

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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25th May 2023

Dear Board members

Meeting of the Board
~~23rd May 2023~~
Rescheduled for 14th June 2023

I enclose the Agenda for the Meeting of the Board to be held at the Middle Level Offices, March at 2.00 pm on **Wednesday 14th June 2023**.

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

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

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

Yours truly

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Board

To the Chairman and 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 Meeting of the Board held on the 17th November 2022.

(Copy pages 12 – 21)

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

5. Bank Mandate and National Savings & Investments

- i) The Clerk will request authorisation to add the Chief Executive to the Barclays bank signatories if necessary.
- ii) The Clerk will report that it is necessary to update the signatories on National Savings & Investments.

6. Vacancies in Membership

Further to minute B.2063, to consider the filling of the 3 vacancies on the Board.

7. Member Training Update

The Clerk to report on the training undertaken by Members in the past year.

8. Access problems

Further to minute B.2064, Mr Harrison to report.

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

Further to minute B.2065, the Chairman will report.

10. Clerk's Report

The Clerk advises:-

i) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That a ninth Chair's Meeting was held on the 13th December 2022.

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

David Thomas advised on the planned staffing changes being implemented due to his impending retirements. He stated that his post was being split back into Chief Executive/Clerk and Chief Engineer and that the appointments were:

Paul Burrows – to be the new CEO/Clerk - currently in post with the EA as a national Delivery Assurance Manager, and before that as Flood & Coastal Risk Manager for the East Anglia Area, then Flood Strategy Manager – Paul spearheaded Tactical Plans for the Fens which have secured the possibility of obtaining significant grant allocation on a Board by Board basis over a 15 year period, whilst at the same time defining a pathway to better understand the challenges faced and options worth considering for our lowland catchment as climate change and growth tests our current infrastructure arrangements.

Nicola Oldfield – to be the new Chief Engineer – currently in post with the EA as a Senior Project Manager. She most recently project managed the £30M Middle Level Barrier Bank scheme and had just taken over as project manager of the Cranbrook Counter Drain Strategy. She has, in the past, been employed by an IDB and has worked in close partnership with many IDBs including North Level IDB. Jonathan Brown stated how pleased the MLC Executive had been with these two candidates and how easy the choice had been given their knowledge of the area and experience to date.

An update was given on the role out of telemetry, which was receiving positive feedback from District Officers. A request was made for the login details to be provided to Chairmen as well as District Officers and it was confirmed that this would be arranged.

David Thomas confirmed that all but two Boards had stated their wish to move to the new planning and consenting charging and reporting arrangements and that the Assistant Treasurer was finalizing figures ready for the 2023 IDB/DDC meetings. A request was made for all correspondence which developers and their agents which is copied to Chairman should include the planning application references.

The protection and control of Bylaw strips was discussed at length and it was agreed that a policy document outlining the red-lines Boards should be applying to ensure that their ratepayers do not suffer as a result of development will be prepared for the Boards to consider. It was noted at the meeting that the refusal to issue any consent is subject to a reasonableness test, hence the document cannot preclude consenting everything within the 9m strip and the policy will be for guidance purposes only. It was felt that it should help developers, planning authorities and the

Boards by providing some additional clarity. It was also felt that some case history examples to be circulated to members might help them understand the issues which have to be addressed.

Climate Change was discussed and it was noted that the MLC had completed its carbon audit and would now start work on carbon reduction and mitigation initiatives. It was also noted that the M&E engineer was looking at base levels of energy consumption at pumping stations, for example to see if panel heaters are left on permanently. He will be making recommendations to Boards if he identifies scope for reducing power without risking the apparatus.

WRE were mentioned and the Chief Executive stated that he was pleased that the draft water resource plan for the East included extensive reference to agriculture and its need for water to support the growing of food to feed the nation and also of the key role played by IDBs in transferring water to the point needed by abstractors. He also commented upon the newly proposed Cambridgeshire fens reservoir, north of Chatteris and advised that the MLC were responding on the need to get fill supply and draw-down arrangements right, but also that we need to seek to gain capital from the opportunities that the new reservoir will present in terms of bringing money into the area and potentially helping reduce flood risk and assist with water need balancing.

The Chief Executive advised that a decision had been made to move the MLC and IDB's electricity supply contracts from Anglian Farmers to the Green Energy Advice Bureau. This followed several years of extended poor service levels and lack of timely information coming from Anglian Farmers.

The future of IDBs and the value of potential amalgamations was once discussed and this gave rise to questions over small boards being able to secure a quorate for which this had been a particularly poor year. It was agreed that this item should remain on the agenda and that any Chairs who felt that the time was right for their Boards to look again and the advantages/disadvantages of amalgamation would contract the Clerk. It was also agreed that it may be useful to undertake an exercise around updating the original Geoff Beal report which had recommended that the number of Boards within the area administered by the MLC could reasonably be reduced to three or four.

The Clerk finally noted that the ADA Great Ouse branch AGM would be held on the 7th March at Prickwillow Hall and would be in the format of workshops in the morning and an AGM in the afternoon. The workshops theme this year would be; water resources, the new reservoir and climate change.

ii) Annual Flood & Water Conference 2023

Invitation to ADA Flood & Water Conference 2023

Tuesday 21 November 2023 | 11:00 – 17:00 | One Great George Street, London, SW1P 3AA

ADA is delighted to invite you to join them for the ADA Flood & Water Conference on Tuesday 21 November 2023, as the conference returns to the magnificent venue of One Great George Street, Westminster, London. ADA will bring together a leading line-up of prominent political, policy, and technical speakers from across the United Kingdom to discuss key policy topics of the moment during the main conference session.

Following feedback from members, the format of this year's Conference has been developed to:

- maximise the time available for networking between delegates and suppliers to the sector,
- invite a greater variety of guest speakers, and

- provide more convenient timing for those travelling to and from London.

The Conference will open at 11.00 for networking with delegates and an expanded Exhibition of ADA's Associate Members in the Great Hall. A buffet lunch will be served from 12.00 before the conference presentations commence at 13.20 in the Thomas Telford Theatre. The Conference will close at 17.00.

Discussion forum

A discussion forum will form part of the day where delegates will be able to pose topical questions to the speakers/panellists via the conference chair. ADA wish to receive delegates questions in advance, which can be submitted as part of the ticket booking process on Eventbrite. Their aim is to consolidating key subjects for discussion and questioning and to maximise the value of this session.

Book your place

ADA has launched bookings for this year's conference early to give everyone plenty of advance notice of the revised date of Tuesday 21 November 2023 to make travel arrangements. They invite you to secure your place now via Eventbrite, via the link below. Tickets are non-refundable but can be transferred.

[ADA Flood & Water Conference 2023 Tickets, Tue 21 Nov 2023 at 11:00 | Eventbrite](#)

iii) Meeting of the Welland and Nene Branch

The Clerk will report on the Meeting of the Welland and Nene branch of the Association held in Woodhall Spa on 23rd February 2023.

iv) Water Resources East (WRE)

Further to minute B.2039 (v), the Clerk will report that the requested contribution from this Board for 2023/2024 financial year is expected to once again be £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.

The Board is asked to approve this payment.

v) Planning and Consenting Fees

Proposed changes to planning and consenting service supply charging

Two changes are proposed. The current arrangements and the proposed changes are outlined below.

1. The current arrangements for charging for Technical Services advice and support, for planning and consenting matters, is based upon a direct cost recovery arrangement. To achieve this all time spent on every item of work undertaken has to be logged and recorded in detail. This information is then pulled together and invoices prepared and checked before being passed to the Board Chairs for sign-off. This requires a considerable amount of time and effort and this time is of course included in the eventual fees paid. It is considered that a more efficient model would be to mirror the one used for charging for Clerking services which is based upon a lump sum annual fee. This has a number of advantages. It reduces internal workload which in turn

releases time to carry out productive work. It also allows Boards to budget for the fees knowing at the time of rate setting what the annual fees will be.

To ensure that a fair assessment is made it is suggested that the last five years of fees are looked at and an average taken. If there is clearly one or two years where one or two planning matters have impacted heavily upon the figures then an appropriate adjustment will be made. The final fee will be converted into a fraction of the costs of overall cost of supplying planning and consenting services for all Boards including the MLC and this percentage will become fixed until such time that a review is called for.

In addition, we will still actively encourage developers and their agents to enter into Pre/Post application contracts. This will help keep the overall planning costs to a minimum. We will also be looking to move more and more to lump sum charges for developers for the same reasons outlined above, ie to reduce internal administration work and costs where possible.

It is not proposed that this change will extend to other Technical Services work, such as surveys, catchment analysis, and refurbishment/replacement/improvement scheme work or associated advice which will continue to be logged and charged on a “hours spent” basis.

2. Many members have noted that the reporting in relation to planning application comments and responses is comprehensive. Again, it often takes many hours to produce such detailed reports for which the Board is charged. This time could be spent in dealing with and taking action on planning and consenting matters. There is also the issue of the potential time lapse between any planning/byelaw issue raising its head and the meeting of the Board. It is of course normally advantageous to take action as soon as possible after any issue had become apparent. It is therefore proposed that going forward the Board nominate who they wish to be copied in on all planning correspondence, for example the Chair and Vice-Chair. They will then be able to liaise with the Planning Engineer if they wish to and will be conversant with discussions being undertaken. The Board may also wish to delegate decision making for initial actions for bylaw infringements to the Board nominee/s.

