officer reported that the remedial works required by Anglian Water at Points 35-36 had not been completed satisfactorily. It was suspected that this was because of COVID-19 Government restrictions that remain in place.

RESOLVED

That the Consulting Engineer contact Anglian Water and request that they carry out the works to the culvert at Points 35-36 as a matter of urgency.

B.1117 Contraventions of Byelaws

a) Access Strip – Points 29-30

Further to minute B.1083, Miss McShane reported that the work had now been completed and the District Officer confirmed that he is now able to gain access.

b) Access Strip – Points 48-49

Further to minute B.1084, Miss McShane reported that Mr Clifton had been advised that he needed consent from the Board. To date the relevant forms had not yet been received and a further letter would be sent to Mr Clifton reminding him that he needed to apply for the Board's consent.

c) Development on land to the east of Church Field, south west of 54 Well Creek Road and east of Baldwins Drove, Outwell – Mr J Vickers (MLC Ref No. 604)

Further to minute B.1086(iii), Miss McShane reported that Mr Vickers had removed the sign and post box from within the Board's 9 metre Byelaw distance. She also reported that the appropriate documentation required in respect of either surface and/or treated foul effluent water disposal at this site had not been received.

However, as the works had not yet been completed the matter would need to be kept under review and further action taken if and when necessary.

RESOLVED

That consent for the disposal of surface water /treated foul effluent should be followed up by the Consulting Engineer if not received.

B.1118 District System Sections 42-40

Further to minute B.1086(ii), the District Officer referred to Sections 42-40 of the District system which had very little flow and was difficult to maintain. Consideration had been given to relinquishing this section of the District watercourse but the District Officer reported that the land had been sold and was to be developed. The District Officer would review this section over the summer period and report back to the Board.

B.1119 Flooding and Drainage Matters at Upwell Health Centre Car Park, land east of New Road, south of Townley Close, north of Listers Road, Upwell (MLC Ref No 602)

Further to minute B.1086(ii), the Board considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers on flooding issues in the car park of Upwell Health Centre and the associated reports of high water levels in the private watercourse along the rear of properties in Townley Close.

The private watercourse behind properties in Townley Close has been poorly maintained and the majority of the properties in Townley Close are owned by Freebridge Community Housing. The Board were advised that the Upwell Health Centre car park was in the ownership of the neighbouring Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk who were therefore riparian owners for the drain and it was likely therefore that maintenance of the ditch would fall between the Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk and Freebridge Community Housing although there were other public and private ownerships where there may be riparian rights involved and some of the land remained with Woodgate Developments.

At a meeting on the 12th February 2021 between the various agencies involved it had been decided, subject to approval of the Board, to obtain quotations for clearing any obstructions from the drain and clearing and reprofiling the whole end of the drain at the rear of Townley Close. The Borough Council had accepted that they had riparian responsibilities along with Freebridge Housing Association. However the Board would act as agents for the Borough Council and the Council agreed to underwrite their share of the costs to enable the work to be carried out. It had been agreed at the meeting that the Middle Level Commissioners would supervise the work on behalf of the Internal Drainage Board and that the Solicitor/Assistant Clerk would write to all riparian owners informing them of their financial liability once the tenders had been received from contractors.

RESOLVED

That these works be approved in principle subject to receipt of tenders and once these were received they should be discussed with the Chairman of the Board.

B.1120 Sulivans Dam

Further to minute B.1086(vii), the District Officer reported that the control structure at Point 14 had not been an issue since the two top boards had been removed from Sullivans Dam

B.1121 Clerk's Report

Miss McShane advised:-

i) COVID-19 Actions

That following the instructions given by government on 23rd March 2020 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 2020.
- 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 the last Chair's meeting was that each Board be asked to consider the degree of delegation and reporting they require on planning and consenting matters. This was in response to several queries over the extent of detail being reported on such matters and the delays in issuing responses due to the number of people being consulted. I have outlined several possible options below to assist the Board but of course there are many other permutations and it is for the Board to decide which suits its interests best.

a) Remain with the current arrangements.

b) Continue to delegate all commenting on consent applications and relevant planning matters to the chairman and in his absence (or where he has an interest) to the Vice Chair. The Chair to have the power to decide if a matter should be raised at the board meeting for its consideration where legal timeframes permit this. All matters however to be reported generally more briefly within the Board report, ie number of applications responded to and number of consents issued or refused.

c) As above but leaving the Clerk with the power to determine the appropriate responses to consent applications and planning matters without reference to the Chair or Vice Chair.

RESOLVED

That the Board continue with the current arrangements and receive all details on planning permissions and consenting matters.

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 an Environmental Good Governance Guide. It was also noted at this meeting that Agricultural and Environmental Bills were passing through Parliament, the later including clauses benefiting 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 Board:-

Name of Applicant	Description of Works	Date Consent Granted
A D Hurst and Son Commercial Ltd	Erection of a steel palisade security fence	11th August 2020
Mr A Loveridge	Piping of private watercourse alongside 100 Stonehouse Road Upwell	9th September 2020
Woodgate Developments Limited	Construction of a culverted access crossing and associate works including roadway access – private watercourse to rear of nos. 10-28 Townley Close and the Upwell Health Centre car park	28th September 2020

Mrs Satt-Cunningham	Construction of a 20m long brick wall inclusive of 4 metre wide gate Baptist Road, Upwell	14th October 2020
Fountain Construction (Anglia) Ltd	Piping and filling of approx..5 metres of Board's watercourse to provide vehicular access – between points 5 and 2, Back Drove, Upwell	2nd February 2021

RESOLVED

That the action taken in granting consents be approved.

iv) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the 83rd Annual Conference of the Association had been 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 Member who wishes to attend.

c) Meeting of the River Great Ouse Branch

That the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association was held virtually on Tuesday the 2nd March 2021.

Matters covered were that there was a change in Chairman with Harry Raby stepping down and Marc Heading taking his place. Councillor Doug McMurdo takes on the role of Vice Chairman. This maintains the balance of having upland and lowland members in key roles and also balances council and agricultural ratepayers’ interests. John Heading was appointed for another three years on the ADA Board as branch representative. Robert Caudwell gave on update on ADA matters focusing in on progress of the agriculture bill through parliament and the lowland peat initiative which he considers must not negatively impact on livelihoods and the need to produce food for the nation. Next to speak was Brian Stewart who was seeking support for his initiative to create an Ex-Aficio post on the FRCC for the sitting Chairman of the Great Ouse branch of ADA (EA nominated post). This was supported unanimously and Marc Heading will take up this new role with immediate effect.

