HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE

2nd November 2022

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Meeting of the Board - 17th November 2022

I enclose the Agenda for the Meeting of the Board at The Crown Lodge, Outwell at 5.00 pm on **Thursday 17th November 2022**.

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

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

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

Dinner will be provided at the conclusion of the Meeting.

The office needs to advise The Crown Lodge of how many meals will be required by **FRIDAY 11th NOVEMBER**.

To avoid paying for food that is not required please confirm in advance that you **WILL BE STAYING** for the meal.

Yours truly

D C THOMAS

Clerk to the Board

To the Members of the Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare any interests relating to the agenda.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

To confirm the Minutes of the Meetings of the Board held on the 16th May 2022.

(Copy pages 7 - 21)

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

5. Appointment of Chairman

To appoint the Chairman of the Board.
(Present Chairman – M G Day Esq)

6. Appointment of Vice Chairman

To appoint the Vice Chairman of the Board
(Present Vice Chairman – N Buttress Esq)

7. Election of Board Members

The Clerk will report that as the number of candidates for membership did not exceed the number of persons to be elected (FOURTEEN), the following candidates were elected as Members of the Board for a period of three years from 1st November 2022, viz:-

BUNNING, John	LEACH, Francis
BUTTRESS, Neil	LEACH, Jonathan
DAY, Michael	PINDER, Amanda
DUNCALFE, Henry	SMART, Charles
HARRISON, Nigel	TEGERDINE, Peter
LAKE, Geoffrey	

(NB) – Councillors Miss S Hoy, Miss M Tanfield, Mrs S Wallwork, G Booth, N Meekins, B Rackley, W Sutton and D Topgood are also Members of the Board as the nominees of Fenland District Council under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

8. Filling of vacancies

Further to minute B.2033, to consider the filling of the 3 vacancies on the Board.

9. Access Problems

Further to minute B.2037, the Chairman to report.

10. Hundred of Wisbech IDB and Waldersey IDB
Review of Joint Pumping Arrangements/Amalgamation
Joint Working Group

Further to minute B.2038, the Clerk to report.

11. Clerk's Report

The Clerk advises:-

a) Application(s) for byelaw consent

That the following application(s) for consent to undertake works in and around watercourses has/have been approved and granted since the last general meeting of the Board/Commissioners:-

Name of Applicant	Description of works	Date of consent
Hannah Hewitt	Pipe and fill a 26-metre length of private watercourse to the rear of 66 March Road, Friday Bridge	06/05/2022

b) Annual Conference

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities will be held on Wednesday the 9th November 2022, The Hive, Nocton, Lincolnshire LN4 2AY.

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.

This was the first face to face meeting held since the COVID-19 outbreak but the format was restricted to the AGM only. It is planned however to reintroduce the popular and useful morning workshops for 2023.

Marc Heading was reappointed as chair with Councillor Doug McMurdo as vice chair. Topics covered included unsurprisingly red diesel, and water resources/the work of WRE.

Sofi Lloyd announced that Brian Stewart and Ian Hodge from the EA had recently joined the ADA Board and that DEFRA had asked ADA to liaise with them on the implementation of schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act. She was also pleased to be able to report that ADA had been instrumental in initiating an all-party parliamentary group with a remit to discuss and consider Sustainable Flood and Drainage Management.

Phil Hulme and Amanda Macloughlan spoke on behalf of the EA covering the challenging associated with significant staff changes at the EA and noted that with the capital program for this six-year cycle being double that of the previous one this would be generating considerable additional work load.

It was advised that this coming years revenue (maintenance) budget was £5.3M which was more than the previous year but what could be delivered within this budget could be impacted by inflation.

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 7th March 2023.

d) 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. Delivery of Annual Maintenance contract

Further to minute B.2040, Mr Harrison's report below;

As of 20/10/2022;
An early harvest gave us the opportunity to make a good start to the agricultural section and has mostly been completed apart from a few areas, unfortunately we missed a couple of sections on Waldersea farms as they turned ex pumpkin land around quicker than I expected but we will make sure they are covered another season.

A lot of slubbing work has been completed in the industrial section this campaign and has gone relatively well despite the confusion over white diesel.

Some problems have occurred again due to the cress type weed in the Halfpenny Lane section, if weather conditions allow in November we intend to spray to try and keep levels down.

We will be trying to make another cut in the industrial area before Christmas as the growth has been especially strong.

As usual many thanks go to the District Officers for their help during the year.

Regards Nigel Harrison

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

To consider the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

(Copy pages 22 - 31)

14. Capital Improvement Programme

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

(Copy page 32)

15. Health and Safety

Further to minute B.2034, to consider the report of the Health and Safety Officer:

'We are continually improving and will undertake a full review in early 2023 as previously agreed by the board. Some structures that need improving have been delayed due to the impending major improvement programme whatever that may be. However when we do the full review if these improvements are deemed vital then a different approach will be needed. The liaison with our Contractor Nigel Harrison on HSE matters works exceptionally well, the fact that both parties use the NFU means we are generally in unison. One of the biggest risks as far as I am concerned is when we have a deluge of water at any one point in the system thus highlighting for me the need to be able to have greater control facilities. I will endeavour to answer any questions at the board meeting.

Kind regards Neil'

16. District Officer's Report

To consider the Report of the District Officers.

(Copy page 33)

17. Works Committee Report

To receive the Report of the Works Committee.

18. District Officers' Fee

To give consideration to the District Officers' fee for 2022/2023.

19. Association of Drainage Authorities – Subscriptions

The Clerk will report that it is proposed by ADA to increase subscriptions by 4.5% for 2023.

20. Determination of annual values for rating purposes

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

(See Confidential Papers)

21. Contribution from Developers

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

(See Confidential Papers)

22. Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2021/2022

a) To consider the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2022.

(Copy pages 34 - 38)

b) To consider the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2022.

(Copy pages 39 - 48)

23. Defra IDB1 Returns

The Clerk will refer to the completed IDB1 form for 2021/2022.

(Copy pages 49 - 58)

24. Expenditure Estimate/Update

The Clerk will advise the Board of how estimated expenditure for 2022/2023 compares with actual expenditure to date.

(Copy page 59)

25. Dates of next Meetings

To agree the dates for Meetings of the Board in 2023.

26. Any Other Business

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board
held at Middle Level Offices, March on Monday 16th May 2022

PRESENT

M G Day Esq (Chairman)	G L Lake Esq
N Buttress Esq (Vice Chairman)	P Tegerdine Esq
F D Leach (Deputy Vice Chairman)	Cllr S Hoy
Cllr N Meekins	C Smart Esq
N J Harrison Esq	Cllr S Wallwork

Mr Robert Hill (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Graham Moore representing the Consulting Engineers were in attendance.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from J Bunning Esq, J Leach Esq, Cllr B Rackley and Cllr W Sutton Esq.

B.2029 Declarations of Interest

Mr Hill 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.

The Chairman and Mr Lake declared interests in the planning applications and any matters relating to The Thomas Squire Charity.

Mr Harrison declared an interest in any item in relation to the maintenance work of the Board.

Mr Harrison and Mr Tegerdine (as members of Waldersey IDB) declared interests in any matters concerning Waldersey IDB.

Mr Buttress and Mr F Leach as District Officers of the Board declared interests in matters concerning the District Officers and District Officers Fees.

B.2030 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 18th November 2021 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.2031 Matters Arising

None

B.2032 Election of Board Members

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

RESOLVED

That the register be approved.

B.2033 Vacancies in Membership

Members considered the four vacancies on the Board.

The Chairman reported that he had discussions with Henry Duncalfe and Amanda Pinder who had both expressed an interest in becoming Members of the Board.

Mr Lake asked if the Board had thought it appropriate to approach Mr J Clarke again to see if he would consider a position on the Board.

RESOLVED

i) That Mr Henry Duncalfe and Amanda Pinder be appointed as Members of the Board.

ii) That Mr Lake be authorised to approach Mr J Clarke to see if he would be interested in becoming a Member of the Board and report further at the next meeting.

B.2034 Health and Safety

Further to minute B.2007, the Board considered the report of the Health and Safety Officer.

Mr Buttress reported that he had been in contact with the NFU and it was planned to hold a full review of the District Systems next Spring, hopefully in time to report at next year's meeting.

He informed members that although in the main, warning signs had not been subject to much vandalism, there was a persistent problem in the vicinity of Bruce Close, which provided the Boards access to the watercourse to the rear of the Thomas Clarkson School. He reported that the standard warning signs together with the No Parking signs had been put up but the No Parking signs had been removed and vehicles parked restricting access for the Boards Contractor.

Mr Harrison reported that he does put notices on vehicles ahead of maintenance works concerning access requirements but this does not always guarantee vehicles will be removed when access is required. Cllr Hoy enquired if Highways had been contacted concerning the possibility of putting hatching/No Parking markings and if the police could be notified. She referred to the possibility of Private Highways works and agreed to forward contact details to the Clerk.