To ensure that the Board is consulted on the most important matters it is proposed that when it is wished for a matter to be raised within the Board report then a request from the Chair can be made and a detailed report would follow. This would normally be the case where significant costs might be associated with enforcement, including perhaps incurring legal fees or where an unusually large or significant development is proposed.

Should the above change be agreed to, then going forward the Engineer’s report will provide a list of all planning applications of interest to the Board and consents applied for/approved but unless requested by the Chair no detail will be provided.

vi) Changes to Electricity Supply Contracts

The Clerk will report that Boards have encountered problems with the operation of the electricity contract by Anglia Farmers over the years. Following various meetings with them it appeared some of these problems were being addressed and the service appeared to be improving this, however, was short lived. Over the past 2 years there has again been a significant deterioration in both the quality of service and lack of account management received from Anglia Farmers.

During the summer the Middle Level Commissioners were approached by Green Energy Advice Bureau (GEAB), one of the UK's leading energy companies and buying group, whose portfolio includes numerous companies with over 200 million kwh tendered per annum. They have experience working with an estimated 60 Internal Drainage Boards, which include locally the Ely Group of Internal Drainage Boards and Downham Market Group of Internal Drainage Boards. We accordingly contacted Jean Heading of the Ely Group of Internal Drainage to enquire of the service provided by GEAB and she has confirmed she is far happier with the service received from them compared to that from Anglia Farmers and since has signed a 5-year fixed rate contract with GEAB from 1st April 2022.

A report was presented to the Middle Level Commissioners at their Board meeting on 3rd November 2022 and due to the ongoing poor performance of Anglia Farmers, together with the positive feedback given by Jean Heading of the Ely Group, the Commissioners' resolved to consider moving to alternative arrangements. The Executive Committee were delegated the final decision and having considered a report on the options and subsequently confirmed their agreement that a move would be appropriate in the circumstances.

The Clerk will report this was considered a positive move and recommended the Board also move to this alternative arrangement.

The Clerk will report that this Board's Chairman had subsequently agreed for the Board to serve notice to Anglia Farmers and for Green Energy Advice Bureau to handle the energy procurement process and management of the electricity contract.

The Clerk will advise that the Middle Level Commissioners and its administered Boards have entered into a fixed rate energy supply with Corona Energy for an 18-month period from 1st April 2023.

vii) Insurance

Historically the number of insurance companies willing to quote for the insurance requirements of the Middle Level Commissioners and administered Boards is limited.

Our insurance portfolio is complex and includes a range of policies that includes Commercial Combined (largest component), Motor Fleet, Engineering & Construction, Terrorism, Management Liability, Marine Craft and Professional Indemnity.

The overall cost of our insurance portfolio for 2023/24 will be £192,275 (£152,373 in 2022/23) a 26% increase, although increases will differ Board by Board depending on their individual insurance needs.

Key factors and changes are highlighted below:

- For Commercial Combined insurance, 2022/23 was the last year in our previous five-year agreement with AXA which included a 7% price reduction woven into the deal. For 2023/24 Towergate, our brokers, approached several companies and all bar AXA were not willing to quote given the size and complexity of our portfolio. Independently we also approached the NFU who declined to quote for the same reason.
- There has been an increase in fleet, property and marine assets included within our cover.

- In view of rising inflation most Boards agreed to index link their insured sums from 1st April 2023. AXA have increased insured sums by 15%, which has resulted in an increase within the overall premium.
- AXA have offered a 2-year stability deal, where any premium increases, subject to claims not exceeding 50% of the written premium, will be capped for 2024/25 at 2.5%. This excludes any increases in sums insured.
- AXA will not extend the stability deal as they plan a review of their whole IDB scheme in 2025.
- Commercial combined policy excess has increased from £350 to £2,500. None of our four 2022/23 claim values were above this new excess.
- Excesses are dictated by AXA's overall scheme for all IDBs and this is apparently now standard and has been imposed due to the number of lower value claims across the whole IDB industry. As other IDB/IDB Groups come out of their previous agreement with AXA the above will apply.

For future years Boards ought to consider index linking their valuations of properties and pumping stations every 3-5 years rather than annually, to mitigate annual premium increases and balancing having suitable cover without being over-insured.

It should also be noted that personal accident and sickness cover only covers employees or members up to 80 years of age. Boards may need to consider the implications of this.

viii) Delegation of signatory on consents

The Board is asked to note that under the Board's scheme of delegation, the Chief Executive has delegated the authority to sign consent on behalf of the Board to the Chief Engineer. As well as the Chief Engineer being better placed to technically assure individual consents, this will enable them to effectively take ownership over the whole planning and consenting service. This also creates a mechanism for escalation in case of any issues or complaints.

ix) Service Delivery Frameworks

The Board are asked to resolve that the Clerk, on their behalf, be authorised to enter into user and/or access agreements for public sector delivery frameworks (For example, Environment Agency Delivery Frameworks and SCAPE). This will open up access to the fees, terms and conditions of these Frameworks so our Consulting Engineers can compare and choose the most suitable procurement route for delivery of the Boards future needs. This does not tie the Board to using any Framework they then have a user/access agreement with, and Frameworks are not the only procurement route for delivery that will be considered. Having this resolution from all the Boards we administer is key if we are to package work across Boards to exploit economies of scale and become more efficient and effective in the delivery of services.

11. Delivery of Annual Maintenance Contract

To consider the Report of Harrison Agricultural Contractors Ltd.

(Copy page 22)

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

a) To consider the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

(Enc 1)

b) To consider the Supplementary Report Improving Capital Delivery

(Copy pages 23 - 25)

13. Capital Improvement Programme

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

(Copy page 26)

14. Contribution(s) from Developers

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

(See Confidential Papers)

15. Health and Safety

Further to minute B.2070, to consider the Report of the Health and Safety Officer.

(Copy page 27)

16. District Officers' Report

To consider the Report of the District Officers.

(Copy pages 28)

17. Environment Officer's Report

The Clerk to refer to the Environment Officer's Report.

(Copy pages 29 - 36)

18. Works Committee Report

The Chairman to report on the meetings of the Works Committee.

19. State-aided Schemes

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

20. Environment Agency – Precept

The Clerk will report that the precept for the financial year 2023/2024 has been fixed at £17,780.

The precept for 2022/2023 was £17,780.

21. Appointment of Internal Auditor

The clerk to report that following the conclusion of tendering Whitings LLP have been appointed as internal auditor for a five-year period commencing 1st April 2023 (financial years 2023/24 to 2027/28).

(Copy pages 37 - 50)

22. Review of Internal Controls

To consider the system of Internal Controls.

23. Risk Management Assessment

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

24. Exercise of Public Rights

The Clerk to refer to the publishing of the Notice of Public Rights and publication of unaudited Annual Return, Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and the Notice of Conclusion of the Audit and right to inspect the Annual Return.

25. Annual Governance Statement – 2022/2023

To review and complete the Annual Governance Statement.

(Copy page 51)

26. Payments 2022/2023

The Clerk to report on payments made during the financial year 2022/2023.

(Schedule page 52)

27. Annual Accounts of the Board - 2022/2023

To consider the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2023 and the completion of Section 2 of the Annual Return as required in the Audit Regulations.

(Copy pages 53 - 58)

28. Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2023/2024

To consider estimates of revenue expenditure and levy and rate requirements in respect of the financial year 2023/2024.

(Copy pages 59 - 60)

29. Date of next Meeting

The Clerk will remind Members that the next meeting of the Board will be held on Thursday 16th November 2023.

30. Any other business

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board
held at The Crown Lodge, Outwell on Thursday 17th November 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)	J Bunning Esq
N J Harrison Esq	Ms A Pinder
Cllr N Meekins	J Leach Esq
Cllr B Rackley	H Duncalfe Esq
Cllr W Sutton Esq	

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 Cllr G Booth and Cllr S Hoy.

B.2057 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.

Mr Bunning declared an interest (as an employee of Hutchinson's) in any matter concerning H.L Hutchinson Ltd.

Cllr Sutton declared an interest in all planning matters as a member of Fenland District Councils Planning Committee.

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

Cllr Sutton declared an interest (as a member of the Middle Level Board) in any matter concerning the Middle Level Commissioners.

Mr Harrison, Mr Tegerdine and Cllrs Sutton & Rackley (as members of Waldersey IDB). declared interests in any matters concerning Waldersey IDB.

The Chairman, Messrs Buttress and Leach declared interests in agenda item 18 (District Officers Fees).

B.2058 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 16th May 2022 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.2059 Matters Arising

None

B.2060 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED

M G Day Esq re-appointed as Chairman

B.2061 Appointment of Vice Chairmen

RESOLVED

N Buttress Esq & F Leach Esq are re-appointed as Vice-Chairmen

B2062 Election of Board Members

The Clerk reported 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
BUTTRESS, Neil
DAY, Michael
DUNCALFE, Henry
HARRISON, Nigel
LAKE, Geoffrey

LEACH, Francis
LEACH, Jonathan
PINDER, Amanda
SMART, Charles
TEGERDINE, Peter

(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.

B.2063 Vacancies in Membership

Members considered the three vacancies on the Board.

RESOLVED

That no action be taken to fill the vacancies at the present time and for the matter to be discussed at the next meeting of the Board.

B.2064 Access Issues

Further to minute B.2037, Mr Harrison reported that although works had been carried out at the S B Components site, the issues concerning the building and containers within the byelaw distance still remained. He informed members that in general he was able to carry out maintenance works and there was nothing of immediate concern.