Claire Vouvray and Paul Burrows gave updates on the revenue funding position, which was quite healthy with sources of money found to deliver what had been targeted and on the long-term strategy for the area including the tactical plans which are set to make access to grant in aid smoother than it might otherwise be. A warning was raised that funding may get squeezed as time passes and the financial impact of COVID-19 gets addressed.

Approximately 30 people attended this virtual meeting, which should return to its normal format at Prickwillow Hall next year.

That the date of the next meeting is 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 and the full EFRA report can be found via the following link; https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5801/cmselect/cmenvfru/170/170.pdf.

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

Further to minute B.1085(vi) Miss McShane 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.

vi) 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 £5.2billionn 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

vii) <u>What is Good Governance</u>

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.

viii) <u>Fens Biosphere</u>

Further to minute B.1085, Miss McShane referred to the leaflet from Cambridgeshire Acre.

ix) <u>Land Registry</u>

That whilst it is a legal requirement for land occupiers to notify the Board of any change of occupation, including releasing contact details for the new occupiers, on many occasions this does not occur and time is spent trying to determine who the new occupier is. When the normal avenues fail to deliver any meaningful information we now use our Land Registry account to gain details of the current land owner. The costs of making an application via this method are small (currently £6) but obviously this will show up on the Board accounts, hence the need to draw this new way of working to the Boards attention.

x) National Drainage Show & Floodex 2021

That the National Drainage Show & Floodex 2021 will be held at ExCel, London on the 9th and 10th November 2021.

B.1122 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

The Board considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

Flood Risk Management (FRM) for the Fens

The Engineer reported on the future Fenland project. The Board noted the response from the Environment Agency and the cost to Internal Drainage Boards of developing the technical plans.

The Integrity of Corrugated Steel Pipes

The Engineer reported that several Boards within the Commissioners' area have experience problems with sudden deformation and failure of corrugates steel pipes, many of which were installed during the 1980s/early 1990s, that have needed urgent action often requiring the total replacement of the structure concerned with unexpected costs. The Board noted this issue but were not aware of any corrugated steel pipes in their area.

Planning consultation

Following concerns raised by the Board following problems with the development in the Three Holes/Outwell/Upwell area, a meeting was held with the Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council to discuss development control related issues including planning and consenting matters. The meeting was primarily in relation to a five-plot development at the rear of Townley Close, Upwell. However, the issues related to development in the wider local area within West Norfolk. The meeting was attended by the Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Senior Planner, Principal Planner and Water Management Officer and Assistant Director of Environment and Planning together with the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer and Mr S Calton, Chairman of two Internal Drainage Boards within West Norfolk. The meeting were advised that in respect of planning applications no bespoke responses were supplied to the planning authority unless the Board had specifically instructed the Middle Level Commissioners to do so or if it was subject to a pre/post application consultation with the Middle Level Commissioners. The Council were advised that the Middle Level Commissioners and associated Boards do respond to strategic planning matters and although the Council had been advised of Boards concerns on several occasions it was felt that these had been overlooked. The Engineer advised that due to the topography and nature of water level and flood risk management systems in the local area housing allocations often raised issues which require resolution if the development are to meet National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy and the local strategies and policies of the Lead Local Flood Authority. These solutions often require negotiation with relevant parties which can delay the delivery of development and may have financial implications for the developer and local economy and affects the Council's housing targets. In addition many developers, agents and consultants do not have adequate local knowledge to provide these solutions for these developments and it is often necessary for the relevant Internal Drainage Boards to assist. This can impact on the Board's limited resources. The funding of solutions using Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy was discussed and Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council advised that it was possible to submit a request for these but there were many parties bidding for these small allocations of money from 106 Agreements.

Planning Applications

The Engineer reported on 18 new development related matters which had been received and dealt with since the last meeting.

Application for 100 Church Drove, Outwell (MLC Ref. No. 621)

Mr J Barratt chose to use the infiltration device self-certification process for this development. However the scale of the development exceeded the scope of the self-certification process and Mr Barratt's agent had been sent an email advising him of this. No further correspondence had been received from the agent or Mr Barratt.

Developments at Fountain Foods Ltd, New Road, Upwell – Fountain Foods Ltd/Anglia Growers (MLC Ref. Nos 405, 421, 436, 472, 543 & 627)

a) The Board noted that the outstanding documents required for this development were currently being processed.

b) Erection of canteen, training room and staff facilities – Fountain Foods Ltd (MLC Ref No. 627)

The Engineer reported that planning for this development had been granted by the District Council in August 2020. Since then a letter had been sent to the applicant and Anglia Building Consultants (ABC) advising that the development had been implemented that the applicant be reminded of its duties under both the Board's Byelaws and the Land Drainage Act and discharge consent would be required.

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

The Engineer advised that the developers had been sent a letter requesting them to submit the required Byelaw/Discharge applications to the Board to regularise the situation at this development. This letter had been issued to the applicants requesting the submission of the appropriate documents to the Board and a response was awaited.

Proposed Residential development of 4 dwellings land south of Plawfield, Back Drove, Upwell – Fountain Developments (Anglia) Ltd (MLC Ref No 505) and Fountain Construction (Anglia) Ltd (MLC Ref No.618)

The Engineer advised that planning permission of this development had been refused and therefore no byelaw consent was needed for the culvert.

Residential development on land north west of Townley Close, New Road, Upwell – Mr & Mrs M Starr (MLC Ref No. 523), Starr Developments (MLC Ref Nos. 540, 560 & 579), Mr D

Johnson (Plot 4) (MLC Ref No. 614), Mr A Walshaw & Miss Brown (Plot 2) (MLC Ref No. 623) and Mr S McCurry (Plot 5((MLC Ref No. 631)

The Board noted the position with regard development on this site and that one of the planning applications was supported by a Flood Risk Assessment & Surface Water Strategy that was prepared by Engineering Support Practice (ESP) Ltd. This document had included extracts from both national and local guidance, including the Commissioners' website and the Board's Policy Statement but no reference was made in the submission to the infiltration tests that had been undertaken and the conclusion infers that, following a meeting with the Commissioners' Engineer, it was agreed that a shallow soakaway system would best suit and be compatible with the soakaway requirements. However, a record of this meeting cannot be found and ESP were advised of this in December 2019. It would appear however that ESP Ltd have not advised either their client or the Borough Council of these issues.