B.2035 Depot/Yard

Further to minute B.2008, Mr Hill reported that the Boards premises at Redmoor Lane, Wisbech had been sold by public auction in November 2021 for £61,000.00. He informed members that the board had previously looked at selling the premises with outline planning permission and after the deductions of these fees, sale and legal fees the net amount of £53,252.00 was currently being held as a separate pot in the Boards financial statements.

B.2036 Church Road Development, Friday Bridge

Further to minute B.2010 Mr Harrison reported that these works had now been completed.

B.2037 Access Problems

Mr Harrison reported that he was scheduled to go into Porter's site in a couple of week time and that there had been several problems in gaining access to the S B Components site. He informed the meeting that several notices had been sent out and that when he eventually gained access, there were still sections of the watercourse that he could not gain access due to obstructions that had not been moved. He reported that there were steel shipping containers within the byelaw distance and also a building, which made access/working difficult.
Cllr Hoy reported that it was her understanding that Fenland District Council owned the site and rented it to S B Components.
Mr Harrison considered some progress had been made but access/working on the site was still restricted.
Mr Moore reported that he was not aware of the Board granting consent for the building within the byelaw distance. Cllr Hoy reported the she would take up this matter with Fenland District Council.
Mr Leach reported that it was generally difficult to get any works carried out in the industrial area and enquired why the Board were paying for external legal assistance when the Middle Level had a solicitor who should be able to carry out this work. In response to an enquiry from Mr Leach, Mr Hill out-lined how the Middle Level administration fee was calculated and what level of services were included in the standard fee. Mr Buttress commented that the main issue with using the legal services at the Middle Level was the amount of time it took to get anything done.
Mr Leach enquired if the issuing of letters and notices to gain the Board access to sites to carry out routine drain maintenance works should be covered within the standard administration fee and in response, Mr Hill agreed that for those types of work, they should be but he reminded members that they had also used the services of external solicitors with regards to access to the Porter's site.
Mr Lake considered the Board were frustrated with the speed of previous actions when using the Middle Level services.

RESOLVED

That a meeting be arranged between the Clerk, Chairman and Vice-Chairman to discuss the Boards concerns.

B.2038 Hundred of Wisbech IDB and Waldersey IDB
Review of Joint Pumping Arrangements/Amalgamation

Mr Hill reported that the revised payment contribution had been agreed in principle by both Boards and payments for the last two years had been made on these calculations. He informed members when the Middle Level Solicitor had been working on a heads of terms for a formal agreement between the two Boards and had now produced a draft document for consideration.

Mr Buttress enquired if the document should be reviewed in the agenda paper, in response, Mr Hill confirmed he had received the draft this morning and that he considered it needed further refinement before the next step, which he considered should be reviewed by the Joint Pumping Working Group.

RESOLVED

That a meeting be arranged for the Joint Pumping Working Group to review the proposal for the Joint Pumping Agreement between Hundred of Wisbech IDB and Waldersey IDB.

B.2039 Clerk's Report

Mr Hill advised;

i) COVID-19 Actions

That the majority of control measures have been removed now and normal office working has resumed (with the exception of trialling a degree of flexible working, which has been shown to be effective following the previous periods of enforced home working). Impacts now are largely confined to the high rates of COVID-19 illness cases in the UK.

ii) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That an eighth Chair's Meeting was held on the 12th April 2022.

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

It was recorded that there had been a number of MLC staff changes over the period. These included the retirement of Deb Watts, Katie Hunt and Malcolm Downes. Also, Sarah Lemmon and Richard Lloyd had handed in their notice. New members of staff replacing them and linked with some restructuring of the finances and admin departments were Dave Bantoft (M&E Engineer), Sarah Bowd (Accounts Assistant), Polly Tombleson (PA Secretarial) and Claire Collings (Secretarial).

It was reported that following the successful telemetry grant bit for Local Levy £125K in grant had been secured and consequently an order had been placed for in excess of 45 new telemetry outstations. The MLC have tested the new system with the six stations they commissioned and were satisfied with its operation.

Training for Board members was covered and it was noted that ADA provide online training videos. Various methods for delivering these and recording attendance was discussed and it was finally resolved that the best way forward would be to ask all members to watch one or two videos a year and to record when they had been viewed. A record of who had watched which video would be retained and this information recorded at Board meetings and used to support DEFRA IDB1 returns.

A proposal to move from time charges to lump sum annual fees for planning and consenting matters was discussed and it was agreed that a proposal to move to this more efficient and effective way of working would be put to each Board. For similar reasons it was resolved that a proposal should be put forward which would reduce the scale of content reported to Boards under planning matters.

Inflationary pressures were touched upon and it was recognised that if this continues there will be pressure placed upon Boards to raise their rates more than has occurred in recent years. It was also recognised that along with these inflationary pressures there were increasing demands (with legal backing) evolving in relation to environmental gains and Boards should be aware of the costs of delivering on these. Examples are the government's commitment to protect 30% of all land by 2030 for the environment and of the Doubling Nature initiative in Cambridgeshire.

An update on work in relation to climate change and carbon reduction was given. Work currently in hand comprises of production of a carbon baseline for the MLC. Once complete the scale of the challenge to target carbon neutrality will be known and work will be undertaken to identify possible opportunities for reduction and mitigation, prior to production of a policy statement. During these next stages it is expected that Boards associated with the MLC will be similarly assessed and plan proposals made for them.

iii) Application(s) for byelaw consent

That the following application(s) for consent to undertake works in and around watercourses has/have been approved and granted since the last general meeting of the Board/Commissioners:-

Name of Applicant	Description of works	Date of consent
Macca Tree Holdings Ltd	Pipe and fill a 36m length of private watercourse to the rear of 84 March Road, Friday Bridge	18/02/2022

iv) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

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

b) Meeting of the Welland and Nene Branch

The Clerk reported briefly on the Meeting of the Welland and Nene branch of the Association held in Woodhall Spa on Thursday the 2nd December 2021.

v) Water Resources East (WRE)

Further to minute B.11983 (vi), the requested contribution from this Board for the 2021/2022 financial year is once again £125. Also, the contributions for 2022/23 had been confirmed at

£125. Contributions from drainage boards within the East of England secure a direct stake in WRE and help to ensure their needs and opinions are taken into account.

A draft WRE plan went out for public consultation and responses to it were to be received by 28th February 2022. The latest news can be found by visiting www.wre.org.uk.

RESOLVED

That the Board approved the requested annual contribution of £125.00 for 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 to be paid.

vi) Red Diesel

Following extensive lobbying and the efforts of ADA, DEFRA and Treasury have softened their stance on the potential loss of access to red diesel use by IDBs. Going forward then as long as the work undertaken by the IDB can be shown to have some agricultural benefit then red diesel use can continue. The exception will be construction works and works where the sole beneficiary is an urban area.

vii) Planning and Consenting Fees

Proposed changes to planning and consenting service supply charging.

Mr Hill outlined the proposal as detailed in the report and Mr Leach considered the proposed arrangements should deliver a more efficient service but that any changes should deliver value for money and asked Mr Moore his views on the proposals. Mr Moore confirmed that he had not been consulted concerning the proposals and although he had reservations concerning the proposals for the format of the report, he considered that for this Board there was regular discussions with the Chairman, District Officers and works committee concerning Planning Matters that all issues would be adequately covered.
Mr Buttress raised concerns that although the officers of the Board would be aware of issues surrounding Planning, just having a list of applications dealt with would not give Members sufficient details to understand issues or implications for decisions they may be required to make.
The Chairman reported that he had concerns over the proposal for changes to the fee structure and had discussed this with Mr Hill before the meeting. He informed Members that while he was, in principle, in favour of moving towards a fixed fee based on a 5-year average he had concerns over percentage links to Middle Level staff costs which the Board had no influence. He agreed that any changes must provide value for money and ensure the complex issues concerning planning for the Board were dealt with effectively and efficiently.

RESOLVED

That the matter be reviewed with the Clerk at the meeting to be arrange to discuss the Boards concerns over the delivery of legal services.

viii) Anglia Farmers

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting of each Board/Commissioners the Anglia Farmers electricity contract was renewed in October 2021 for a shorter period of 6 months to 31st March 2022 and this was due to the volatile energy market at the time. As there remains an enormous amount of volatility and uncertainty surrounding energy prices and as competition is very limited, it was decided that the Commissioners and Boards should remain within the Anglia Farmers buying group at the moment as there is likely to be little scope for us to negotiate better deals. The Clerk will also report a new contract has been signed for a 12-month period to 31st March 2023 with EDF Energy through Anglian Farmers.