Mr Buttress confirmed he would be looking at access issues for maintenance working as part of his Health and Safety review.

In response to Mr Harrison, Mr Moore confirmed that he had received correspondence concerning the development on the Porters/Pallet Network site in the last couple of days.

B.2065 Hundred of Wisbech IDB and Waldersey IDB - Review of Joint Pumping Arrangements/Amalgamation - Joint Working Group

Further to minute B.2038, Mr Hill reported that the Middle Level solicitor was in the processing of finalising the agreement and when done it was proposed to review the agreement at a meeting of the Joint Pumping Working Group, as had previously been agreed.

B.2066 Clerk's Report

The Clerk advised:-

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 was held on Wednesday the 9th November 2022, The Hive, Nocton, Lincolnshire LN4 2AY.

c) 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.

B.2067 Delivery of Annual Maintenance contract

Mr Harrison reported that the early start allowed for the majority of the programmed works to be completed, although there were a few small sections which would be carried over into next year. Should conditions allow, he proposed to spray areas of water cress in the system to hopefully give better control. He updated members on how the changeover between red and white diesel was working and in response to Mr \Harrison, Mr Hill confirmed that Middle Level solicitor had been working on the letter of variation which she hoped to have finalised in the near future.

B.2068 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

Mr Moore updated members on the current position concerning the A47 culverts and informed them that there was a meeting this coming Monday at which he hoped to progress matters further.

Attenuation Area near Point 29

In response to Mr G Lake, Mr Moore detailed how the proposed outfall structure on the attenuation area near point 29 would work.

Mr F Leach reported that he understood from Maxey & Co that the land transfer had now been completed and in response both Mr Moore & Mr Hill confirmed that they were not aware nor had been updated on the current position.

Mr Buttress considered that this was an important issue to address, as if the land had been transferred to the Board, policies and procedures would need updating concerning insurances and Health & Safety requirements.

Concerning the operation of the proposed outfall structure, Mr Moore agreed to forward a webinar link to the Chairman and District Officers.

Culverting Works near Point 66

With regards to the culverting works near point 66, Mr Moore confirmed that the engineer was currently in the process of preparing tender documents. Cllr Sutton reported that the works committee had discussed the backfill/surface dressing for the scheme and although slightly more expensive than the topsoil and grass they had considered that an aggregate covering would provide the best long-term value for money taking into account future maintenance costs.

Flood Alleviation Investigations

Mr Moore detailed the background to the flood alleviation investigations and reported that contact had been made with the environment Agency who were currently considering the possibility of including

the study in this year or next year's Grant Aided programme. He further reported that the works committee had discussed this matter with the Middle Level engineers on Monday and it was their recommendation to wait for a response from the Environment Agency before taking any further action. Mr Moore confirmed that if approved, the Grant-in-Aid would cover 100% of the study costs. In response to Mr Hill, Mr Moore confirmed that both Hundred of Wisbech IDB & Waldersey IDB systems had been included in the proposal discussed with the Environment Agency.

Planning Applications

Cllr Sutton reported that he had a meeting with some residents at Bar Drove and it was intended for one of the residents to attend this meeting to address the Board on behalf of 4 residents, to ascertain the Board's position concerning development in the area. However, as the resident was unable to attend, he had agreed to raise the matter on the resident's behalf. He further reported that he had informed the residents that the Board was not a planning authority and although they have an opportunity to raise drainage concerns, they do not have any influence on planning decisions by the Local Authority. Mr Moore reported that he had received a letter from residents of Bar Drove raising concerns to the Board and the Chair reported that he had been trying to arrange a meeting with residents. Cllr Sutton was hopeful that the FDC Enforcement Officer would be able to attend along with representatives from Highways.

Mr F Leach queried the pictures of Sandall Road in the agenda and that it appeared that the top two pictures had the narrative switched. Mr Moore confirmed that they had been included to show/highlight water levels during rainfall events. Mr F Leach referred to an application from Pike Textiles to install a bridge and the Chairman referred to the cluster of pipes/ducts crossing the watercourse. Mr Moore reported that the application was for an access culvert but he has an issue with the ducts and proposes to have a site meeting to discuss the issues of the access culvert and the ducts.

Mr F Leach referred to recent planning applications and to one recently applied for a property at Railway Road, which appeared to discharge surface water via a pipe to around point 66. He referred to a number of likely historic pipes within the industrial area which, when developed, had not been properly recorded. Mr Moore was not aware of the proposed discharge but agreed to look into it further.

Mr Moore referred to the proposed development around point 12 and the location of pipework. The Chairman confirmed that together, with the District Officers, they had mapped the course of the pipeline along with measurement and would give the details to Mr Moore to pass onto the developer's agent.

Mr Buttress considered that the development would encroach into the 9-metre byelaw distance. Mr Moore considered that it would be possible to reduce the byelaw distance to a width of 6m over the pipeline. In response to Mr Buttress, the Chairman considered that he should inform the owner of the garage of the route of the pipeline. Members considered that they could reduce the byelaw distance to 6-metre either side of the pipeline.

Mr Moore referred to the proposed housing scheme development in Elm by Bowsall Developments Ltd and that they were in danger of losing funding unless a drainage solution could be found. He informed members that there was a proposal to pipe and fill open watercourses on the site and discharge to the north of the site, which would involve a long circuitous route for the discharge. Members considered that the most effective discharge would be under the road to point 87. Mr F Leach considered that the on-site filling of watercourses could cause other drainage issues in the area.

Members approved to recommend a discharge route under the road to point 87 along with a requirement for mitigating works to other watercourses if the proposal was to also infill on-site watercourses.

With regards to proposed development in the vicinity of Smithees Garage at Begdale Road, Mr Moore confirmed that he had located plans for the area. Members discussed problems associated with private watercourses being infilled. Mr F Leach considered that the individual dwellings that had been built had all originally had a proper drainage route installed which had been working correctly.

Mr Moore updated members on the progress of the Medworth CHP Ltd/MVV Environmental Ltd application noting that he had recently registered himself to respond on behalf of the Board. He referred to some of the possible short response times and the difficulty these could cause in getting response from the Board/Works committee, particularly should this coincide with holidays. He referred to the proposal for a high pressure/high temperature steam pipeline, which was proposed to be 1.6m above ground level and for proposals for footpaths and possible cycleway.

Members approved for the works committee to be authorised to deal with this matter on behalf of the Board, along with Mr Moore.

Mr F Leach queried the progress of the proposal from Seagate Homes for around 53 dwellings and Mr Moore confirmed that he had not received any further proposals. Cllr Sutton considered that Seagate were concentrating on other sites currently rather than this one. The Chairman considered that the majority of larger developments had slowed down recently.

RESOLVED

- i) That the report be approved

- ii) Attenuation Area near Point 29

That the Middle Level solicitor confirm the current position concerning the land transfer of the attenuation area near point 29 to the Chairman and District Officers.

- iii) Culverting Works near Point 66

That the engineer be informed that the scheme should be finished with a membrane and aggregate covering and for this to be included in the Tender specifications.

- iv) Flood Alleviation Investigations

That the recommendation of the works committee to wait for further information from the Environment Agency before proceeding further be approved and that the works committee be authorised to take any further action as considered appropriate when the update is received.

- v) Planning Applications

That the engineer informs the applicant that the Board had successfully mapped the course of the pipeline and that they would be prepared to reduce the byelaw width to

6-metere on either side of the pipe along its length. (Piped section – Fridaybridge Road/Back Road).

Medworth CHP Ltd/MVU Environmental Ltd Application

- a) That the work committee be authorised to deal with this matter on behalf of the Board.
- b) For Mr Moore to be authorised to represent the Board in any responses/representation required and that he also be authorised to make responses/representation on behalf of the Board in circumstances where it may not be possible to consult with the works committee.

B.2069 Capital Improvement Programme

The Members reviewed and approved the Board's future capital improvement programme.

Mr Hill reported on the current position including the likely slippage on the pipe and filling of watercourse at Point 66 and attenuation/drainage area at Point 29 schemes

B.2070 Health and Safety

Further to minute B.2034, Neil Buttress reminded members of the previous approval to employ the NFU as consultants, which has been working very well as the Boards contractor uses the same consultants and this provides a high degree of synergy when reviewing systems.

He reported that it was intended to undertake a full review early next year.

He informed members that there were still a few areas to complete, which it was hoped the Boards contractors would be able to attend to in the near future.

Neil Buttress referred to the majority of the Boards within Middle Level being mainly 'Rural' which allowed for a more generic approach; however, major parts of the Boards system were in the developed area which causes specific individual problems which hag to be dealt with on an individual basis. He referred to problems caused by members of the public, while the contractors were working, despite all required signage, warnings and banksmen being in place.

The Chairman offered his thanks on behalf of the Board for all the work Neil was carrying out and noted that everything he was doing was greatly appreciated by all members.

B.2071 District Officers Report

Fred Leach reported that it had generally been dry and quiet and although some slubbing works had been carried out, further works had been put on hold due to the lack of water as works on dry watercourses could cause additional damage to their integrity.

He referred to the event on 5th June, when there was approx. 40mm of rain and a large amount of weed blocked the A47 culvert at point 50, which required the contractor to attend site to clear it.

Cllr Will Sutton referred to pollution incidents in the District and Fred Leach reported that things had been quite for a while. He reported that Anglian Water have found some sources of pollution but considers there are a number of historical pipes in the industrial area feeding into the Anglian Water system which Anglian Water do not know about.