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

The Engineer reported that site inspections of the construction of the new access culvert at Tointons Road, Upwell were carried out by the Senior Engineer to ensure compliance with the consent conditions.

Development at Plawfield Cottage, 112 Green Road, Upwell – Mrs E Rigby (MLC Ref Nos. 567 & 606)

The Engineer advised that the site is in close proximity to the water control structure at Point 13 and the Board's consent will be required for any encroachment within the associated maintenance access strip. A letter was issued to the applicant whose agent has now returned a Byelaw consent application which is currently being validated and an Infiltration Device Self certification application has been received in respect of surface water disposal.

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

The application for the piping of the private watercourse to the rear of this property along with the surface water drainage system for the two properties was recommended for approval in September following discussions with the Board's Chairman. Following confirmation that consent would not be granted the proposals for the disposal of treated effluent from the development was changed to infiltration with discharge from the treatment plants to public sewer was confirmed to be too expensive for the size of development due to the closest foul water sewer being 100 metres from within Green Lane. The consent included the condition to inspect the construction of the drainage pipe and infill work. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions the work has been delayed and has not yet been undertaken on site. To date the developer has not yet confirmed when the works will be undertaken.

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

The Engineer reported that the planning application for this development was refused planning permission by the Borough Council because the site was outside of the defined area of the village and therefore it had not been necessary to object to the development being within the Byelaw distance or the requirement for Byelaw/Discharge application to be submitted before the commencement of development.

Initial enquiry for residential development of 39 plots for affordable housing at land off St Peter's Road, Upwell to the rear of previous Blunt's Orchard development – Client of ADC Infrastructure (MLC Ref No. 619)

The Engineer reported that following an initial enquiry from ADC Infrastructure Ltd and consultation with the Chairman a response was provided in relation to the highlighted drainage proposals outlining the challenges within the area in respect of drainage and particularly the drainage proposals for the adjacent Blunts Orchard development. The response highlighted the Board's requirements for a fully attenuated drainage system which would also require improvements to the Board's Drain along Stonehouse Road between Points 8 and 9. The Engineer advised that no further correspondence had been received in relation to this matter.

Proposed extension and alterations to existing dwelling at Eason House, 11 Well Creek Road, Outwell – Mr & Mrs Wadsley (MLC Ref No. 620)

The Engineer advised that a planning application had been sought for a relatively small development to the north of Point 42 and that provided the Board's requirements are met it should not be of concern to the Board.

Outdoor all weather riding arena (menège) at Belmont Garden, 68 St Peters Road, Upwell – Ms Parfett (MLC Ref No. 634)

The Engineer advised that planning permission had been submitted to the Borough Council for a menège which was subsequently granted planning permission. Contact has now been made by the developer and a completed post-application request has been received. Questions are continuing and the applicant has been advised that any discharge into the Board's drain beside Stonehouse Road will have to be attenuated to greenfield rates. Any infiltration device proposed by the applicant will be checked to ensure its long-term efficiency and this position was noted by the Board.

The Board considered and noted the Upwell Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2038, the Norfolk Water Management Partnership (Norfolk County Council (LLFA) and the Drainage and Waste Water Management Plans.

RESOLVED

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

ii) Application for 100 Church Drove, Outwell (MLC Ref. No. 621)

That a letter be sent to Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Council Land Charges Department advising that the self-certification process was not appropriate for drainage for this development.

iii) Developments MLC Ref Nos. (188), (566, 574 & 575), (309, 338, 375, 461, 551 & 568), (445 & 536), (446), (479), (541), (559 & 573), (542), (553), (562), (516), (571), (529, 538 & 548), (582), (555), (578), (562), (572), (558 & 576), (565), (584), (512), (539 & 540), (603)

That further action was required on these developments at the current time.

iv) Development at Fountain Foods Ltd, New Road, Upwell – Fountain Foods Ltd (MLC Ref No. 627) - Erection of canteen, training room and staff facilities

That a further letter be sent to the applicant and Anglia Building Consultants advising that the advisory letter on the failure to comply with the Board's Byelaws and the Land Drainage Act be noted on the Land Charges Register.

v) Residential development on land north west of Townley Close, New Road, Upwell – Mr & Mrs M Starr (MLC Ref No. 523), Starr Developments (MLC Ref Nos. 540, 560 & 579), Mr D Johnson (Plot 4) (MLC Ref No. 614), Mr A Walshaw & Miss Brown (Plot 2) (MLC Ref No. 623) and Mr S McCurry (Plot 5((MLC Ref No. 631)

That the Consulting Engineer should write to the parties concerned advising them that the site is to be the subject of a note on the local Land Charges Register; infiltration tests undertaken on the site have failed to meet the Board's requirements and current design standards and remind them of their duties under both the Board's Byelaws and the Land Drainage Act.

B.1123 Capital Improvement Programme

Members considered the Board's future capital improvement programme and requested that some provision is made in the next Capital Improvement Programme for culvert works at Points 21-25 and Points 2-4.

RESOLVED

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

B.1124 District Officer's Report

The Board considered the Report of the District Officer.

The District Officer reported that the maintenance work had again been completed by the Kings Lynn Consortium Internal Drainage Board and various matters raised in his last report had been satisfactorily completed including culvert blockages at Points 7 and 9 and the control structure at Point 14. He confirmed that the clearance of bushes and brambles between access points 29 and 30 now enabled access for maintenance purposes. He also confirmed that nursery stock planted along the access strip between Points 48 and 49 were currently being removed. The District Officer said that he wished it to be recorded that in his opinion the number of new dwellings and associated impermeable surfaces planned for the north west of the district in the near future will render parts of the system inadequate in a high rainfall event leading to significant localised flooding.

The District Officer also requested that his contact details are withdrawn from the Middle Level Commissioners' website.

RESOLVED

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

ii) That the necessary drainworks notices be sent and the District Officer be authorised to obtain quotations and organise the maintenance works for 2021/2022.

B.1125 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Miss McShane referred to the Conservation Officer's Newsletter, dated December 2020, previously circulated to Members.