The Anglia Farmers Energy team does not have to commit to buying energy for years ahead at the current price levels and the flexible contract that they have to buy energy from 1st April 2022 allows them to risk manage the portfolio for their Members, which means they will be well positioned to take advantage of any energy market normalisation ahead. When market conditions have settled down/normalised the Board/Commissioners will be asked whether they wish to remain with Anglia Farmers. But this may not be for several years based upon current market assessments.

ix) Fens Biosphere

The Clerk reported that this project is on hold and will remain so unless and until Fenland District Council is prepared to engage with a redefined brief and vision for it.

B.2040 Delivery of Annual Maintenance Contract

Mr Harrison reported that the Boards systems was generally in good order with weather conditions allowing for works to be carried out. He confirmed that some slubbing works had been carried out in the year but due to access issues some works in the industrial area had been carried over into 2022/2023. He referred to the issue for the Board concerning red and white diesel for working in industrial areas and that currently, as a temporary measure, he has a machine running on white diesel dedicated to the industrial area, but, when works in the agricultural area started, he would need to revert to red diesel.
Mr Harrison reported he had considered the possibility of purchasing a machine which could be dedicated fulltime to operating on white diesel for operating in the industrial area but that provisional costing had been estimated this would add an additional £7,000 p.a to the contract price.
In response to Cllr Meekins, Mr Hill outlined the discussions between ADA, HM Treasury and Defra to reach this point of allowing the use of red diesel if it provided benefit to agriculture and that, as the industrial area was upstream at the top of the District, it would not be possible to provide any basis that works in this area provided benefit for agriculture and therefore, white diesel would be required to be used for all maintenance operations.
In response to Mr Lake, Mr Harrison estimated that between 30 & 40% of his time was spent operating in the industrial area.
Mr Harrison referred to the possibility of having a need for emergency works with industrial area but only having a machine available to run on red diesel.
In response to Mr Hill, Mr Harrison confirmed that the cost to drain tanks, flush out and change filters was around £400 and that there was then the additional cost of running white diesel instead of red diesel.

RESOLVED

i) That the Clerk raise the issue of possibly having to respond to an emergency in the industrial area with a machine running on red diesel.

ii) That in such circumstances as in i), the Chairman be authorised to issue an instruction from the Board to in an emergency situation, use a machine running on red diesel in the industrial area.

iii) That a variation letter be drawn allowing additional costs for the maintenance contract for £400 per change-over from red diesel to white diesel and the increased costs for running machinery on white diesel.

(NB) – Mr Harrison declared an interest when this item was discussed.

B.2041 Consulting Engineer’s Report, including planning and consenting matters

Main outfall at Crooked Bank

Mr Moore reported that the contractor had completed the works and an inspection had been held last June with the Chairman, himself and the contractor which was the commencement of the 12month maintenance period, at the end of which, any works required will be identified and subject to everything being in order the retention monies paid.
He referred to the co-operation of the family at 19 Crooked Bank who were required to use the temporary crossing for access to/from their property. He reported that, to-date, no claims for compensation had been received from any landowner or from the occupants of 19 Crooked Bank and enquired, if as a matter of appreciation for the co-operation of the family, the board would consider an ex-gratia payment.

Attenuation Area near Point 29

Mr Moore reminded members that as part of a wider development proposal, the developer had agreed to provide an attenuation lagoon close to point 29. He reported that this had now been constructed and that the legal process to transfer the land from the developer to the Board was in progress. He informed the meeting that the developer’s solicitor had raised a query concerning access from the A47 and that at a site meeting, the works committee had agreed that access from the A47 could be used in an emergency but considered that access from Cromwell Road should be retained as the principal access. He reported that it should soon be possible to carry out some hydraulic modelling to establish if further works were required. The Chairman confirmed that these costs would be met by the Board and provision had been made in the budget to meet these.

Culverting Works near Point 66

Mr Moore reported on the access issues concerning this area and that following the Boards approval, a design to pipe and fill the section of watercourse had been developed and it was intended to go to tender for the works shortly. The Chairman referred to the possibility of back-filling with suitable material that would provide the least future maintenance costs and Mr Buttress referred to the ADA Good Governance training videos in which it referenced the engagement of the local community and wondered if it would be possible to provide a grassed community area which local residents could then maintain. The Chairman considered there could be problems with this as the land was not owned by the Board and there would therefore likely be multiple riparian ‘owners’. Mr Lake considered it was important to get the works completed and a decision could then be made when finalised. Mr Hill reminded members that the Board had previously authorised the works committee to deal with this scheme.

Flood Alleviation Investigations

Mr Moore reported on the problems following the Christmas 2020 rainfall events and subsequent to these the proposals for investigations to take place into a review of the Boards District System to identify possible future improvement works. He had hoped it would have been possible to have identified consultants by this meeting but, as some works may have also been identified in proposals from the Highways Agency. The Chairman reported that following initial discussions, he had received on email from the Clerk informing him that the Middle Level did not have capacity to carry out the works and that the Board should progress the matter themselves. Following this the works committee did look at possible consultants and provisionally appointed one to look into matters but had not heard further and that he had recently made contact for an update and it had been mutually agreed to end the provisional arrangement. He considered that everything depends on getting hydraulic modelling carried out but once done this would give a clear indication of what works would be required.
In response to Cllr Meekins, Mr Moore confirmed that the Middle Level did not have the capacity to carry out hydraulic modelling. Mr Leach commented that the works committee had been told that it could possibly cost as much to carry out hydraulic modelling on the Boards systems as any potential works would and queried the possibility of Grant-in-Aid Funding for the proposed modelling work.

Proposed Drainage Improvements south of Point 53 at the A47 (project ref: 346/20) and the Condition of the Existing Culverts under the A47 (Points 29, 50 & 53)

Mr Moore updated on the assistance he had given to Mr Ian Smith in his dealing with the Highways Agency and that, from an initial review of the report produced, it appears that the Highways Agency content that the Culverts are not posing an immediate problem and are sufficient in size. The Chairman confirmed that the Highways Agency currently intend to de-silt one culvert only and in response to Mr Lake, Mr Moore confirmed that this would be the culvert at point 50. Mr Moore considered that the Board needed to challenge the Highways Agencies opinion that the culverts were of sufficient size as they were installed during the 1980’s when the area upstream was generally green-field and would therefore not have taken into account the now developed industrial area.
Mr Moore considered that any proposed hydraulic modelling from the Highways Agency could ‘duplicate’ works proposed by the Board but it was highly unlikely that the Highways Agency would accept any works that were not carried out by their own appointed consultants. Mr Moore reported that a channel for dialogue had been created and it was important to continue to use this to progress the Boards requirements.

Mr Moore referred to the Government current policy concerning SuDS and that issues still remained concerning the future ownership and maintenance of such system. He accepted that Local Authorities had limited resources to properly maintain systems and it was therefore important to ensure that proper long-term arrangements were put in place. The Board agreed that in such circumstances, a proper agreement for the long-term ownership funding, management and maintenance arrangement needed putting in place.

Concerning the proposals for car parking and new vehicular access at Pike Textiles Display Ltd (MLC Ref no’s 1595, 1621 & 1627) Mr Moore referred to the proposals to install an access culvert between service ducts across the watercourse and that he had raised concerns as it was indicated on a plan supplied by UK Power Networks that at least one of the ducts carried an electricity supply. Mr Buttress considered that if we are now aware of what services are carried in the ducts, can the appropriate warning signs be put in place. In response to Mr Moore – the Chairman confirmed it was his understanding that Pike Textiles had purchased a piece of adjacent land in order to install the access culvert and had then erected the fencing on the now new boundary line. Mr Moore did not believe this fencing had been consented and was a byelaw infringement which would further restrict the Boards access.

Mr Moore referred to a proposal to infill the short section of watercourse at Point 58. Mr Leach referred to an inlet from the highway that entered the watercourse around the location the photograph was taken from. Mr Harrison considered that if this section was infilled, it would only move the problems further along and that if infilled, it would require a very large access to allow for proper cleaning. The Chairman agreed with the comments of Mr Harrison and considered that as the section was on a bend and took large flows requiring a large access for future maintenance, it would be un-economic to take any actions to pipe and fill the section at the present time. Members agreed that no action be taken concerning the engineers' comments to pipe and fill this section.

Concerning the Seagate Home Development, Mr Moore reported that his understanding was that a planning application was likely to be submitted in the near future. He referred to proposals for access requirements and that if an acceptable sized concrete box culvert was used then adequate arrangements would need putting in place concerning its future maintenance. The Chairman reported that the works committee had only currently discussed access arrangements and not issues concerning the development.

With regards to the proposals concerning the development by Mr Means (MLC no 1634) the Board were content that as long as the proposals do not interfere with their access and maintenance operations then the final details could be dealt with by the engineer.