In response to Amanda Pinder, Fred Leach confirmed that policing water quality is dealt with by the Environment Agency, who are initially contacted in cases of pollution being reported. Neil Buttress considered that there are multiple sources from within the industrial area. Fred Leach referred to problems pollution can cause if allowed to flow into the Waldersey system, which has a number of irrigators taking water.

The Chairman referred to the new Conservation Officer, Sofi Lloyd, and the new IDB Biodiversity Guidance manual and that he considered it appropriate to take these matters up further with her.

Neil Buttress referred to the slubbing programme and the volume and quality of spoil being removed which, due to the content of foreign materials was starting to cause problems when left bankside. He reported that, due to the nature of the material deposited and further disruption caused by the contractor carrying out culvert lining works, it had been agreed between the Chairman and District Officers for an ex-gratia payment to be made to the land owner for the inconvenience caused.

Members discussed proposals for paying compensation for drain maintenance works. Cllr Sutton considered that the Board should develop a policy if compensation was to be paid and referred to recent discussions on this subject at a recent meeting of the Middle Level Commissioners.

The Chairman referred to a meeting he had attended earlier in the week, at which the Clerk had confirmed that he would be retiring towards the end on March. Cllr Sutton reported that Middle Level had decided to split the post back to its previous staffing's, in that there would be two separate posts, one for Clerk/ Chief Executive and one for Chief Engineer. He further updated that both posts had been advertised and there were a number of high-quality applicants, with the interviews commencing towards the end of this month.

Both District Officers confirmed that since the report, their hours had increased slightly.

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.
- iii) That the ex-gratia payment of £750 for disruption caused by drain maintenance works and culvert lining works be approved.
- iv) That the works committee formulate a policy proposal for compensation payments for drain maintenance operations and that it be discussed at the next meeting of the Board.

B.2072 Works Committee Report.

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

B.2073 District Officers' Fee

Mr Hill referred to the discussion from last year's meeting and the rates set.

Mr Buttress and Mr F Leach confirmed that they were happy with the current arrangements and that, following the meeting, they would be submitting claims for works carried out over the previous six months.

The Chairman confirmed he was content with the arrangements put in place last year and Mr Fred Leach commented that it was important for him to submit a claim in relation to the time he spends working on behalf of the Board.

RESOLVED

That the arrangements remain unchanged for 2023/2024 and they be reviewed again at the November 2023 meeting.

(NB) – Messrs Buttress, Day and F Leach declared financial interests when this item was discussed.

B.2074 Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscriptions

Mr Hill reported that ADA had increased subscriptions by 4.5% for 2023, from £875 to £915

RESOLVED

That the increased subscription be paid for 2023.

B.2075 Determination of Annual Values for Rating Purposes

The Board considered the recommendation for the determination of annual value for rating purposes.

RESOLVED

- i) That the determinations recommended be adopted by the Board.
- ii) That the Clerk be empowered to serve notices and to take such other action as may be necessary to comply with statutory requirements.
- iii) That the Chairman and the Clerk be empowered to authorise appropriate action on behalf of the Board in connection with any appeal against the determinations.

B.2076 Contribution from Developers

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

B.2077 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2021/2022

- a) The Board considered and approved the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year that ended on the 31st March 2022.
- b) The Board considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year that ended on the 31st March 2022.

B.2078 Defra IDB1 Returns

Mr Hill referred to the completed IDB1 form for 2021/2022 which the Board noted and approved.

B.2079 Expenditure estimate/Update

Mr Hill reported that he had reviewed the current position with the Chairman & District Officers and it was currently anticipated that any further slubbing works could be covered from the budget position.

He further reported on the current position concerning electricity rates and at this point the forecast had been left as per the budget, however, depending on the level of pumping required over the winter months, this could change, possibly significantly.

RESOLVED

That the report be approved.

B.2080 Date of next Meetings

RESOLVED

That the next Meetings of the Board will be held on:

Tuesday 16th May 2023 (MLC offices) 2pm

Thursday 16th November 2023 (The Crown Lodge, Outwell) 5pm.

Annual Maintenance Report 2023

Work over the Autumn period went relatively smoothly with no major issues, favourable weather conditions helping greatly, any slubbing areas requested were completed with some spoil having to be stored at the farm because of different issues (rubbish or not a convenient tip site) this spoil is now in the process of being removed.

Regular mowing has been started but the second cut and also any work in the industrial section has been delayed because of high rainfall, we hope to start work on these areas on week starting 22nd May.

Excessive rainfall on Tues 9th May put the industrial drainage system under huge strain as shown in attached picture and several businesses showed concern but fortunately no significant rainfall followed and levels subsided, as a result of this an extra board has been put in the weir at point 33 to deflect more water under those conditions down the first culvert under the bypass, point 29.

Many thanks go to both Neil and Fred for their support.

Nigel Harrison



Hundred of Wisbech IDB

Consulting Engineers' Supplementary Report - April 2023

Improving Capital Delivery

Introduction

Since being in post I have been getting to grips with a number of things in the Engineering/Technical Services Department. I've made a number of observations: officers are knowledgeable, dedicated and committed to delivering a service to the Commissioners and IDBs; working in partnership with the Environment Agency and local planning authorities/LLFAs is clearly evident; the operations team do an excellent job managing water resources in an extremely complex system; our capital delivery programme is growing as assets come to the end of design life; we have some significant changes and challenges ahead (biodiversity net gain requirements, the climate emergency and Fens Reservoir amongst others) which need careful planning and resourcing if we are to properly represent members and local communities and secure the best outcomes for the catchment.

We have an increasing capital delivery programme, with a number of ongoing projects and many identified for future delivery. I have identified areas where improvements are needed to deliver these projects better and to improve communications between the consulting engineer and the Boards.

Resources

Staff in MLC's Technical Services are currently stretched in terms of capacity and capability. There is a significant lack of suitable people across the engineering and project delivery profession generally, which impacts not only MLC's ability to recruit, but also the availability of consultant and contractor resources.

As well as our services to IDBs, and the Bank Raising Scheme over the next 4-5 years, and delivery of the pumping station refurbishment programme, there is an immediate need to provide resources to support MLC input to developing plans for Anglian Water's Fens Reservoir. This will have a significant and profound impact on water management in the catchment, and MLC officers need to ensure we secure the very best outcomes for our Board members, ratepayers, customers and the environment. We will be working very hard over the next 6 months to achieve this before the project passes its next 'gate'.

Now that MLC receives revenue through navigation licences, we have to ensure that we deliver on the requirements set out in the Navigation Byelaws 2020. This is a work in progress, but again sets additional demands on our internal resources and our ability to be proactive.

MLC were unsuccessful in recruiting a new planning engineer in 2022 and the existing team is under continued pressure to resolve ongoing and new applications, let alone adequately accommodate new demands. We are now looking at alternative resource solutions to support the wider engineering department.

IDB Projects

I am already aware of a number of projects that have been in progress for some time. There is lack of a clear programme of delivery and/project management discipline for these; there are no specific timescales and other agreed tolerances with the IDB as 'client', and this makes it difficult to plan and prioritise resources and workloads.

I am compiling a programme of all the projects being delivered by MLC and determining the resources needed to complete them. I will work with the Boards in question to progress delivery as quickly and efficiently as possible.

For new project requests, I am implementing a simple process with a 'Project Initiation Form' to capture key information and undertake an initial assessment of the project. I will prioritise work requested based on urgency and availability of resources. Unless otherwise instructed by an IDB, our default approach will be to seek to maximise FCRM Grant in Aid funding for eligible projects. I will implement a process of reporting progress regularly to the Boards/key contacts. As part of this process, I'll be asking each Board to agree how they delegate decision making, as projects can't be effectively delivered when governed through annual meetings, and how we manage better, more frequent, communications between the Boards' delegates and officers in Technical Services.

I am looking at the possibility of 'packaging' some works together for delivery by consultants, e.g. Pumping Station Refurbishment Projects rather than delivering each one individually. This has the advantage of securing a team of suitable resources who can focus on the work and deliver it as efficiently as possible (economies of scale). This will be a change of approach for individual IDBs and will need further work to determine how we manage this approach practically when each Board is its own individual entity with maybe a once per annum meeting. I hope to provide you with more detail about this, and the benefits it will give the Boards, in the coming months.

It may take some time to deliver the backlog of projects, which in turn might delay the start of new projects. However, I'm hopeful my approach will eventually lead to a more effective and efficient delivery process.

MLC Bank Raising Scheme

This is currently the largest IDB led project in the national flood investment programme and gives us the opportunity to develop capacity and capability in the organisation and share best practice across all our work. The scheme will be under the spot-light and have a focus from the Environment Agency in terms of grant assurance.

Works are progressing on a number of fronts but were lacking leadership and direction and there was no delivery programme. I have implemented some standard project management tools to control, manage and deliver the project: An 'exception report' was raised to the Project Board/MLC Executive Board outlining the existing situation and mitigation measures being put in place; A project plan and outline programme is now in place; Clear project governance has been identified; A data management plan is being drafted; Risks and issues are being identified; Project and delivery manager resources have been appointed and they will start in April.

Most of the project work was being carried out by MLC staff putting a strain on their already stretched ability to deliver other commitments, especially to the IDBs. The Technical Services team does not currently have the capacity or capability to deliver major projects.

There was a lack of clarity around environmental impact and risk assessments for activities which are considerably more than 'business as usual.'