Mr Peter Beckenham, Conservation Officer, introduced himself to the Board and presented his Biodiversity Action Plan report for 2020/2021. In addition to his written report, The Conservation Officer commented on water voles and reminded the Board that he should be contacted before any bank reprofiling works that may have an impact on water voles takes place. There had been issues with another board in the area where works had caused damage to water vole habitat and if the Board had any concerns about this he was happy to be contacted to discuss the matter. There was some discussion on the occurrence of Chinese mitten crabs. The Conservation Officer advised that any sightings of mitten crab should be reported to him so that he could record the data. The Conservation Officer then reported that ADA had published a new template and guidance note and that next year the Biodiversity Action Plan will follow this new template which would provide an opportunity to introduce changes and refresh the way the report is presented to, for example, enable BAP reports to identify projects for developers to help provide net gain in accordance with the new Environment Act. The Conservation Officer commented that floating pennywort is a problem in the area and board members should be vigilant about the presence of it and that he would arrange for a poster to be sent to the board for display.

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.1126 District Officer Expenses

The Board gave consideration to the appropriate reimbursement of the out of pocket expenses for 2021/2022 incurred by the District Officer on the Board's behalf.

RESOLVED

i) That the Board agree that reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred by the District Officer for 2021/2022 be allowed, if substantiated by an invoice and that the Chairman be authorised to agree the final amount.

ii) That the Board agree that a sum of up to £1,643.00 be allowed for the services of the District Officer for 2021/2022.

iii) That the payment submitted for 2020/2021 in the sum of £2,499.52 be approved.

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

B.1127 State-aided Schemes

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

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

B.1128 Environment Agency – Precepts

Miss McShane reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2021/2022 in the sum of £2,838.00 (the precept for 2020/2021 being £2,838.00).

B.1129 Association of Drainage Authorities Subscriptions

Miss McShane reported that the Clerk had been advised that subscriptions for 2021 will remain unchanged at £565.

RESOLVED

That the requested ADA subscription for 2021 be paid.

B.1130 Determinations of annual values for rating purposes

The Board considered the recommendations for the determinations of annual values for rating purposes.

RESOLVED

i) That the determinations recommended be adopted by the Board.

ii) That the Clerk be empowered to serve notices and to take such other action as may be necessary to comply with statutory requirements.

iii) That the Chairman and the Clerk be empowered to authorise appropriate action on behalf of the Board in connection with any appeals against the determinations.

B.1131 Rate arrears

Consideration was given to writing off rate arrears amounting to £28.24.

RESOLVED

That the arrears be written off.

B.1132 Contribution from Developer

With reference to minute B.185(iii), Miss McShane 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.

B.1133 Health and Safety

Further to minute B.1097, the Chairman reported that as the Board had no pumping stations he had felt it had not been necessary to have a second meeting with Cope Safety Management and reported that the risk assessments had been completed and were up-to-date.

B.1134 Special Circumstance Policy on Tendering

Miss McShane referred to the policy that had been produced and advised Members 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 Board formally adopt this policy.

B.1135 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2020/2021

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

B.1136 Defra IDB1 Returns

Miss McShane referred to the completed IDB1 form for 2019/2020 which the Board noted and approved.

B.1137 Review of Internal Controls

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

B.1138 Risk Management Assessment

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

B.1139 Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

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

RESOLVED

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

B.1140 Exercise of Public Rights

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

B.1141 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £3,744.55 which had been made during the financial year 2019/2020 (1st February to 31st March 2020) and £34,323.16 made during the financial year 2020/2021 (1st April 2020 to 31st January 2021).
(NB) – The District Officer declared an interest in the payment made to him.

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

B.1142 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2021/2022

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2021/2022 and were informed by Miss McShane 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 17.79% and 82.21%.

RESOLVED

i) That the estimates be approved.

ii) That a total sum of £30,519 be raised by drainage rates and special levy.

iii) That the amounts comprised in the sum referred to in ii) above to be raised by drainage rates and to be met by special levy are £5,431 and £25,088 respectively.

iv) That a rate of 6.30p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.

v) That a Special levy of £25,088 be made and issued to the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.

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

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

B.1143 Display of rate notice

RESOLVED

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

B.1144 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Monday the 7th March 2022 at 7.00pm at the Crown Lodge Hotel, Outwell.

B.1145 Contravention of Byelaws – Croft Road

The District Officer raised a matter of leylandii trees approximately 8 feet high which were in the 9 metre strip on the brink of the bank. The property was up for sale but it was understood that the current owner was retaining the land. The trees were at the rear of 41 Croft Road and the owner was a James Williams.

RESOLVED

That a letter be sent to Mr Williams requesting that the leylandii trees be removed from the Board's 9 metre easement strip.

CHURCHFIELD AND PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Members of the Churchfield and Plawfield Internal Drainage Board hosted at the Middle Level Offices, March on Friday the 25th June 2021

PRESENT

S A Calton Esq (Chairman)
D J W Boyce Esq (Vice Chairman)
G D Boyce Esq
C J Crofts Esq
M D R Fairey Esq
D J Lunn Esq

Miss Lorna McShane (representing the Clerk to the Board) was in attendance.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from P Allen Esq, D Cowling Esq, A Robb Esq, Councillors K Harrison, R Melton and C N T Rose.

B.1146 Standing Orders

Further to minute B.1108, Miss McShane reported that ADA have obtained agreement from Defra for the flexibility which allowed the Board to choose how they wished to hold Board 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 Board's particular requirements at that time.

RESOLVED

That the Board adopt the revised Standing Orders.

B.1147 Annual Governance Statement – 2020/2021

Members 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 Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2021.

B.1148 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2020/2021

Members 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 Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2021.

B.1149 Date of next Meeting

The Chairman reminded Members that the next Meeting of the Board will be held on Monday the 7th March 2022 at the Crown Lodge Hotel, Downham Road, Outwell at 7.00pm.

Churchfield & Plawfield Internal Drainage Board

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	2031/32	FUTURE YEARS	ALL YEARS
		Pre Yr 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Post Year 10	Total Expenditure
Structures	Gravity outfall refurbishment/replacement	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	10.0
	Control structure refurbishment/replacement	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	10.0
	Inlet structure refurbishment/replacement	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Refurbishment of culvert at Small Lode (Point 26)	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Sulivans dam refurbishment	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Works to Townley Close/New Road Watercourses	5	0.0											
			0.0											
	Culvert refurbishment - points 2-4 & 21-25	0	7.0	7.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.0
	Culvert improvement programme	0	0.0	0.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
Drainage Channels														
		5	**7.0**	**7**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**20**	**54**

District Officer's Report 2021-2022

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

Remedial works between Points 35 and 36 are still to be completed.

The control structure at Point 14 is being monitored.

Two unconsented discharges were noted during an inspection. These are being investigated.

Following discussion with the occupiers, the conifers planted on the brink of The Board drain between Points 6 and 7 are to be removed.