Mr Moore reported that the issues associated with the Foster Property Development Ltd proposals (MLC nos. 1417, 1429 & 1622) had now been resolved with discharges going into the new AW system.

Concerning the Medworth Energy proposals (MLC no. 1542) Cllr Hoy reported that the application was due to be submitted to the Secretary of State on 7th June 2022. Mr Moore reported that he had been in discussions with the developer's consultants and had clarified the Boards position. The Chairman reported that the Board would continue to need access to the Board maintained watercourses and raised concerns that it could be possible for the Boards byelaws to the over-ruled.

Mr Moore reported on a previous meeting concerning historical contraventions on the Copart site and the works agreed with the Works Committee and that it was his understanding that some of these works had already been completed

Concerning the proposals by H L Hutchinson, Mr Moore reported that the Clerk had responded to the query raised by Mr John Maxey and had contested some of the points made. Mr Leach queried if Mr Moore knew what had been contested and what responses were made, in response, Mr Moore reported he did not have that information at hand at this time.

With regards to the proposals close to Point 12, Mr Moore referred to applications received in this area and that it was understood that the culvert pipe had a 'dog-leg' but it was not definitely known the exact location. Mr Buttress reported that he had previous success with dowsing rods and agreed to inspect the location with the Chairman to try to identify the course of the culvert. If successful, he would inform the engineer to assist with dealing with the applications.

Mr Moore reported that he was still waiting for information concerning Mr Castle's proposals (MLC nos 1087, 1563& 1567) and in response to Mr Lake detailed the process that could be taken following the issue of an advisory notice.

With regards to issues concerning access culverts at Fridaybridge Road, Elm, Mr Buttress considered that the planning authority were not following up on the conditions they made in granting planning permission. Mr Moore agreed to follow this up with Fenland District Planning Officers concerning the developments at Fridaybridge Road, Elm and at other locations within the District.

Mr Leach referred to the ongoing pollution problems in the District and the problems this causes if the polluted matter outfalls into the Waldersey IDB system. Cllr Hoy reported that Fenland District Council had been dealing with the dumping of raw sewage in the Redmoor Lane area and the Chairman considered the source of this could be traced back to the industrial area. Mr Leach reported on the previous investigations by Anglian Water and the Environmental Agency to identify some sources of pollution and that those investigations were ongoing. He reported that Anglian Water had recently located a drainage network which had not been adopted by them and they therefore considered these systems were the responsibility of Fenland District Council. He updated members that Anglian Water were currently installing monitoring equipment to try to trace other sources of pollution.

Mr Buttress expressed his thanks to Mr Moore for his attendance and delivery of his report.

RESOLVED

i) That the report be approved

ii) That an ex-gratia payment of £100 be made to the occupants of 19 Crooked Bank in recognition of their co-operation during the replacement of the main out-fall pipe-line.

iii) Flood alleviation Investigations

a) That the consulting engineer make enquires as to the likely availability of Grant-in-Aid for the hydraulic modelling of the District system.
b) That the works committee be authorised to deal with this matter.

iv) That the Board require an agreement putting in place for the long-term ownership funding, management and maintenance arrangements for all Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

v) That the Clerk write to Pike Textiles Display Ltd to make them aware of the Boards access requirements and that the palisade fencing recently erected is in contravention of the Boards byelaws and that action will be required to be taken to rectify this.

vi) That the engineer be authorised to deal with the application from Mr Means (MLC no. 1634) on the Boards behalf.

vii) That an advisory notice be issued to the land owner (planning ref nos: 1087, 1563 & 1567) and that the planning engineer be authorised to take further action to regulate the application.

viii) That the planning engineer discuss with Fenland District Council Planning Officer the apparent non-compliance with planning conditions of developments at Fridaybridge Road, Elm and at other locations with the Districts.

B.2042 Capital Improvement Programme

Mr Hill referred to the programme and that the proposals for works in 2022/2023 were estimates only but would be updated following receipt of tenders for the culverting of the watercourse near to point 66 and of quotations for proposed works to the attenuation lagoon near point 29. He reported that funding had already been allocated for these schemes. He reported that works for future years would be directed by the outcomes of any Flood Alleviation Investigations.

RESOLVED

That the programme be approved in principle and kept under review.

B.2043 District Officers' Report

Mr Buttress reported that matters raised in the report had previously been dealt with in the meeting.

Mr Lake reported he had been on an inspection with the District Officers and had noticed an environmental strip left at the bottom of watercourses but that in places there were ash trees taking root and these, if left, could cause problems in the future. Mr Buttress reported that it was intended to change policy and mow alternative sides of the watercourse so these would be dealt with in due course.

RESOLVED

i) Report and actions therein be approved and that the District Officers be thanked for their services.

ii) That the hours worked as detailed in the report be approved for payment.

B.2044 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP report

The Clerk referred to the Conservation's Officers newsletter, previously circulated to members and considered the most recent BAP report.

RESOLVED

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.2045 Works Committee Report

The Chairman reported that all matters discussed by the works committee had been dealt with earlier during the meeting.

B.2046 State-Aided Schemes

The Board considered 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.

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time – but the engineer to make enquires as to the availability of Grant-in Aid for the Hydraulic modelling of the District System.

B.2047 Association of Drainage Authorities
Subscriptions

Mr Hill reported that ADA had increased subscriptions by 1% for 2022, from £866 to £875

RESOLVED

That the increased subscription be paid for 2022.

B.2048 Environment Agency – Precept

The Clerk reported that the precept for the financial year 2021/2022 has been fixed at £17,780 representing a rate (including special levies) of 0.57p.

The precept for 2021/2022 was £17,780.

B.2049 Review of Internal Controls

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

Mr Hill advised that due COVID-19 challenges the current Internal Auditor, Whiting & Partners, had been approached and asked and had agreed to extend their contract beyond the originally agreed three-year term (under the original contractual terms). It was also noted that going forward auditors be invited to tender for a five-year term, the principle being that this gave both parties certainty over a longer period. For the Boards this meant that the investment in time in getting a new auditor up to speed represented better value.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve a further one-year extension of the appointment of Whiting & Partners as Internal Auditor and to support the proposal for a five-year contract to be tendered thereafter.

B.2050 Risk Management Assessment

The Board considered and approved the Board's Risk Management Policy.

B.2051 Exercise of Public Rights

The Clerk to 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.2052 Annual Governance Statement – 2021/2022

The Board considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31st March 2022.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2022.

B.2053 Payments 2021/2022

The Board considered and approved payments which had been made during the financial year 2021/2022.

NB: Mr Tegerdine declared an interest (as a member of Needham & Laddus IDB) in the payment made to Needham & Laddus IDB.

NB: Messers Harrison and Tegerdine declared interests (as members of Waldersey IDB) in the payment made to Waldersey IDB.

NB: Mr Harrison declared an interest in the payments made to Harrison Agricultural Contractors Ltd.

NB: Councilors Hoy, Meekins and Wallwork declared interests in the payment made to Fenland District Council.

NB: Mr Buttress declard an interest in the payment made to him for District Officers Fees.

NB: Mr Leach declared an interest (as an employee of W.Norman & Sons Ltd) in the payment made to W.Norman & Sons Ltd.

B.2054 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2021/2022

The Board considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliations for the year ended on the 31st March 2022 as required in the Audit Regulations.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Return, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2022.

B.2055 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2022/2023

The Board considered & approved estimates of expenditure and proposals for Special levy and Drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2022/2023 and were informed by Mr Hill that under the Land Drainage Act 1991, the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by Drainage rates on

Agriculture hereditaments and by Special levy on Local Billing Authorities would be respectively 4.80% and 95.20%

RESOLVED

i) That the estimates be approved.

ii) That a total sum of £215,158 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 £10,335 and £204,823 respectively.

iv) That a rate of 6.90p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District

v) a) That a Special levy of £203,629 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.

b) That a Special levy of £1,194 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.2056 Date of next Meetings

RESOLVED

Mr Hill reminded members that the next Meeting of the Board will be held on Thursday 10th November 2022 at The Crown Lodge, Outwell.

Hundred of Wisbech I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – October 2022

Flood Risk and Water Level Management Schemes

Re-assessment of South Brink Pumping Station

This matter will be discussed under the agenda item for the Review of Joint Pumping Arrangements.

Proposal for Drainage Improvements south of Point 53 at the A47 (Project Ref. 346/20) and the Condition of the Existing Culverts under the A47 (Points 29, 50 & 53)

Further to the last Meeting Report, a response has been made to Intelligent Drainage Solutions (IDS) Ltd, a drainage contractor working on behalf of National Highways, concerning the cleansing of the culvert at Point 50 only. The response welcomed the proposed works to cleanse the culvert but also enquired whether the other two culverts will also be cleansed in due course.