Resources are in place/are being identified to complete environmental impact assessment required before wholesale desilting works can be undertaken, including significant input from the MLC Environment Officer.

The Independent Technical Advisor has prepared a scope for tender to secure a consultant to develop outline design and prepare Full Business Case (for MLC Project Board approval). The consultant will provide all technical input needed for developing and planning the project and ensuring consents and approvals are identified and in place. MLC staff will continue to act in a lead client capacity, providing their specific technical expertise and knowledge of the catchment as necessary. I will lead the project as Project Executive, working closely with the Project and Delivery Managers and providing regular updates to the Project Sponsor (Chief Executive) and MLC Executive Committee.

MLC's H&S advisor, Cope, visited and assessed the provisions in place and provided advice on additional requirements. Risk assessments/methods statements are being developed for physical work activities alongside a full review of the MLC H&S policies.

A Communications & Engagement team is in place and is planning engagement in parallel with Chief Executive's proposed MLC engagement and branding improvements.

A robust forecast of project costs needs developing. It is likely that the total project costs will exceed the current approval limit of £23million from the Outline Business Case. There are also some risks to the delivery programme that need to be investigated further and mitigated as necessary. All of these will be considered in more detail over the next 6 months, appraised and included in the Full Business Case, before the end of the financial year 2023/24.

Contractors are currently being identified for the various work phases: desilting; material import; bank raising works and hard defences (including detailed design).



Consulting Engineer

5 April 2023

Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board

Capital Improvement Programme (2023/2024)

			PREVIOUS YEARS	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	FUTURE YEARS	ALL YEARS
			Pre Yr 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Post Year 10	Total Expenditure
Structures	Gravity outfall/overspill refurbishment/replacement	B	14.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.6
	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		1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5
Drainage Channels	Sleeving existing pipework		0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
	Open ditch lining - Point 66		0.7	250	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	250.7
	Culverts under the A47 - Highways improvement works		0.3	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
	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	0.1	150	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	150.1
	Culvert replacement - Point 3	B	1.3	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9
	Walkway and handrail improvements to structures	A	0.0	6.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0
	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	0.3	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.3
	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	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
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
			18.9	431.6	11	165	60	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	692

District wide flood alleviation scheme.
- works no-longer required depending on outcome of study

District wide flood alleviation study:

Approval for business case to be developed and grant-in-aid application to be submitted.
Programmed works for future years to be developed following recommendations in study.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT FOR HOW I.D.B.

IT HAS BEEN 4 YEARS SINCE WE STARTED A NEW JOURNEY AND HAD A VISIT FROM THE NFU RESULTING IN A LOT OF WORK NEEDED DOING TO CONFORM. IN FACT WE WERE STARTING FROM A LOW POSITION. IT WAS SUGGESTED BY THE NFU REPRESENTATIVE THAT WE PROCEED WITH PLANS AND HAVE AN NFU REVIEW IN 4 YEARS WITH MYSELF MONITORING PROGRESS. I AM PLEASED TO INFORM YOU THAT THIS REVIEW WITH NEIL WHATLING FROM THE NFU AND MYSELF WENT AHEAD ON 24/03/2023. THE REPORT CONCLUDES THAT WE HAVE MADE VAST IMPROVEMENTS AND THE MAJORITY OF THINGS ARE NOW IN PLACE.

HOWEVER A FEW PROBLEMS ARE STILL THERE NAMELY STEPS AT THE OUTFALL WEIR (POINT 26) AND THE STEPS AT THE WEIR (POINT 12) WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR OUR IMPROVEMENT PLAN BUT THIS IS NOT GOING TO HAPPEN OVERNIGHT SO AT A WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING IT HAS BEEN AGREED TO PUT NEW STEPS TO THE EXISTING STRUCTURES.

THIS BRINGS ME ON TO THE SHORT SECTION OF THE DRAIN AT THE SCOUT HUT I WAS VERY DISAPPOINTED THAT THIS HAS NOT BEEN PIPED THE DECISION BETWEEN US IS AS IT WAS 4 YEARS AGO IS THAT THIS IS UNSAFE WORKING PRACTICE, WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS THAT THE TENDERS ARE NEARLY READY I HOPE THAT THIS WILL HAVE HAPPENED BY THE BOARD MEETING.

HE WAS IMPRESSED BY MOST THINGS AND PARTICULARLY THE DECISION TO MOW AROUND MC DONALDS ETC WITH A RECIPROCATING MOWER. GOING FORWARD ALL WOODEN DAMBOARDS IDEALLY NEED REPLACING WITH SAFER OPERATING SYSTEMS.

DUE TO THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THIS POLICY I AM UNABLE TO PRINT IT BUT CAN QUOTE THAT WE HAVE NO (RED) URGENT REQUIREMENTS. THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT I WILL SHARE WITH YOU AS I FEEL IT IS IMPORTANT. FROM THE VISIT IT IS APPARENT THAT THE CLIENT TAKES THEIR HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES VERY SERIOUSLY AND THE PERSON I ENGAGED WITH ON THE DAY WAS EXCEPTIONALLY COMPETENT AND KNOWLEDGEABLE WITH THE ATTITUDE AND WANT TO GET THINGS RIGHT.

IN CONCLUSION THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT OVER THE YEARS BECAUSE THIS HAS BEEN VERY MUCH A LONG HAUL, TEAM EFFORT, WHICH HAS APART FROM THE AFORE MENTIONED ITEMS HAS RESULTED IN MAINLY MONITORING AND TWEAKING FROM MY PERSPECTIVE.

FINALLY, I MENTIONED FORMAL TRAINING TO NEIL AND HE FELT IT WOULD LOOK GOOD IF A BOARD MEMBER HAD SOME FORMAL TRAINING BUT NOT ESSENTIAL. IF YOU WISH ME TO CONTINUE IN MY ROLE, I INTEND TO TAKE A COURSE AT MY EXPENSE FOR MY OWN PEACE OF MIND. ALSO, TO HAVE HALF ANNUAL UPDATES WITH THE CHAIR AND DEPUTY VICE CHAIR TO DOCUMENT PROGRESS PRIOR TO THE BOARD MEETINGS, WHILST CONTINUING MY CONTACT WITH THE BOARD'S CONTRACTOR.

IF YOU HAVE ANY POINTS, PLEASE ASK ME AT THE MEETING.

KIND REGARDS NEIL

District Officers Report Nov 22 to May 23.

Generally, a quiet winter with rainfall fairly low.

November. We've had discussions with MVV regarding the proposed incinerator.

January. Site meeting at the Pallet Network. Mike Neil and I established the course of a long section of pipe under the Friday Bridge Road as its route was uncertain.

March. Neil and I had site meetings with CoPart about their expansion, and Melanie at No.1 Oldfield Lane, regarding the open drain section at the scout hut.

April. Mike Neil and myself toured some of the boards district with Henry and Amanda to help familiarise them with the area. Neil walked the agricultural drains to check on their condition.

May. Neil and I attended a budget meeting at Mike's, with Robert Hill, to establish a rate recommendation for the board to consider. Considerable rainfall on the 9th, nearly caused our drains to overspill. While there was flooding to some properties in Wisbech, we didn't get any reports of problems within our district.

Neil and I have had regular meetings, sometimes two or three times a week to discuss issues that we've come across, including planning applications that require consideration, and matters concerning the ongoing maintenance with Harrison Contractors. We've had a few works committee meetings, a couple of which have been held at the Middle Level Office, to include middle level engineers and other staff.

We've met the new Chief executive, Paul Burrows, Chief engineer, Nicola Oldfield, and Environmental Officer, Sofi Lloyd.

Some time has been spent taking soil samples and pictures from a large heap of dredgings, that HAC have had to cart from the industrial area. This to prove that the soil wasn't contaminated with heavy metals or pollutants, in order to arrange disposal. We're working on a method policy to deal with future dredgings, as there is such a large quantity of rubbish brought out of the drains with the soil, not only in the industrial area. Also, any dredging in the industrial area has to be carted and stored for removal at a later date, which creates a number of problems.

The two areas of considerable frustration to us are the lack of progress on the Scout Hut Piping, and the surveying of the districts drains and associated grant application. We apologise to the board and ratepayers for the lack of progress.

I've printed some information showing rainfall over the last few years, and this month so far at Walsoken, for interest. I have access to a number of weather stations around Wisbech, and this one, on our farm, near to the Elm Hall roundabout, is the nearest to the industrial area of our boards area. There is another between Outwell and Wisbech, on the boundary of the boards agricultural Eastern area. Although only a couple of miles apart, the differences in rainfall can be large.

For approval.

Fred hours 17.

Neil hours 32 to include Health and Safety.



Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board

Environmental Update – May 2023

Introduction

As I took up post in mid-October, unfortunately I am not in a position to provide a full biodiversity action plan update yet, but have compiled the following update of environmental activities and key points relevant to the Board, which I hope you find useful.

As you know, I have been familiarising myself with the IDB area, its approaches and plans as well as I can, over winter, but from now onwards I would like to plan some further visits to the IDB area to develop a much better understanding of the area and your priorities, so will be in touch to do organise this. I look forward to working with you to enhance any areas that we agree would be beneficial and feasible to do so.

1. Bank Raising Project

You will have been made aware of the Bank Raising Project and the work that is planned on the MLC channels and banks within the district. The ecological considerations of the project are being dealt with separately, outside of this report, along with the project update. However, should you have any questions about the projects' ecological considerations then do contact me directly and I will be happy to help.