The nursery stock, previously planted on the access strip between Points 48 and 49, have been removed.

Levels are still being monitored either side at Point 26.

Fly-tipping and litter has been at an all-time high, with one instance requiring the use of a substantial digger to remove it (Point 12).

Reports have been received of a private watercourse holding up water – to be discussed.

Board members to advise on any further potential issues please.

Maintenance for the forthcoming season:
The usual flailing, weed raking and jetting (as and when required) should hopefully be sufficient.

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

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

Addendum: I have held the position of District Officer for nearly thirty years and, regardless of rainfall totals, the workload has steadily grown alongside the increase in local development, with the associated paperwork, site visits etc. Hourly remuneration has, in real terms, therefore decreased. Although I am not in this position for profit, I would like The Board to consider raising my fee from the current £1,643 plus expenses, to £3,200.

Churchfield & Plawfield Internal Drainage Board

Biodiversity Action Plan Report 2021-22

Environment Act (2021) and note on 2021-22 BAP report

The new Environment Act recognises the key roles IDBs play in nature conservation (Photo: PB)

The Environment Act (2021) passed into UK law in November 2021 with the aim of protecting and enhancing our environment for future generations. The Act includes bold aims to 'halt the decline in species by 2030', improve air quality, natural habitats and how look at how resources may be better used. For Internal Drainage Boards ADA describes the Act as bringing 'impacts and opportunities' which recognise the important role IDBs have to play in some of these targets. Areas of particular interest to IDBs are:

- Biodiversity Assessment and Reporting
- Species Conservation Strategies and Protected Sites Strategies
- An Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) to uphold environmental law

Following the note in the 2020-21 report, work is underway to update IDB Biodiversity Action Plans in line with the newly available ADA guidelines; Boards will be notified when this is ready. As part of this process voluntary submissions for an IDB 'Biometrics survey' were issued by ADA in autumn 2021 and were submitted on behalf of the Board by the Conservation Officer. This survey aims to gather data relevant to key targets of the Biodiversity Action Plan with a view to putting IDBs 'on the front foot' with regards future Biodiversity reporting and assessment, like that laid out in the Environment Act above.

The Conservation Officer is happy to field any questions on the subject and will continue to work with Boards on existing and future plans.

Churchfield & Plawfield IDB Report Summary

Water Voles

Board drains all show consideration given to sensitive maintenance.

As always, Boards are reminded to contact the Conservation Officer *before* any bank reprofiling or other works that may impact water voles take place. If unsure, please contact the Conservation Officer regardless.

Barn Owls

CO has bought replacement for the old box at Pingle Bridge, suggestions for new locations welcomed.

Planning Issues

The CO has contributed to ongoing discussions regarding environmental considerations at Upwell Health Centre.

Invasive Species

None recorded during visits. Mink raft active at the Aqueduct/Well Creek.

Training

No training opportunities possible in 2021 due to Covid-19 guidelines. New sessions are planned in 2022 covering two important areas of our work; it is hoped that IDBs will be able to use the opportunities to refresh their knowledge on the subjects and/or enhance the skills of contractors/staff who may not have received such training before.

Tuesday 22nd March 2022: Non-native species workshop. Venue: Oliver Cromwell Hotel, March. 10-1pm.

The culmination of our Floating Pennywort awareness project, this training morning will provide an up-to-date summary of invasive species, both flora and fauna, to look out for in the Middle Level. Guest speaker(s) TBC.

May/June date TBC: Water voles - ecology, legislation and mitigation: a guide for IDBs. Venue: Middle Level Offices, March (followed by visit to local drain)

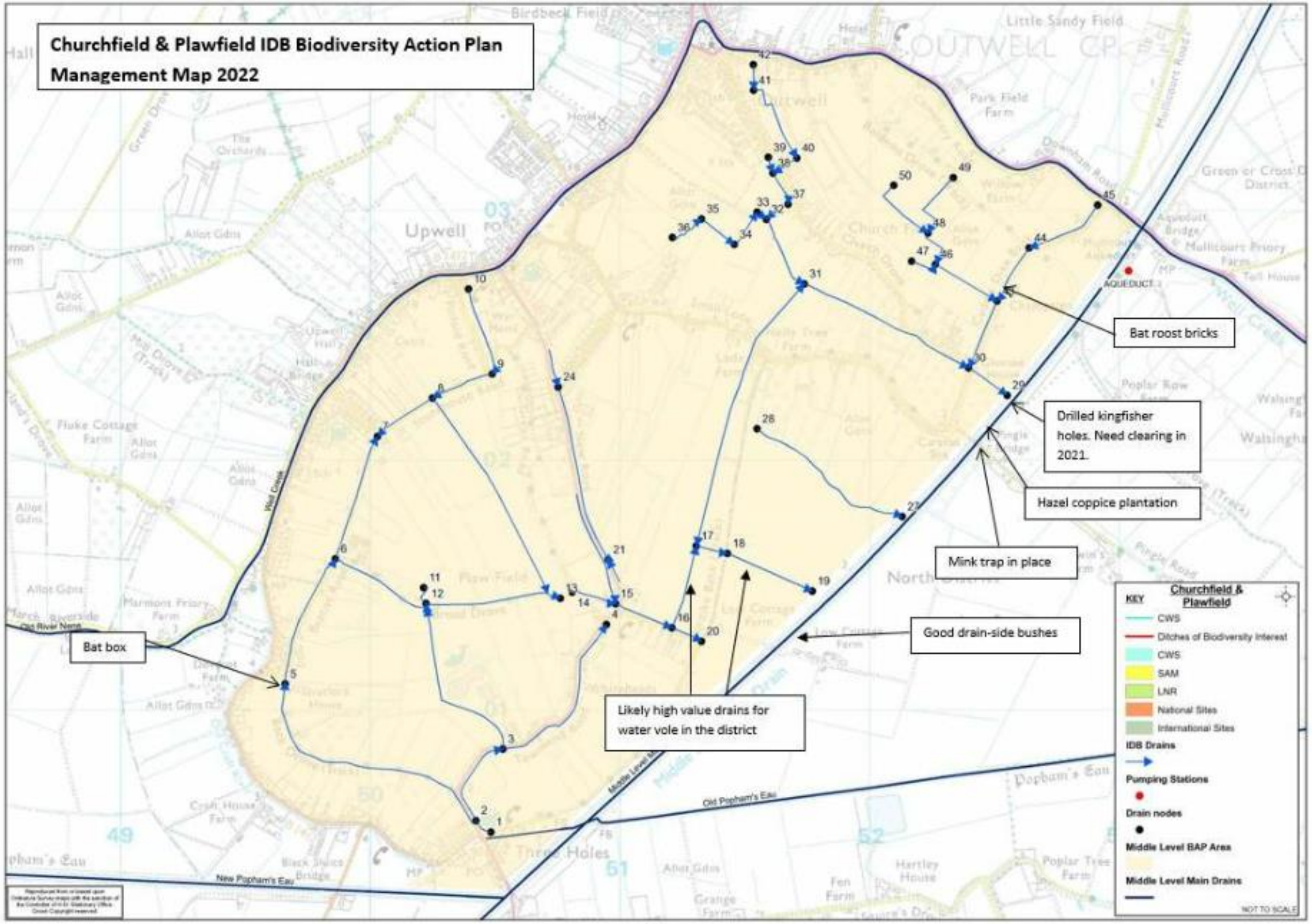
This training will be led by Julia Massey CEnv MCIEEM a Principal Ecologist with many years of experience working with water voles in the fens. It will cover the key elements of the species' ecology and how it relates to the work of IDBs.