Some initial guidance was provided concerning the undertaking of the works ie the installation of dams to temporarily reduce flows and/or the temporary diversion of flows from one sub-catchment to another sub-catchment for a short period of time. It also advised that the Board's prior written consent would be required to undertake the works.

Rather disappointingly, given the weather conditions during the summer, no response has been received. Correspondence to IDB Ltd is therefore currently being prepared expressing the Board's disappointment that this opportunity may have been lost until next year and requesting an update on the current position.

Main Outfall at Crooked Bank [Point 1] (Project Ref 346/21)

Following the end of the Defects Liability/Maintenance Period an inspection of the works was attended by a representative from the Fen Group, the Chairman of the Board and the Middle Level Commissioners' (MLC) Planning Engineer, in his role as the Project Manager. Some minor remedial works were identified which were completed by the contractor within a few days.

The final invoice, relating to the payment of outstanding retention fees, was submitted subsequently and recommended for payment.

As agreed at the last Board Meeting a gratuity has been sent to the occupants of No 19.

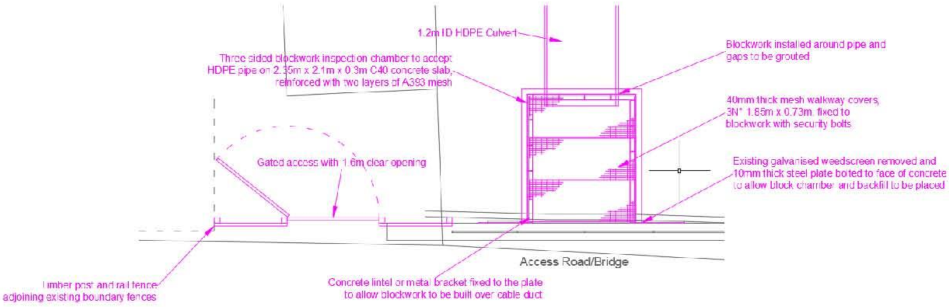
Attenuation Area near Point 29 (Project Ref 346/23)

No subsequent correspondence has been received from H L Hutchinson Ltd or its agents.

Several specialist engineering consultants have been contacted enquiring whether they would like to be included in an invitation to tender for the preparation of a hydraulic model of the sub-catchment in order to determine the parameters for the outfall structure.

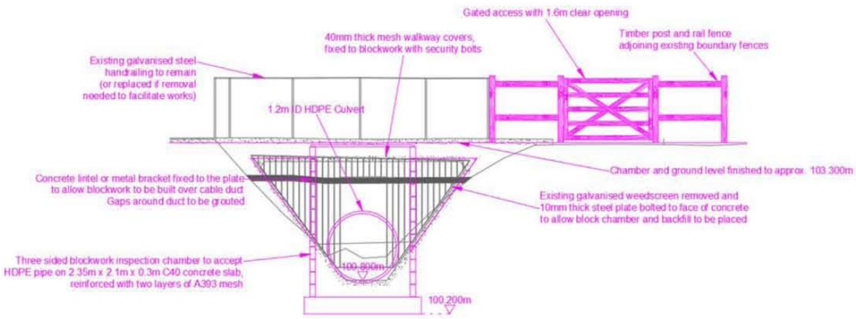
<u>Culverting Works near Point 66 (Project Ref 346/24)</u>

Following the previous meeting where approval was given to further develop the scheme and produce a tender for piping the existing watercourse near Point 66, the timescales were discussed. At the time of writing, the tender documents are being produced based on the agreed programme so that they are finished and enable the scheme to be progressed in advance of the meeting. For information, and serving as a reminder, the proposed scheme includes the installation of approximately 81m long by 1.2m internal diameter HDPE pipeline, a simple headwall at the upstream end and a bespoke chamber connecting to the existing bridge structure at the downstream end. Extracts from the drawing, showing the details of the latter, are shown below.



<u>Plan View</u>

Extracts from Drawing No 346/205A



<u>Cross Section View</u>

These works, along with the proposed timber post and rail fences with gated accesses, will allow the Board to maintain the land above the culvert, between the gardens and the "Scout Hut", using a ride-on lawn mower or similar plant, making routine maintenance substantially easier.

The Board's Drain viewed from the access into Wisbech Business Park looking upstream toward Hillburn Road

The access into Wisbech Business Park features a vertical screen and a duct crossing the channel
Note the sloped concrete sides

Flood Alleviation Investigation (Project Ref 346/25)

Further to the last Board Meeting Report a start-up meeting was held with the Board's Works Committee to discuss the implementation of this proposed scheme.

The Environment Agency's (Welland & Nene) team has been approached concerning, initially, the submission of a catchment study covering both the Hundred of Wisbech and Waldersey Internal Drainage Boards, with Hundred of Wisbech IDB taking the lead, involving survey, modelling and optioneering, in order to determine shared catchment-based solutions including some rationalisation. It is expected that a scheme proposal will follow and that a further bid would be put in for this alongside development of the business case which would of course be underpinned by the study. Unfortunately, the Environment Agency (EA) has advised that all area grant-in-aid spending is allocated this year. A meeting is being sought to see if there could be any likelihood of some funds becoming available through an underspend on another project.

In general, the EA states that new schemes need to be submitted first into their online PAFS system before they can be considered by local and national teams for review pending a final decision on allocation. The deadline for new schemes is April 2023 and the EA has advised that it "would be happy to work with the Board with a view to submitting next year".

A letter of enquiry has been sent to several specialist engineering consultants prior to issuing an invitation to tender (ITT) for the preparation of a Catchment Study. An ITT letter has been prepared and is ready to be issued when required. It is considered that upon the return of the quotations a meeting should be held with the Board's Works Committee together with representatives from Waldersey IDB to discuss the next steps, funding opportunities, the submission of an application to the EA etc.

Due to the age and absence of survey data on key sections of the Board's system a topographic survey will be required to ensure that the model reflects the current situation. Using current technology it will be possible for this information to be inserted into the hydraulic model and not require the physical inputting of data which would increase the time required to prepare the model.

Some awareness of potential constraints, at least within the urban area of Wisbech, was provided during the late afternoon of the 16th August when the local area was subject to an intense thunderstorm which led to the flooding of some roads within the town.

The dry weather conditions may have reduced the risk of significant flooding at this time but a brief inspection of the Board's system at readily available points of access, notably within the Halfpenny Lane Drain sub-catchment, revealed fast flowing water within the channels with higher than normal water levels. Minor flooding on parts of Oldfield Lane and Sandall Road were noted.

The Sandall Road Drain at the junction with Weasenham Lane (Point 58)

Halfpenny Lane Drain viewed from New Drove (Point 55)

Some of the power ducts across the Sandall Road Drain between Points 58-59.
The lower pipes over which the water is passing are restricting flows. Some debris is collecting.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following new development related matters have been received and, where appropriate, dealt with during the reporting period.

MLC Ref.	*Council Ref*	*Applicant*	*Type of development*	*Location*
1639	F/YR22/0349/F	Mr & Mrs Walker	Residence (Extension)	Wales Bank, Elm
1640	F/YR22/0422/F	Mr & Mrs N Lunn	Residence (Extension)	The Stitch, Friday Bridge
1641	F/YR22/0405/F	Maccatree Holdings Ltd	Residence	March Road, Friday Bridge*
1642	F/YR22/0361/RM	Mr A Bennett	Residence	Fridaybridge Road, Elm
1643	F/YR22/0417/F	Richard Knight Homes	Industrial building (B1(c) use)	Regal Road, Wisbech*
1644	F/YR22/0444/AG1	Ms Smith	Agricultural building	New Bridge Lane, Elm