2. Consents

I have been asked for input in relation to a number of consenting applications in the area. As you know, the consultants for the Wisbech incinerator project proposal have asked if the IDB have any biodiversity net gain projects they could fund to mitigate the loss of open ditch habitat as part of that development. I have discussed this with you and I await your direction as to whether this is something you would like to explore with them. For context, Local Authority biodiversity credit value estimations are ranging for £20k per credit up to £70k depending upon location and habitat type. You can expect a water-related type to be on the higher side of that scale as will require intensive and frequent management. I believe that MVV are looking for at least 0.25 units.

Their consultants have in the meantime asked if they would be able to enhance the retained ditch for the benefit of water voles. This would most probably involve the widening of the ditch and installation of pre-planted coir roll as we have previously discussed. If this is something you would be willing for them to undertake and manage, in line with your specifications, for 30 years, or you would like to propose that they fund the IDB to maintain it and/or establish these things on their behalf, please let me know. However, for these measures to be worthwhile, it would be necessary for the upstream pollution issue to be resolved first.

In the meantime, for any other consent applications I am asked to review, I will continue to focus on ensuring the key objectives of the IDB are delivered, namely, the maintenance of channel conveyance and capacity whilst conserving and enhancing the environment.

3. A47 pond-side enhancement

If you would like some input on how to improve the small triangular pond next to the A47, then please let me know.

4. Pollution

The suspected point-source pollution in the catchment remains an issue I understand. I am raising the issue with colleagues at the EA to see if investigations can be progressed but this is moving slowly. In the meantime, it may be beneficial if we could discuss options to tackle the within the channel to reduce the impacts until the cause can be managed.

5. Biodiversity Action Plan Review

The Biodiversity Action Plan has traditionally been the key document which sets out the IDBs' planned contributions towards conserving and enhancing biodiversity. Although the BAP remains vital, the objectives are unlikely to be reached unless there is a process in place to ensure that the incremental steps that need to be taken to achieve the BAP objectives are incorporated into regular operations and are reviewed regularly. Otherwise, the BAP simply becomes a document that is reviewed once or twice a year. It is the review of this vital process that I will be focussing on, rather than reviewing the objectives in the BAP, because the objectives themselves still remain valid.

6. Process and Compliance Review

I am well into a thorough process and compliance review of all our environmental approaches across all boards. This will help to ensure that IDBs are operating in line with all new legislative and regulatory requirements, updated guidance and best practice, and are better prepared for any changes we expect to be introduced in the next year. This will include the impacts and opportunities brought forward by the Environment Act 2021, including biodiversity net gain and delivering biodiversity enhancement. The outcomes of this review will feed into the BAP refresh for each IDB.

I also plan to review the currently-available pre-application environmental advice for consents and standard responses with the planning office.

7. GIS System Development

To support the activities mentioned above, an improved environmental GIS system is being developed and work is well underway to digitise all available environmental data. Lots of data exists due to all the good work already undertaken by IDBs but it exists in different states in different places. There is also a great deal of information held by the Local Environmental Records Centres, for which I am pleased to say, we now have a contract in place to receive regularly. This will be a vital data source that we must consult when planning our work to help us identify any protected and priority species which may be impacted or enhanced by our work. We are merging all these data sets to develop a more complete picture of what we have, in order to define and preserve the baseline from which to progress. This, more complete picture is also necessary to enable us to identify opportunities for environmental enhancement. Developing the GIS system this way will deliver efficiencies in environmental data collection, analysis and reporting, allowing more time to undertake practical conservation work on the ground. It will also enable us to share our data more easily with the local environmental records centres, contributing to the understanding of the local and national status of many species and help to raise the profile of the IDB and the valuable work they do to support biodiversity. You can see an example of how some of the digitised data is coming together in the attached IDB map.

8. Work Package Ecological Screening Document

We have developed the template named above for IDBs to complete when planning any ad hoc/non-routine works that will "break ground" on the any of the banks. The information is needed in order to evidence that we have correctly considered the ecological impacts of the work, and to identify opportunities for enhancement, as we are mandated to do, by law. Activities for which the form would be relevant include bank reformation, mooring construction, culverting, head walls, piling, filling in a ditch, moving an access culvert etc.

Only the first page needs completing by the IDB (not a lot of info needed) and the rest by me. I undertake the assessment as far as possible, and then return the second part of the document to the IDB, setting out what surveys etc. will be needed, if any. I may be able to undertake some of the practical surveys but in some

cases, an ecological consultant with a specialist licence may be needed. In some cases, there may not be a need for any surveys and the recommendations will be that the work can proceed with some adaptations to the proposed approach, such as altered timings or establishment of “no-work” buffers around sensitive areas.

When all desk and fieldwork is complete, the form is “signed off” from an ecological perspective, and returned to the IDB with recommendations for the approaches to be taken. This means the IDB and the operatives undertaking the work have full sight of the ecological constraints, mitigations and approaches required to remain compliant. It is recommended that this form is completed and sent as early as possible to prevent delays, even up to 1 year in advance of the proposed works. The form is available by emailing sofi.lloyd@middlelevel.gov.uk and is also available from the MLC website.

9. Protected Species

a) *Water Vole*

As always, any work that plans to “break ground” on the any of the banks, so bank reformation, mooring construction, culverting, head walls, piling etc, **OR the removal of any marginal vegetation, please let me know ASAP by completing the above ecological screening document** so we can plan the appropriate surveys and mitigations in plenty of time, to avoid any delays and ensure compliance with wildlife legislation. This is particularly relevant for water voles. We know that there are some known, valuable water-vole ditches in the district, and some which could be enhanced to better support the local population, but the accepted approach is to always assume water voles are present in all ditches, and plan work around their assumed presence, in order to avoid committing an offence in terms of wildlife legislation. There is a lot of good, pragmatic and practical guidance on how to properly consider water voles during IDB works contained in the Environmental Good Governance Guide for IDBs.

b) *Badgers*

A reminder that badgers and their setts are protected by law and care must be taken not to disturb setts during routine channel management. Sett interference requires a licence under all circumstances. Please contact us should you have any queries regarding activities taking place around any known badger sett. Please also let me know asap if there are any setts which are presenting a flood risk due to any burrowing which is destabilising banks etc. More detailed information and refresher training on approaches to be taken around badger setts will be organised in the coming months. In the meantime, please refer to the relevant chapter in the Environmental Good Governance Guide (available on the ADA website) for more detailed information on badgers.

c) *Birds*

Please be reminded of the legislation around the disturbance of breeding birds, particularly when cutting vegetation or bank-side trees, between March and September and where kingfishers are known to hunt. Please see the relevant chapter in the Environmental Good Governance Guide (available on the ADA website) to refresh your understanding of mitigation and survey requirements and get in touch should you have any questions.

i. Barn owls

I have met with our barn owl conservation delivery partners and we had defined a schedule of checking and refreshing barn owl boxes over winter but have unfortunately been unable to commence due to the restrictions imposed by BTO (British Trust for Ornithology) due to avian flu. We continue to monitor the guidance and act accordingly and have been able to commence some box checking by following strict biosecurity measures. Please do let us know therefore if there are any boxes that you feel need some maintenance ASAP so we can plan to visit them before the start of the breeding season. It is even more important during these times that you please help us with the following:

- Tell us if you spot a box needing repair
- Tell us if you see a box being regularly visited in nesting season
- Tell us if you'd like a barn owl box

- Establish and maintain un-cropped field margins for foraging

-

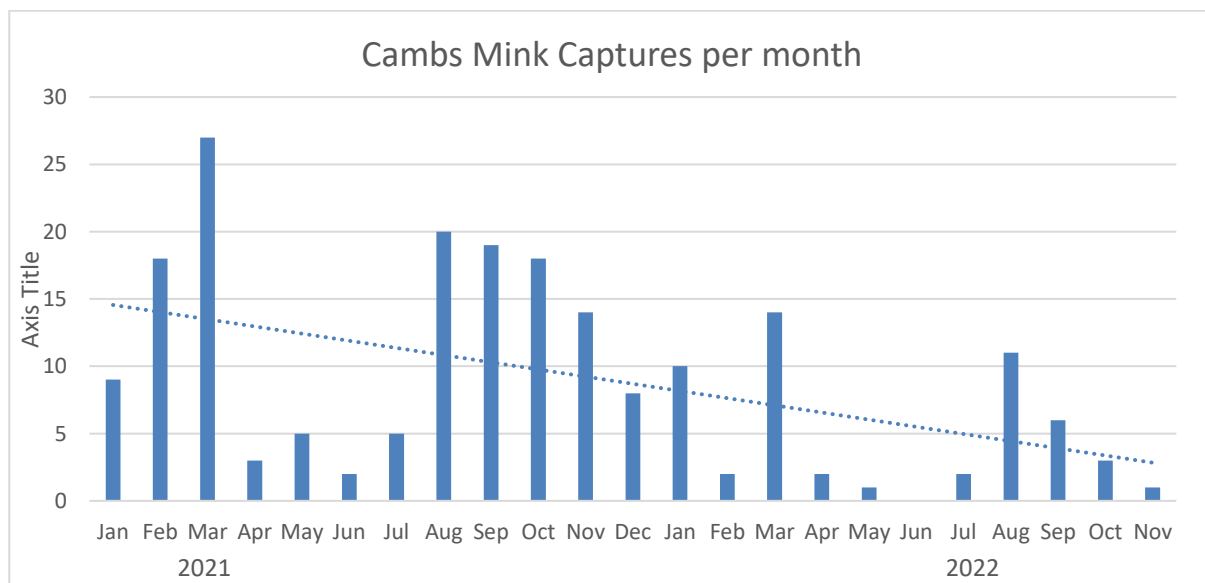
ii. Avian Flu

Avian Flu is now thankfully less of a risk now that temperatures are increasing and there are less avian arrivals from overseas. However, please ensure that you are familiar with, **and promote the knowledge of** the DEFRA guidelines on avian flu, in particular those for reporting suspected cases: Bird flu (avian influenza): latest situation in England - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). If any dead birds are spotted, please do let us know and either we can come and collect and dispose of them in a safe manner to minimise the risk of the disease spreading to other wildlife, or we can arrange for the collection.

d) Mink & Water Voles

I am now part of the co-ordination team for the mink control strategy for the MLC area. The mink control project has been hugely successful so the vision of full eradication of mink is becoming much closer to being realised than was ever thought possible. A strategy refresh meeting took place on the 9th January where we reviewed the data to date to help us devise an updated trapping regime for the coming months. The key outcomes of which are that we are very much in **need of further volunteers** to respond to mink raft activation alerts in the area. Any activation would need to be attended promptly within a few hours but the need to respond is likely to be very occasional. Please let me know of any interest.