Peter Beckenham, Conservation Officer for Middle Level Commissioners

Peter.beckenham@middlelevel.gov.uk

07765 597775

Churchfield & Plawfield IDB Map 2021-22



3

Drainage Ditch Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
1	Manage ditches for biodiversity as well as for drainage	1.1	Establish and maintain a management plan for routine IDB operations incorporating key biodiversity features	Conservation Officer	2015	Plan finalised and followed each year	*A map-based is attached. It will be amended as further information is gathered.*
		1.2	Look for opportunities to provide natural erosion protection such as marginal plant ledges when re-profiling ditches	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	If re-profiling is carried out, opportunities identified	*Not aware of re-profiling carried out during the period.*
		1.3	Provide natural erosion protection as in 1.2 if opportunities available	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	Length of ditch with ledge / natural vegetation revetment	*As above.*
2	Identify ditches of conservation interest and manage appropriately	2.2	Ensure appropriate management of ditches for priority species	Conservation Officer, Plantlife, Wildlife Trust	Ongoing	Specified in management plan	*Ditches of interest identified on Management Plan map.*
3	Support the Conservation Officer in working with landowners to benefit wildlife in the district	3.1	Refer private landowners to the Conservation Officer for advice on creating field margin buffer zones and wildlife-friendly ditch management	Conservation Officer, Natural England, Wildlife Trust, FWAG	Ongoing	Number of contacts received and passed to Environmental Officer	*No enquiries were received during the period*
4	Control invasive species	4.1	Report any sightings of non-native invasive species immediately to the Conservation Officer and control as appropriate (see Appendix F for species list)	Conservation Officer, Environment Agency, Plantlife, Wildlife Trust	Ongoing	Reports to Conservation Officer	*Monitoring ongoing*

Reedbed Action Plan

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

Open Water Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
1	Promote the creation of ponds, lakes and reservoirs in appropriate areas	1.1	Consider pond creation as mitigation when a ditch has to be filled in or culverted	Local authorities, Amphibian & Reptile Conservation, Wildlife Trust	Ongoing	(a) Number of mitigation opportunities (b) Number of ponds created	*(a) None (b) None*

		1.2	Support creation of flood storage areas and reservoirs	Environment Agency, Natural England, Wildlife Trust, RSPB	Ongoing	Number of projects involved with	*No flood storage areas or reservoir projects arose during the period*
		1.3	Assist private landowners with advice, information or contacts as necessary	Amphibian & Reptile Conservation, Wildlife Trust	Ongoing	(a) Number of information requests (b) Number responded to	*No information requests were received*
2	Look for opportunities to create open water habitat when managing ditches	2.1	Create a pool at an appropriate ditch junction when re-profiling (see the Drainage Channel Biodiversity Manual, technique CL3)	Conservation Officer	2010	One pool successfully created	*No new opportunities for this method arose.*

Water Vole Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
1	Manage ditches according to the law and to best practice for water vole	1.1	Assume water voles are present when carrying out works and follow the ADA water vole mitigation guide	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	Measures incorporated in management plans	*Water vole Best Practice methods were used*
		1.2	Publicise good practice for rat control near drainage ditches	Conservation Officer, Wildlife Trust	Ongoing	Good practice publicised	*Best Practice for rat control has been previously publicised in the Environmental Officer's Natural Level newsletter.*
2	Enhance drainage ditch habitat to benefit water vole	2.1	Look for opportunities to add a marginal shelf when re-profiling banks	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	(a) Opportunities identified (b) Measures taken	*No opportunities identified; no measures taken during the period.*

		2.2	Consider using coir roll to stabilise banks and provide marginal vegetation	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	(a) Sites considered (b) Measures taken	*No appropriate sites or opportunities arose during the period.*
3	Monitor water vole populations	3.1	Set up a survey programme to monitor water vole populations	Conservation Officer, Wildlife Trust	2010	Surveys carried out	*Conservation Officer to periodically survey Board drains*
		3.2	Provide data on water vole to the relevant Biological Records Centres	Conservation Officer, CPERC, NBIS	Ongoing	Data sent via Environmental Officer annually	*Data sent to CPERC.*
4	Control mink as necessary	4.2	Carry out mink control as part of the Middle Level programme and report all sightings to the Conservation Officer	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	(a) Number of trapping days (b) Number of mink caught	*Mink raft in place at Pingle Bridge and Aqueduct (courtesy of WRE).*

Otter Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
1	Improve otter habitat	1.1	Identify and maintain existing key bushes and trees near watercourses likely to be important for otters	Conservation Officer	2012 and ongoing	Sites identified and listed in management plans	*Suitable habitat and popular sprainting sites represented on map*
2	Monitor otter populations	2.3	Ensure any dead otters are reported to the Conservation Officer and transferred to the Environment Agency for post mortem	Environment Agency	Ongoing	Otters reported to Conservation Officer, if found	*No dead otters were reported*
3	Reduce otter deaths related to eel and crayfish	3.1	Report incidents of suspected illegal netting, trapping or fishing to the	Environment Agency, Angling Clubs &	Ongoing	Incidents reported, if discovered	*No reports or indications of illegal trapping noted. Members are encouraged to*

	trapping and road traffic		Environment Agency Fisheries Officers and the Conservation Officer	syndicates			*report any suspicious activity or illegal fishing to the EA or Conservation Officer.*