1645	F/YR22/0450/F	Mr J Turnbull	Equine Storage container (retrospective) and stable block	Bar Drove, Friday Bridge
1646	F/YR22/0535/F	Barrett Properties	Residential (2 plots)	Victoria Road, Wisbech*
1647	F/YR22/0500/F	Mr D Hamilton-Higgins	Residence	Fridaybridge Road, Elm
1648	F/YR22/0520/O	Mr K Leonard	Residential (5 plots)	Elm Road, Wisbech*
1649	F/YR22/0591/F	AMS Recovery Trucks	Workshops (10 units)	Sandall Road, Wisbech
1650	F/YR22/0619/RM	Mr Wadsley	Residence	Fridaybridge Road, Elm
1651	F/YR22/0586/F	Karen Booker	Residence (Extension)	Queens Drive, Friday Bridge
1652	F/YR22/0589/F	Mr Weaver	Residence	Fridaybridge Road, Elm
1653	F/YR22/0596/F	Mr Codona	Travellers' site (8 caravan pitches, 2 utility block buildings a stable block, the formation of hardstanding and an access)	Begdale Road, Elm
1654	F/YR22/0646/F	Mr A Harris	Residence	Fridaybridge Road, Elm
1655	F/YR22/0680/F	Mr A Hodge	Residence (Extension)	Mill Way, Friday Bridge
1656	F/YR22/0663/F	Messrs Freeman & Duff	Residential (2 plots)	Elm Low Road, Wisbech
1657	Enquiry	Pallet Network (Anglia)	Culvert encroachment	Oldfield Lane, Wisbech
1658	F/YR22/0740/F	Mr S Brazil	Residence (Extension)	Gosmoor Lane, Elm
1659	F/YR22/0781/RM	Mr A Bennett	Residence	Fridaybridge Road, Elm
1660	F/YR22/0810/F	Mr T Maynard	Residence (Extension)	Limes Avenue, Elm*
1661	F/YR22/0872/F	Mr & Mrs T Farnworth	Residence (Garage and a new access)	Queens Road, Wisbech
1662	F/YR22/0846/F	Mr W Bibby	Residential (2 plots)	Fridaybridge Road, Elm
1663	F/YR22/0862/F	Truckmax Ltd	Workshop (Extension)	Boleness Road, Wisbech
1664	F/YR22/0883/F	Mrs A Pinder	Equine Change of use of 2no stable blocks to function/games room including an extension to link buildings; alterations to reception/tack shop kitchen/shop/office, relocation of storage container, use of existing paddock area for outdoor recreational use and formation of an extension of existing lunge area	Redmoor Lane, Begdale, Elm
1665	F/YR22/0849/F	Mr & Mrs Brown-Ahern	Residence (Extension, stable block and 2 detached workshops)	Back Road, Friday Bridge
1666	F/YR22/0921/O	Mr D Hyde	Residence	Colletts Bridge Lane, Elm
1667	F/YR22/0892/F	Mr & Mrs Gibbs	Residence	Hillburn Road, Wisbech

1668	F/YR22/0931/F	Harlow Town Greyhound Entertainment Centre	Canine (2 kennel blocks)	Redmoor Lane, Wisbech
1669	F/YR22/0964/F	Mr S Sleight	Residence (Conversion of barn)	Main Road, Elm

Planning applications ending 'RM', 'REM' or 'RMM' relate to reserved matters
Planning applications ending 'AG1' relate to Agricultural Notification

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

The following application is within an area that is exempt from paying the contribution fee:

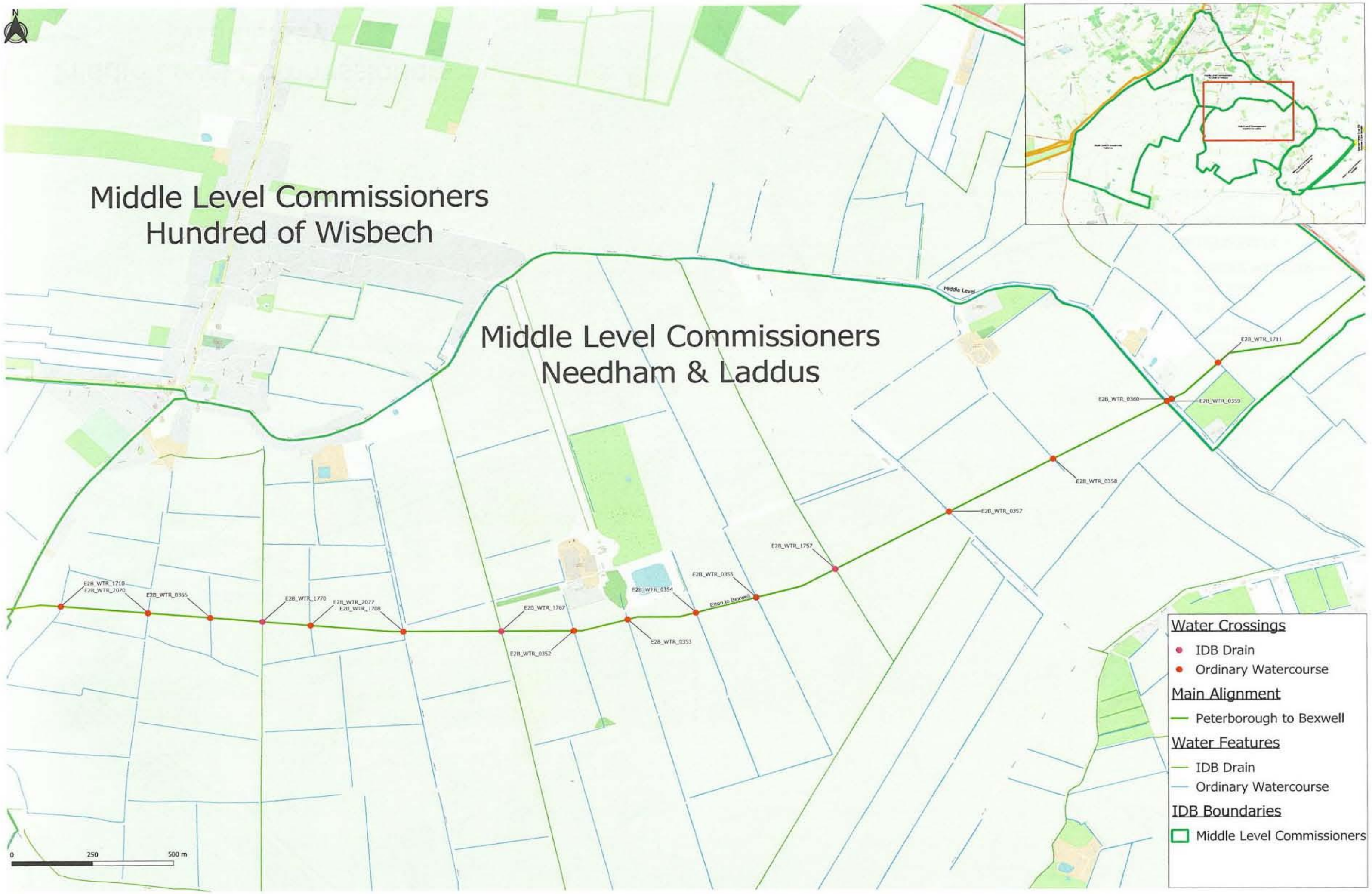
a) Truckmax Ltd (MLC Ref No 1663)

Mr Sleight chose to use the Infiltration Device Self-Certification Service for surface water disposal from an extension of his residence in Main Road, Elm (MLC Ref No 1669) and, in doing so, agreed that if the device was to fail in the future, the land owner would be liable for any remedial works to rectify the situation.

Members of the Board will recall that at the last meeting it was decided that specific detailed entries would not be made in future reports unless requested to do so. In the absence of any instruction no detailed entries have been made.

Grantham to Bexwell Pipeline – Anglian Water Services Ltd [AWSL] (MLC Ref Nos 1579 & 1637)

Anglian Water Services Ltd is proposing to install a new potable water pipeline from Grantham to Bexwell that crosses part of the Board's area. The route of the pipeline crosses the south east corner of the Board's area and does not cross any of the Board's watercourses. Affected landowners have been contacted. See map below.


Middle Level Commissioners
Hundred of Wisbech
Middle Level Commissioners
Needham & Laddus
Water Crossings
IDB Drain
Ordinary Watercourse
Main Alignment
Peterborough to Bexwell
Water Features
IDB Drain
Ordinary Watercourse
IDB Boundaries
Middle Level Commissioners

Planning Updates & Consultations

A "Strategic Planning Consultation Responses" document can be found on www.middlelevel.gov.uk via the following link Strategic Planning Consultation Responses

Fenland Flooding Issues Sub-group

Further to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Flood and Water Management (FloW) Partnership and High Rainfall Event and Flooding Incident December 2020 entries included within the above-mentioned Strategic Planning Consultation Responses document, no further meetings of this sub-group have been held but it is understood that they will re-commence soon.

However, it is understood that flooding issues are currently being investigated by the Board at and adjacent to Smithees Garage at Begdale Road, Elm. It will be beneficial if the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer, as the Board representative on the sub-group, can be kept informed on this and other sites that are being investigated.

Norfolk Water Management Partnership [Norfolk County Council (LLFA)]

No further correspondence has been received and no further action has been taken on the Board's behalf.

The Investigation Report into the flooding in Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Borough in Winter 2020-2021 Report Reference: FIR066 can be viewed at:
FIR066 Kings Lynn WN Winter Flood Event 2020 21 (1).pdf

The report does not refer to any flooding incidents within the Board's catchment.

Norfolk Water Strategy Programme (NWSP)

The MLC Planning Engineer has attended a Steering Group Meeting and Webinar associated with this programme.

Water Resources East (WRE) released a progress report in June which was the subject of a consultation process. Unfortunately, due to annual leave and workload commitments it was not possible to provide a response before the deadline.

Currently the programme is prioritising the Broadland River catchments to the east of Norfolk – Rivers Ant, Bure, Wensum and Yare which are outside of the Board's area of interest.