The following chart shows the number of mink caught each month, suggesting a declining population. However **there have been a number of mink caught in recent weeks in the district**, probably due to the breeding season being underway and their increased travel to find a mate, so trapping is still very valuable and reporting any sightings is key to ensure that traps are ideally placed.



The following table shows the number of Mink caught in 2022 and their locations, compared to 62 mink captures or kills in 2021.

Middle Level mink 2022_List

List of mink captures around the Middle Level in 2022

	Animal Code	Station/Location	Date	Sex
1	WRE/0761	Upwell & Outwell: Laddus Drove holt	09 Jan 2022	Male
2	WRE/0789		11 Jan 2022	Unrecorded
3	WRE/0917	Stoney Bridge	24 Jan 2022	Female
4	WRE/0786	Ramsey: PS Ramsey Hollow	24 Jan 2022	Female
5	WRE/0924	Welches Dam PS bridge SW side	10 Mar 2022	Male
6	WRE/0950	Conington Fen Bridge	13 Mar 2022	Female
7	WRE/0944	Ransommoor: Staffurth's Bridge PS outfall, Old ...	16 Mar 2022	Male
8	WRE/0946	Ramsey Saint Mary's: Speed the Plough Bridge	17 Mar 2022	Male
9	WRE/0951	Twenty Foot, Coldham Bank	22 Mar 2022	Male
10	WRE/0957	Crooked Drain, Sutton Gault	05 Apr 2022	Female
11	WRE/0966	Crooked Drain, Sutton Gault	26 Apr 2022	Female
12	WRE/1046	Great Fen: Charterhouse Farm Bridge	16 Sep 2022	Female
13	WRE/1047	Woodwalton Fen: south	18 Sep 2022	Male
14	WRE/1081	Pingles Pit, Mepal B	21 Oct 2022	Female
15	WRE/1140	Welches Dam PS bridge SW side	27 Nov 2022	Unrecorded

This progress with mink control will positively impact on the abundance of water voles in the area. Previous water vole survey data will be reviewed over winter and added to the GIS system and further surveys will be planned to take place in spring and summer.

10. Invasive species

When any non-native species (particularly the following) are spotted, please record the location using the what3words app ([what3words /// The simplest way to talk about location](#)) if possible (if not postcode or grid ref) and inform us ASAP. Useful identification guides and information can be found online at [ID sheets »](#) [NNSS \(nonnativespecies.org\)](#)

- Floating Pennywort
- Mink
- Himalayan Balsam
- Parrot's feather
- New Zealand pigmyweed (Australian swamp stonecrop - Crassula)

a) Floating Pennywort

Floating Pennywort continues to be an issue in other watercourses just outside the area, so we urge you to remain vigilant, refresh your identification skills and act promptly by notifying us if you think you may have spotted any in the districts drains. Strong adherence to biosecurity procedures is vital as per the boards policy (available from the website).

There has been good progress in trialling the use of an imported weevil to control the plant so we hope that if the success continues, it may be made available nationally at some point in the future.

b) Azolla

Previously reported as common across the IDB area. Please record and notify us as above of any instance. There may be an opportunity to use an approved weevil to control badly affected stretches so please advise if there are any particular areas of concern as there are only limited stocks of the weevils nationally so I will have to apply early to be in with a chance of some of the stock.

c) Chinese Mitten Crabs

Chinese mitten crabs and their apparent rapidly increasing population continue to be a concern. There are reports of some banks in some areas being damaged by their extensive burrowing but it is always difficult to pin this on the crabs alone with there being so many other factors which affect the stability of banks.

We liaise closely with the EA and follow their lead with the management of this species and many others to ensure that nothing we do contradicts their approach, regulation or legislation. Defra has no intention currently of developing policy which would allow the crabs to be caught and removed for commercial or conservation reasons. In particular there was some concern that they were found to carry a gill fluke in other counties which had the potential of being transmitted to humans if they were to be consumed. As Defra isn't planning to change their stance, the EA's approach remains that any crabs which are caught as by-catch must be killed on-site and not removed. The fishing for the crabs specifically is not lawful. There is no recommended or authorised approach to deal with rising populations unfortunately. A commonly held view is that removing mature individuals from the population creates a vacuum that immature individuals then tussle to fill, driving greater movement within the local population and perhaps increased burrowing as a result.

We will continue to monitor the recommended approaches and will adapt ours promptly to follow when necessary.

d) Turkish Crayfish

We have received reliable reports of the presence of Turkish crayfish in some MLC drains. Turkish Crayfish are a schedule 9 listed species listed in the Wildlife & Countryside Act meaning that it is an offence to release them or allow them to escape into the wild. Their impact is not widely understood but it is said that they are known to reside alongside Signal Crayfish, rather than displace them or be displaced by them. Where populations of our native and protected white-clawed crayfish are still present, they are likely to outcompete them but they do not carry crayfish plague which does impact native crayfish. There is no evidence that Turkish crayfish burrow so it is unlikely that they would cause extensive damage to riverbanks but they could reduce fishery profits by competing with fish for food, stealing baits or causing declines in fish recruitment through loss of macrophyte habitat, according to the non-native species secretariat. Please be vigilant and report sightings of the species and maintain strong biosecurity procedures. They can be distinguished from other crayfish species by their long narrow claws, as shown in the pictures below.



Turkish Crayfish

Claws: claws normally same colour as body but underside lightly coloured. Fingers long, straight and narrow



White-clawed crayfish

Claws: are noticeably granular and are whitish to light pink on the underside, never red.



American Signal Crayfish

Claws white or turquoise patch at junction between fixed and moveable finger. Underside of claws are red.

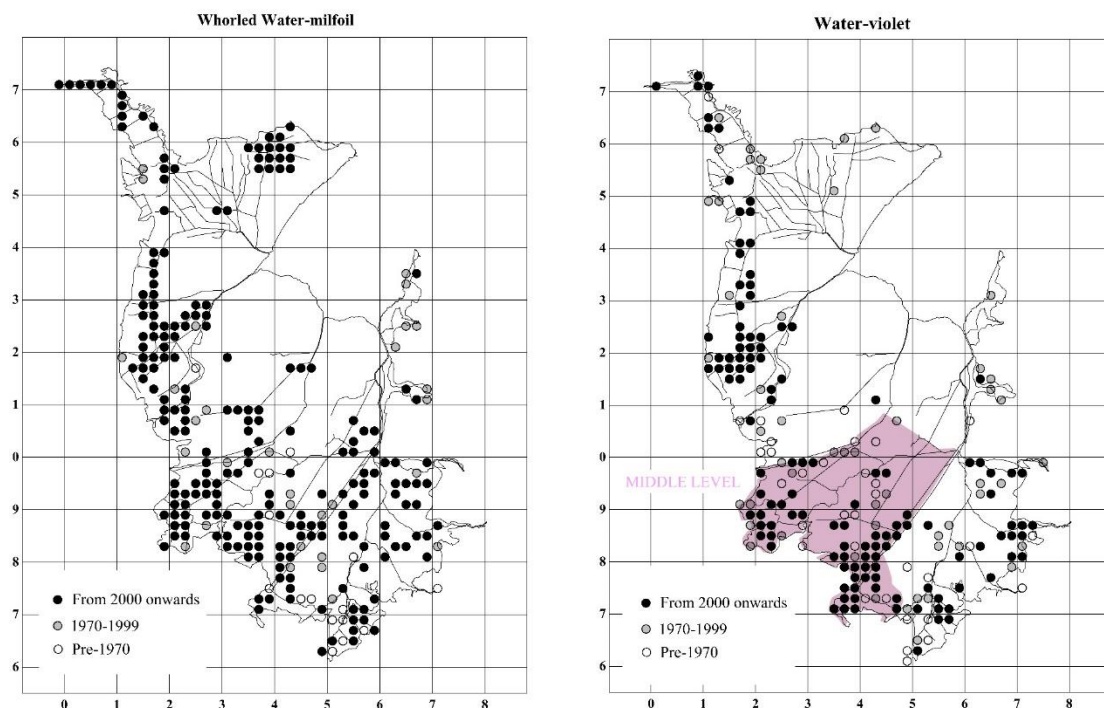
If it is necessary to dispatch a Turkish crayfish, American signal crayfish, or any other non-native crayfish, because it has been removed from the channel accidentally, please ensure that you are familiar with its distinguishing features and can confidently tell it apart from particularly white clawed crayfish. This will ensure no offence against a protected species occurs. There are very few records of the native white-clawed crayfish remaining in the MLC area but care should still be taken and no assumption made. More information can be found at: <https://www.nonnativespecies.org/non-native-species/information-portal/view/381>

11. Fenland Flora Project

The long-running fenland flora project, headed up by botanist Jonathan Graham, to identify and record the presence of rare, threatened and notable aquatic plants in the fens, is nearing completion. The results highlight:

- There are lots of nationally significant aquatic plants in fens, many of which are only found in IDB drains and are present because of the way the drain is being managed.
- Water quality is important for many aquatic plants and a good proportion of IDB drains have good water quality.
- A summer-maintained water level is good for many plants.
- Non-IDB field drains are important too so where possible, aim to always hold some water and cut periodically.