Bats Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
1	Improve habitat for bats	1.1	Put up at least one bat box at an appropriate site, e.g. a pumping station	Bat Conservation Trust	2015	Number of bat boxes sited	*Two bat boxes previously installed at 2 sites. Appear in good condition.*
		1.2	Pollard suitable trees to provide bat roosts		Ongoing	Number of trees pollarded	*No trees identified.*
		1.3	Identify potential sites for a bat hibernaculum, e.g. in disused buildings or tunnels	Conservation Officer, Bat Conservation Trust	As opportunities arise	(a) Potential sites looked for (b) Site created	*4 bat bricks were installed under a culvert in 2015.*
2	Collect information on bat populations	2.1	Monitor bat boxes	Bat Conservation Trust	2015 onwards	(a) Number of boxes monitored (b) Number of boxes used by bats	*(a) two (b) 0*
		2.2	Pass bat box information to CPBRC and NBIS	Conservation Officer, CPBRC, NBIS	2015 onwards	Data via Conservation Officer annually	*Annually if box found to be occupied by bats.*

Kingfisher Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Referenc e	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
1	Improve the quality of kingfisher habitat	1.1	Provide at least one potential nest hole in sheet pilings	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	Number of nest sites provided	*One site provided.*

		1.2	Leave kingfisher fishing perches where possible (e.g. occasional branch)	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	Number of perch sites left	*There are many natural perch sites for kingfishers available along the Old Pop and Main Drain.*
2	Collect records of kingfisher breeding between March and July	2.1	Note sightings of potential breeding kingfisher and pass information to CPBRC and NBIS via the Environmental Officer	Conservation Officer, CPBRC, NBIS	Ongoing	Data sent annually	*Kingfishers seen regularly on Main Drain*

Barn Owl Action Plan

Target Reference	Target	Action Reference	IDB Actions	Partners	Date	Indicators	Report
1	Improve the quality of barn owl habitat	1.1	Put up at least one barn owl nest box in a suitable location	Wildlife Conservation Partnership	2015	Number of nest boxes provided	*2 previously but CO to confirm current situation.*
		1.2	Pollard suitable trees to provide natural nest sites	Conservation Officer	Ongoing	Number of trees pollarded	*None*
2	Collect records of barn owl presence	2.1	Monitor nest boxes for use. Have occupied boxes checked for success by licensed barn owl ringers.	Wildlife Conservation Partnership	2015	(a) Number of nest boxes checked by licensed ringers (b) Number of nest boxes used	*(See 1.1)*
		2.2	Pass barn owl box information to CPBRC and NBIS	Conservation Officer, Wildlife Conservation Partnership, CPBRC, NBIS	2015	Data sent via Conservation Officer annually	*Annual when box is occupied.*

Churchfield & Plawfield Internal Drainage Board

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 Churchfield & Plawfield Internal Drainage Board 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 Churchfield & Plawfield Internal Drainage Board on application to:

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

between the hours of 9.00am and 4.00pm on Mondays to Fridays (excluding public holidays), when any local elector may make copies of the Annual Return.

3 Copies will be provided to any local elector on payment of £2.40 for each copy of the Annual Return

Announcement made by: D C Thomas - Clerk to the Board

Date of Announcement: 6th September 2021

Annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21

CHURCHFIELD & PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

WWW.MIDDLELEVEL.GOV.UK

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: 28/06/2021 29/06/2021

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: 29/06/2021

*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:

CHURCHFIELD & PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 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.*
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A	*has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.*

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets 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.1146

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

Chairman

Clerk Lorna Myers

WWW.MIDDLELEVEL.GOV.UK

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2020/21 for

CHURCHFIELD & PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

	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	36,883	30,323	*Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.*
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	21,926	27,527	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	721	859	*Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.*
4. (-) Staff costs	0	0	*Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.*
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	29,207	27,566	*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	30,323	31,143	*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	44,987	38,917	*The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.*
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	0	0	*The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.*
10. Total borrowings	0	0	*The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).*

	Yes	No	
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			*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 10th June 2021

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

25/06/2021

as recorded in minute reference:

B.1147

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

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2020/21

In respect of **CHURCHFIELD AND PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD – DB0017**

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

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

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 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: 05/09/2021

* 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

Client comment:
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.

Client comment:
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 £.

CHURCHFIELD & PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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. KINGS LYNN & WEST NORFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL	25,088
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
Total	25,088

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		4,988
2. Special Levies		22,539
3. Higher Land Water Contributions from the Environment Agency		0
4. Contributions received from developers/other beneficiaries		468
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		41
10. Rents and Acknowledgements		0
11. Other Income		350
Total income		**28,386**
EXPENDITURE		
12. New Works and Improvement Works		3,922
13. Total precept to the Environment Agency		2,838
14. Watercourse maintenance		13,159
15. Pumping Stations, Sluices and Water level control structures		0
16. Administration		6,904
17. PSCAs		0
18. Rechargeable Works		0
19. Finance Charges		0
20. SSSIs		0
21. IDB Biodiversity and conservation (other than item 20 expenditure)		470
22. Other Expenditure		273
Total expenditure		**27,566**

EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS		
23. Profits/(losses) arising from the disposal of fixed assets		0
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		**820**
24. Developers Funds income not applied in year		13,559
25. Grant income not applied in year		0

Notes:

11. Include all other Income, such as absorption account surpluses (for example plant and labour absorption accounts).

12. State the gross cost of undertaking minor capital works that have not been capitalised and the annual depreciation charges of all major schemes that have been capitalised. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with delivery of the schemes.

13. State the total precept demanded for the year as properly issued by the Environment Agency, in accordance with section 141 of the Water Resources Act 1991. Providing that the precept has been properly issued as before stated it should always be included here, even when the Board has appealed against the amount of contribution, in accordance with section 140 of the Water Resources Act 1991. Where the Board knows with certainty the outcome of any such appeal, it should also include the appropriate accrual/prepayment.

14. State all costs associated with the maintenance of watercourses, meaning work associated with open channels, pipelines, culverts, bridges, etc. Plant, vehicle and labour charges should include a fair proportion of the overheads such as depot/workshop costs, employment on-costs, insurances and depreciation, etc. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with delivery of the maintenance programme.

15. State all costs associated with maintaining and operating the pumping stations, sluices and water level control structures. Plant, vehicle and labour charges should include a fair proportion of the overheads such as depot/workshop costs, employment on-costs, insurances and depreciation, etc. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with maintaining and operating the pumping stations, sluices and water level control structures.