However, there is a strong emphasis on Natural Based Solutions (NBS) and in the absence of any material information on these an indication of costs, advice on suitable consultants who deal with such features examples of good practice and any solutions that have been adopted has been requested but a response has not yet been received.

Copies of the webinar presentation and Progress Report can be viewed at:

PowerPoint Presentation (wre.org.uk)

NWSP-June-2022-Progress-Report-FINAL.pdf (wre.org.uk)

Consulting Engineer

3 October 2022

Hundred of Wisbech (346)\Reports\October 2022

Hundred of Wisbech 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/overspill refurbishment/replacement	B	2.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.9
	Control structure refurbishment/replacement		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Joint pumping station 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	0.0
Drainage Channels	Sleeving existing pipework		1.4	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5
	Open ditch lining - Point 66		0.0	10	190.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	200.0
	Culverts under the A47 - Highways improvement works		1.1	10	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.1
	Pipeline replacement - The Stitch, phase ii	A	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Fridaybridge improvement works - 99 - 101	B	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	55.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	55.0
	Channel improvement works 29 - 31 (Copart to bypass)	B	0.0	0.0	6.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0
	Channel improvement works 53 - (Halfpenny Lane)	D	0.0	0.0	0.0	160.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	160.0
	Storage area - Point 29	B	4.3	50	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	104.3
	Culvert replacement (Henry Warby Close)	B	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4
	Walkway and handrail improvements to structures	A	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9
	Water control structures improvement scheme	B	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	District wide flood alleviation improvement scheme	A	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Surveys and studies	A	0.0	0.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
South Brink p/s	Improvement/refurbishment works		0.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5
Plant & Vehicles			0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
			0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
			10.1	**72.5**	**251**	**165**	**60**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**564**

Possible District wide flood alleviation scheme
proposals, therefore if to proceed - works no-longer required
check next year with view to remove from programme

South Brink pumping station	
2022/2023 - installation of telemetry	4,500
Less grant-in-aid	-2,250
	2,250
Board shre costs - 65%	1,463

H o W district officers report October 2022.

Since the May meeting, its been relatively quiet.

On the 19th May Neil and I met to discuss slubbing priorities. Some of the scheduled slubbing has subsequently had to be postponed due to dry weather

31st May, lorna plus the works committee met two representatives from SB Components to try to resolve access issues.

We had approximately 40mm rainfall overnight on Saturday/ Sunday, and on Sunday 5th June Neil attended point 50, where I joined him later. We'd had a large amount of weed washed down from Halfpenny Lane, and it blocked the A47 culvert at point 50. Neil called out Amin and Mark with their 360 to clear a massive amount of weed.

27th June. Attended PE Logistics at Oldfield Lane, as they had plans to build a large canopy immediately next to our drain, Points 65 to 64.

30th June we met at the middle level offices to discuss remodelling of the boards system. David Thomas explained the FCERM 7 form for grant aid. Update from him.

We've had scheduled meetings for 5th September and the 26th September cancelled.

Fred's hours 6. Neil's hours 17. To the 19th October.

Fred and Neil.

Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board

Notice of conclusion of the audit

Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2022

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 Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board for the year ended 31st March 2022 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 Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board on application to:

The Clerk
Hundred of Wisbech 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: 26th September 2022

Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/22

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

WWW.MIDDLELEVEL.GOV.UK

During the financial year ended 31 March 2022, 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 2021/22 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 2020/21, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. *(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2020/21 AGAR tick "not covered")*			✓
L. The authority publishes information on a free to access website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with any relevant transparency code requirements	✓		
M. The authority, during the previous year (2020-21) 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 2020/21 AGAR *(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).*	✓		

	Yes	No	Not applicable
O. **(For local councils only)** 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: 28/05/2022 31/05/2022 01/06/2022

Name of person who carried out the internal audit: WHITINGS LLP

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: P. PEECH – WHITINGS LLP

Date: 01/06/2022

*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 2021/22

We acknowledge as the members of:

HUNDRED OF WISBECH 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 2022, 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:

16/05/2022

and recorded as minute reference:

B.2052

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

Chairman M. S. Day

Clerk [signature]

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2021/22 for

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2021 £	31 March 2022 £	*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	1,512,889	693,524	*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	188,122	201,858	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	7,891	562,909	*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	49,733	62,181	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	965,645	132,000	*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	693,524	1,264,110	*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	763,300	1,319,947	*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	289,500	239,500	*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	951,673	1,410,762	*The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).*

	Yes	No	N/A	
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 2022 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date 4th May 2022

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

16/05/2022

as recorded in minute reference:

B.2054

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2021/22

In respect of **HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD – DB0038**

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/ .

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 2022; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor report 2021/22

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 2021/22

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 2022.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature	PKF Littlejohn LLP	Date	11/09/2022

* 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

BB/MM053
11 October 2022

Messrs. D Thomas, R Hill and S Ablett
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 2021-2022

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 2022, 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.

<u>General points</u>

1. **Asset Valuations and Insurances**

   It is noted that, whilst a large proportion of boards took the option to revalue for insurance purposes their pumping station and residential assets during recent years, there are still 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. Should a pumping station or residential property require a complete rebuild following an unforeseen catastrophic event, current valuations may no longer be appropriate given today's prices which may lead to a shortfall in funds which have to be met by surplus funds.

   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. This is especially important given the significant increase in material and labour costs seen in recent times as a result of rising inflation and global material shortages. However we are pleased to note that boards are being asked whether they wish for insurance to be index linked going forward and would strong suggest that all boards agree to this proposal.

1. **Asset Valuations and Insurances - Continued**

<u>*Client comment:*</u>
While we have put it to Boards to review pumping station valuations for insurance purposes, as separate statutory authorities it is up to each Board to review and approve what they consider to be an appropriate valuation and your point concerning possible under-insured amounts having to be funded directly by the Board following an event has been highlighted previously. A number of Boards have previously approved to index link valuations and we will be asking all Boards to consider this during the 2023 meetings, along with consideration of current valuations. This is an area already programmed to be reviewed every five years and hopefully with indexing we may not require such individual valuations going forward.

2. **Employee Benefits - Vehicle Usage**
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' vehicles 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. The Court of Appeal ruled in favour of HMRC and, as a result HMRC are now reminding employers of the importance to ensure that they have classified their vehicles correctly and as a result we would advise that this matter is kept under review both now and into the future to mitigate the risk of an unexpected tax bill arising. We would advise that this is considered across all boards going forward if this is not being taken into account already.

<u>*Client comment:*</u>
We are aware of the case and potential implications to employees of classification of vehicles. Generally, we do not make changes concerning additional passenger/load capabilities to that of the original manufacturer's specification, which are relied upon alongside the HMRC guidance when designating vehicles for taxation/benefits in kind.

3. **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 and ideally the rationale being documented in the accounts pack provided to us as part of the internal audit

We would also recommend that any such old debts or provisions (apart 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 accounting procedures, provisions/balances are looked at on an individual basis and decisions made on relevance as to retain or to write back.

4. **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.

The budgets that have been set for 2022/23 year may need to be increased throughout the year due to the significant cost increases that are currently well publicised in the media, most notably in relation to the cost of gas and electricity as a result of the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

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.

5. Surplus Funds

It is noted a number of IDB's hold significant cash reserves, with inflation now being at a 40 year high, all IDB's need to consider investing their surplus funds, in order to achieve greater return on public funds and to ensure value for money principles are observed and cash asset values are not eroded overtime. We appreciate that in recent years interest rates would have made such an exercise unfruitful when taking into account the associated admin cost involved in such an undertaking. However, with the Bank of England now increasing interest rates to combat rising inflation in the UK, we would advise that this is now an opportune time to conduct such an exercise.

Client comment:

We have previously made arrangements with our bankers concerning the costs for the provision of banking services and interest which when added together more than covered the costs associated with monthly/quarterly administration costs in transferring funds. As mentioned, interest rates in recent years have been negligible and as responsible public authorities we need to maintain caution as to where funds may be deposited - the general principle of the higher the reward the higher the risk applies. During this period we did re-negotiate our banking arrangements and maintained the cost benefit in relation to the provision of banking services. Although it is correct that the Bank of England is increasing interest rates to combat inflation, rates will not match/keep pace with (current) inflation and with the current spiralling fuel costs we also need to ensure Boards have sufficient liquidity to meet ongoing operational expenditure. We have planned meetings with our bankers when this will be discussed further as well as looking at possible alternative places for longer term investments.

6. Rental of Land

It was previously noted that some IDB's were renting out land to tenants for less than market value and that this should be reviewed to ensure value for money principles were being applied.

We are happy to note that some IDB's have increased the rental values of land to market rates, although there are still some IDB's where the rental value is significantly below market value and we advise that the market values are increased for these boards to ensure value for money principles are applied going forwards.