16. Include the cost of non-technical staff only, office accommodation, annual depreciation of office equipment that has been capitalised, minor office equipment that has not been capitalised, postages, telecoms', stationery, printing, advertising, auditing of accounts, general insurances and all other costs associated with supporting the organisation. Please note that this does not include support costs, which are directly associated with the delivery of front line services.

17. State all costs associated with the PSCA

18. State all costs associated with undertaking work for third parties. Plant, vehicle and labour charges should include a fair proportion of the overheads such as depot/workshop costs, employment on-costs, insurances and depreciation, etc. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with undertaking the rechargeable work.

19. Include the cost of servicing any borrowing, in terms of bank/loan/hire purchase Interest payable.

20. State all costs associated with undertaking works – capital or maintenance – specifically for helping to achieve favourable condition on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). In most cases, these costs will be incurred in implementing actions set out in SSSI Water Level Management Plans or SSSI River Restoration Plans.

21. State all costs associated with undertaking works – capital or maintenance – that are likely intended to help conserve biodiversity (other than works on SSSIs). These costs are likely to be incurred in implementing actions set out in an IDB's Biodiversity Action Plan or other conservation actions on non-designated sites.

22. Include all other expenditure, such as a provision for bad/doubtful debts, write-offs, and absorption account deficits (for example plant and labour absorption accounts).

23. For the disposal of assets, state the difference between any proceeds from the sale/disposal of the asset and the cost of the asset less accumulated depreciation.

24. Total balance of developer fund year end.

25. Unspent grant at year end.

Section B –IDB Reporting

Policy Delivery Statement

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

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

Biodiversity

Please indicate whether your Board has a Biodiversity Action Plan .... Yes ☒ No ☐

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

What year was your Biodiversity Action Plan last updated?) 2021

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

When was biodiversity last discussed at a Board meeting (date)? 08/03/2021

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?

18

How many pumping stations does the Board operate?

0

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

0

Health and Safety

Does the Board have a current Health and Safety policy in place? Yes ☒ No ☐

Does the Board have a responsible officer for Health and Safety? Yes ☒ No ☐

Have there been any reportable incidents in the past year? Yes ☐ No ☒

If so, please summarise in the box below:

Guidance and Best Practice

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

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

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

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 [X] No [ ]
Register of Member's Interests...Yes [X] No [ ]
Anti-fraud and corruption policy...Yes [X] No [ ]

Board membership and attendance

How many Board members (in total – elected and appointed) do you have on your IDB?	15
Seats available to appointed members under the Land Drainage Act 1991.	9
Number of elected members on the board at year end.	8
Number of appointed members on the board at year end.	7
Mean average number of elected members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year.	4
Mean average number of appointed members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year.	3

Have you held elections within the last three years?...Yes [X] 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 [X] 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 [X] 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 [X]
Meetings [X]
Shows/events (including open days/inspections) [ ]
Consultations [ ]
Notices [X]

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

1.01%

Section B: NOTES

Guidance and Best Practice

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

Board membership and attendance

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

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

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

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

Section C – Declaration

CHURCHFIELD & PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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

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

CHURCHFIELD AND PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Payments 2020/2021 (1st February 2021 - 31st March 2021)

Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution (Environmental Officer)	470.00
Association of Drainage Authorities (River Great Ouse branch) - Subscription 2020-2021	6.00
Upwell Playiing Field Committee - Refund of Discharge consent application fee	300.00
District Officer's expenses 2020/2021	2,499.52
Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal	40.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	1,655.98
Association of Drainage Authorities - Annual Subscription 2020	678.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Health and Safety re-charges for 2020-2021	240.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Land Registry search fee	6.00
	5,895.50

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

Harrison Agricultural Contracting Limited - Flail mowing	90.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery and Health and Safety contract	3,829.51
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	1,711.21
Environment Agency - Precept	1,419.19
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit fee (2020-2021 accounts)	240.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages and telephone charges	2,696.74
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	279.43
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	1,588.81
Environment Agency - Precept	1,419.18
King's Lynn Internal Drainage Board - Flail mowing	10,416.00
Harrison Agricultural Contracting Limited - Removing mattress from fishing lakes	151.20
Bank Charges - Refunded	6.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2020-2021 accounts)	558.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	914.88
Middle Level Commissioners - Land registry search fee	24.00
	25,344.15

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

CHURCHFIELD AND PLAWFIELD INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

BUDGET 2022/2023

		Estimated 2021/2022 £	Probable actual 2021/2022 £	Budget proposal 2022/2023 £			Remarks	
						A -	Includes for:	
1	Insurances	250	280	300			Flail mowing/weed cutting	8,680
2	District work and repairs and renewals (including Environmental measures)	11,650	13,500 [A]	14,650 [B]		B -	Includes provision for:	
							Flail mowing/weed cutting	9,000
						C -	Include for unbudgeted works	
3	Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising etc	7,300	7,250	7,300			at Townley close 19/20 & 20/21	
						D -	Includes for works at Townley Close	5,000
							Recovery of prior years unbudgeted costs	7,436
4	Improvement works	9,000 [C]	12,436 [D]	7,000 [E]				
						E -	Proposed funding for improvement programme	
5	Environment Agency Precept	2,838	2,838	2,895				
						F -	Provision to re-charge third parties for	
		31,038	36,304	32,145			works at Townley Close (not yet invoiced)	5,000
	LESS Deposit Accounts interest	713	5,785 [F]	657				
		30,325	30,519	31,488				

Estimated General Fund					
Opening Balance		17,584	17,584	25,020	
Rate set	6.30p	30,519	30,519		
Rate Required				31,488	6.50 p
Net Expenditure		30,325	30,519	31,488	
Use of balances		9,000	7,436	0	
Closing Balance		26,778	25,020	25,020	

Churchfield & Plawfield Internal Drainage Board

Rate and levy requirements

Under Section 37 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, the appropriate proportions in which the net expenditure of the Board must be borne for 2022/2023 is:-

a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 17.79%.

b) Proportion to be borne by Special levy issued to the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk – 82.21%.

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £862.

In 2022/2023 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levy would raise £4,844.

Estimated revenue cash balance in hand on 31st March 2022 – £25,000.

The estimated net expenditure for the Boards Revenue and Capital Programmes in 2022/2023 is £31,488, is equivalent to:-

a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 6.50p and

b) a Special levy on the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk of £25,885.

In 2021/2022 a rate of 6.30p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £25,088 on the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk.

D C THOMAS

Clerk to the Board

February 2022