Client comment:

Boards which have land holding for rent generally review rents in accordance with tenancy agreements and use local land agents for guidance. A number of Boards have small holdings of land which are let at reasonable rates with a view to keep the land tidy and in good order as they are not necessarily commercially viable. A number of Boards have slamp land, which cannot be considered the same as general agricultural land for rental purposes. All Boards look to get the best rents available, but these are relevant to the size and type of land being let.

Specific Points

Conington & Holme IDB

We note that the pumping station owned by the board is insured at less than the latest revaluation amount, see below;

Insured value	610,000
Latest revaluation	685,630
Underinsured	**75,630**

We understand that the board took the conscious decision not to uplift the insurance value in line with the revaluation figure suggested by the engineer. As already highlighted above, should any significant event occur, such as a major fire, resulting in the need to reinstate the asset in full, the board run the risk of the shortfall which would require the use of surplus balances to cover the resulting deficit in funds. We would therefore strongly recommend that the board consider increasing the insured value to the revaluation figure.

Client comment:

Although as previously mentioned these points will be raised as agenda items your comments and recommendations will also be considered when reviewing the internal audit report.

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.

Waldersey IDB - Debtor	25,936.95
Hundred of Wisbech IDB - Creditor	25,500
Difference	436.95

We are pleased to note that this difference is insignificant for the current year. The difference arises due to the accounts of Hundred of Wisbech IDB being completed before Waldersey IDB, leading to a provision being required in the former's books in the absence of more accurate information being 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.

Client comment:

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 both Boards.

There are no current plans to change meeting dates so as one set of accounts is finalised before the other there is likely to remain creditor/debtor position in both sets of accounts although now that all older balances have been cleared, any in-year balance should be cleared, generally a year in arrears.

March East IDB

During our review it was noted that the onsite pumping station attendant's payments were not authorised during the year, the amounts charged by the attendant are similar to the rental costs charged to the individual for occupying residential property owned by the district. We understand that this arrangement has been agreed at board level to ensure that the individual is not financially penalised in carrying out their duties for the board. However, this treatment appears to be at odds with the amount charged being disproportionate when compared to other IDB's that we have audited. We would advise that these amounts most certainly should be authorised to ensure adequate controls are maintained over the purchase function and we would also question how HMRC would interpret the arrangement should they carry out any follow up review in the future.

Client comment:

Following a review in the previous financial year residential property rent was re-assessed in-line with current guidance from HMRC. At the same time the value of the attendant's services was re-appraised. These reviews were approved by the Board. There were no changes proposed for 2022 so the original resolution remained unchanged. However, we agree with your comments and both areas will be considered annually as separate agenda items.

March Sixth DDC

During the course of our audit we noted that the 2021/22 public rights notice had not been published on the website, we are pleased to note that following notification of this fact the notice was promptly uploaded. We are satisfied that this is an isolated incident but would remind all boards of their obligation to comply with the requirements in this area and to ensure that all relevant documents are published in a timely manner.

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 as well as display on the website, notices are also displayed in paper format withing the District.

Your comment is noted and procedures will be amended concerning this for the future.

We 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. We trust that the engagement team have not caused significant disruption during the execution of their procedures.

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 2022

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 31 October 2022 a copy must be provided to:

- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Division, Floor 3, Seacole, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF via flood.reports@defra.gov.uk
- National Flood and Coastal Risk Manager (Strategic Delivery), The Environment Agency, Horizon House, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AH via james.addicott@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 £.

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Section A – Financial information

Preliminary information on special levies issued by the Board for 2022-23

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 2022-23 (forecast)	
Name of local authority	**2022-23 forecast £**
1. FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL	203,629
2. KINGS LYNN & WEST NORFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL	1,194
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
Total	**204,823**

Section A – Financial information (continued)

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31 March 2022

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 2022 £
INCOME		
1. Drainage Rates		9,736
2. Special Levies		192,122
3. Higher Land Water Contributions from the Environment Agency		0
4. Contributions received from developers/other beneficiaries		1,665
5. Government Grants (includes capital grants from EA and levy contributions)		0
6. PSCAs from EA and other RMAs		0
7. Loans		500,000
8. Rechargeable Works		0
9. Interest and Investment Income		44
10. Rents and Acknowledgements		0
11. Other Income		61,200
Total income		**764,767**
EXPENDITURE		
12. New Works and Improvement Works		10,113
13. Total precept to the Environment Agency		17,780
14. Watercourse maintenance		42,055
15. Pumping Stations, Sluices and Water level control structures		34,583
16. Administration		21,891
17. PSCAs		0
18. Rechargeable Works		0
19. Finance Charges		62,181
20. SSSIs		0
21. IDB Biodiversity and conservation (other than item 20 expenditure)		353
22. Other Expenditure		5,225
Total expenditure		**194,181**

EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS		
23. Profits/(losses) arising from the disposal of fixed assets		0
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		**570,586**
24. Developers Funds income not applied in year		121,266
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?)........................ 2022

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

When was biodiversity last discussed at a Board meeting (date)?........................ 16/05/2022

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?

30.7

How many pumping stations does the Board operate?

0

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

0

Health and Safety

Does the Board have a current Health and Safety policy in place?	Yes ☒	No ☐
Does the Board have a responsible officer for Health and Safety?	Yes ☒	No ☐
Have there been any reportable incidents in the past year?	Yes ☐	No ☒

If so, please summarise in the box below:

Guidance and Best Practice

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Has your Board adopted the following governance documents?

Standing Orders........Yes ☒ No ☐

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

Byelaws........Yes ☒ No ☐

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

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

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

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

Board membership and attendance

How many Board members (in total – elected and appointed) do you have on your IDB?	20
Seats available to appointed members under the Land Drainage Act 1991.	15
Number of elected members on the board at year end.	11
Number of appointed members on the board at year end.	9
Mean average number of elected members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year.	8
Mean average number of appointed members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year.	2

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

Complaints procedure

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

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

Public Engagement

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

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

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

4.74%

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

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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

Signature	SJ Ablett
Date	12/09/2022
Name in BLOCK LETTERS	MISS SAMANTHA ABLETT
Designation	ASSISTANT TREASURER
Email address	sam.ablett@middlelevel.gov.uk

Page no.

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET MONITORING 2022/2023

		Approved budget 2022/2023 £	Actual to 30/09/2022 £	Forecast to 31/03/2023 £
1	Rates, Insurances and telephones	500	985	1,000
2	Fuel (Oil and electricity)	0	44	45
3	Drainworks (incl District Officer's fee & expenses and Environmental measures	74,750	30,536 [A]	74,750 [B]
4	Joint Plant Maintenance (with Waldersey IDB)	26,000	13,000 [C]	26,000 [C]
5	Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	21,250	8,692	21,250
6	Planning Applications	9,000	2,697	9,000
7	Environment Agency Precept	17,780	8,890	17,780
8	Loan Charges	74,628 [D]	37,314 [D]	74,628 [D]
9	Asset Replacement Fund	0	0	0
10	Studies and Surveys	0	0	0
11	Improvement Works - (per programme)	311,463 [E]	1,461	73,000 [F]
		535,371	103,620	297,453
	Improvement works - Funding	310,000 [G]	342 [G]	71,463 [G]
	LESS Rents, Deposit Accounts interest etc	10,213 [H]	3,239 [I]	10,263 [J]
	annual value - 3,118,230	215,158	100,039	215,727

GENERAL FUND			
Opening balance	286,728	286,728	286,728
rates raised (2022/23 6.90p)	215,158	109,865	215,359
net expenditure	215,158	100,039	215,727
Balances	0	0	0
Close balance	286,728	296,554	286,360

Remarks

A -	Includes:-	
	Contractors charges	15,403
	Slubbing/slip repairs	9,611
	Fuel changeover/surcharge	4,059
		29,073
B -	Includes provision for:	
	Contractors charges	30,858
	Proposed slubbing programme (year 2/5)	25,000
	Fuel changeover/surcharge	6,000
		61,858
C -	Provision based on new calculation	
D -	Public Works Loan Repayment - £1.0m + £0.5m	
E -	Open ditch lining - point 66 (Scout hut)	200,000
	Storage area - point 29 (Hutchinsons)	100,000
	A47 culverts highways improvements	10,000
	Telemetry - South Brink p/s	1,463
F -	Open ditch lining - point 66 (Scout hut)	10,000
	Storage area - point 29 (Hutchinsons)	50,000
	A47 culverts highways improvements	10,000
	Telemetry - South Brink p/s	1,463
	Fees/balances from earlier schemes	1,537
		73,000
G -	Funding (Improvement programme)	
H,I,J -	Includes - asset fund -	
H -	provision towards new slubbing programme	10,000
I -	provision towards new slubbing programme	3,189
J -	provision towards new slubbing programme	10,000