The diagrams below show how the presence of 2 England red data plants that are frequent in local drains.



The plant location data will be added to the GIS system and made available so it can be reviewed ahead of any planned works, and will be added to BAPs. The data will also be useful in identifying any opportunities to enhance these valuable plant populations.

12. Environmental Stewardship.

You will most likely be aware that environmental stewardship schemes and farming subsidies are changing. If you would like to discuss existing stewardship provisions within the district, or you or another rate payer is thinking of applying for a stewardship agreement or establishing new stewardship measures, please do get in touch.

13. Carbon & Climate

There are increasingly a number of low-carbon, sustainable alternatives available for many of the common materials and equipment used in flood risk management, such as low-carbon concrete and steel, solar powered mechanical and electrical equipment and coir roll for bank stabilisation. Please get in touch to discuss any projects which involve these or similar materials or equipment to understand if any are suitable for you to consider.

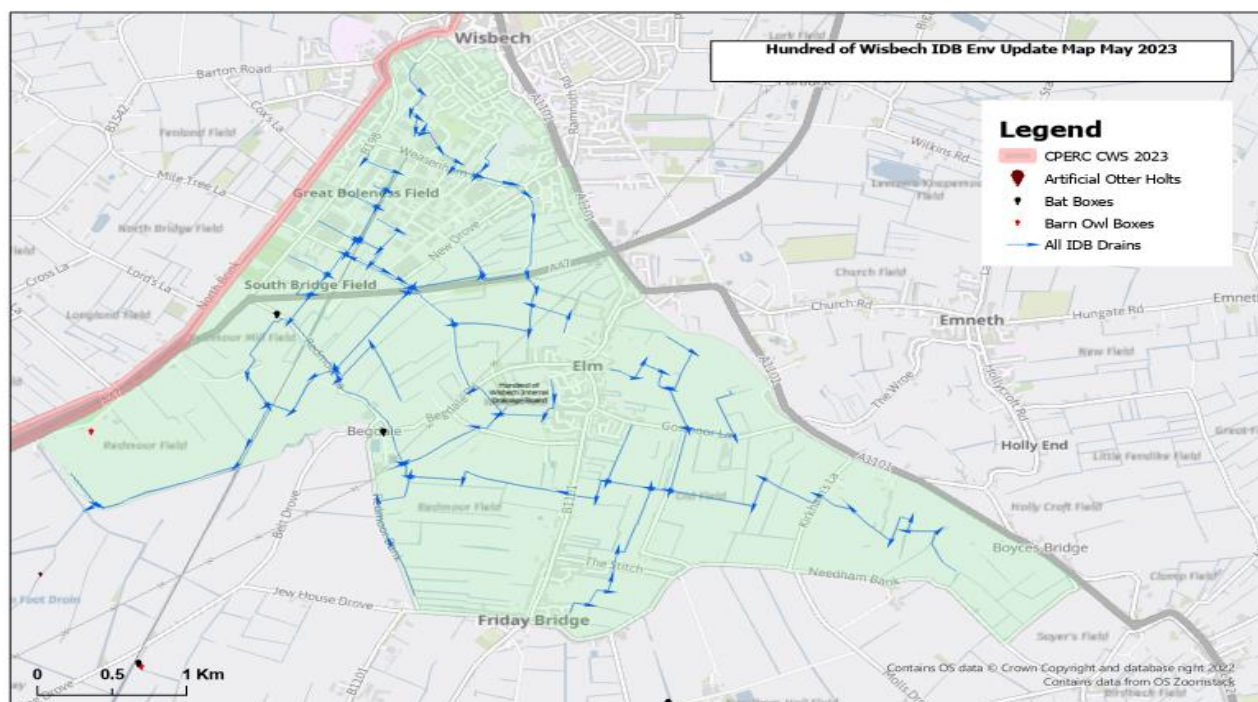
Last year ADA published a Carbon Accounting Guide for IDBs, which is available from their website. The process of calculating carbon emissions does not have to be as complicated as some may think. If you have reviewed the guide and would like some help to progress with calculating your carbon emissions, please get in touch.

14. Paludiculture

I attended a workshop in Cambridge to discuss the progress of knowledge acquisition and trials around growing commercial crops, associated with wetlands in lowland areas, where the water level has been raised to reduce or eliminate CO2 emissions from degraded peat. This is known as paludiculture. This includes the potential for receiving an income for carbon sequestration from such approaches. As you would expect, there is a focus on the Cambridgeshire fens as a key area for development of this approach along with Somerset, Lancashire and the Lincs fens. If you would like to know more about how this topic is progressing, would like to get involved in some trials or would like to have a go at growing a paludiculture crop such as *Typha latifolia* (Bullrush or cattail) or *Sphagnum* moss yourself commercially, then please do get in touch.

15. Environmental Good Governance Guide for IDBs

I have a copy of the above guide, published by ADA last September, for each Chairman and District Officer which I can hand to you when I visit if you don't have a copy already. Until then, an on-line version is available from [here](#) and you can also request copies from ADA directly admin@ada.org.uk.





middle level
commissioners

Internal Audit Tender Proposal to
Internal Drainage Boards and District Drainage
Commissioners under the administration of the
Middle Level Commissioners

November 2022



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Executive Summary

Whittings LLP are a regional firm of Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers, based in 11 locations throughout East Anglia.

The firm has broad range of experience in dealing with internal and external audits, serving a range of local organisations operating with the private and public sector.

On review of your invitation to tender we understand that the following requirements need to be met:

- Subject the financial statements to internal audit in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Upon conclusion of the internal audit prepare of a management letter to the board detailing any deficiencies in the internal systems, recommending improvements in addition to communicating whether in our opinion the organisation are ensuring value for money is being achieved.
- Completion of the Internal Audit Report within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return

We have had the pleasure as serving as your internal auditors for several years and have demonstrated our ability to meet the statutory deadlines set. We will strive to deliver this whilst also providing the following benefits:

- Ensuring staff continuity from year to year
- Quoting and sticking to an agreed fee for the duration of the five year appointment
- Providing a comprehensive and personable service, building on the strong working relationships that we already have with your organisation
- Pro-active in our approach to the engagement, seeking out ways to streamline the internal audit process to ensure minimal disruption to your day-to-day operations

Our fees for the first year ended 31 March 2024, excluding VAT, will be £21,250 (exc. VAT) for the Internal Drainage Boards and District Drainage Commissioners administered by the Middle Level Commissioners, a detailed breakdown of our fee structure for the five year appointment can be found on page 10 of this document.

Our clients rightly demand a service that provides high quality, specialist expertise, timeliness and cost effectiveness combined with local knowledge, an appreciation of local Fenland circumstances and district needs. Whittings LLP, having been established in the local area since 1928, have a proven track record of being able to meet these demands and continue to review and develop its business practices to ensure that this remains the case for many years to come.



Your Requirements

You have asked us to quote for providing the following services for the Internal Drainage Boards and District Drainage Commissioners administered by the Middle Level Commissioners:

- Subject the financial statements to internal audit in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Upon conclusion of the internal audit prepare of a management letter to the board detailing any deficiencies in the internal systems, recommending improvements in addition to communicating whether in our opinion the organisation are ensuring value for money is being achieved.
- Completion of the Internal Audit Report within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return

In order to obtain best value from our service, it is essential that our audit work is directed towards areas of greatest risk. You have indicated that you will maintain the accounting records, presenting our firm with accurate completed financial statements together with relevant and supporting schedules and reconciliations as required in a timely fashion.

The first accounts to be internally audited shall be for the year ended 31 March 2024. We will be able to carry out our work on these in accordance with your completion timetable which we provisionally understand to be 30 June 2024.



Our Audit Approach

Before the boards' year end, we would anticipate a pre-planning meeting between the audit team and members of the Middle Level Commissioners' finance team. At this meeting various formalities such as the timing of our procedures will be agreed, together with the identification of key audit areas. We would also at this stage confirm our understanding of the company's accounting systems and structure of internal controls.

This enables us to adopt an efficient and structured approach to risk assessment, analytical appraisal of results and the tailoring of audit testing to ensure that your accounts comply with all relevant legislation and regulations. The below internal audit strategy has been designed to be a high level statement of how our audit approach will be delivered and developed during the proposed engagement period.

Internal audit is an independent, objective assurance and pro-active consulting services designed to add value and improve the Board's operations. It provides an independent and objective opinion to the Board on the control environment that comprises risk management, control and governance.

All internal audit work will be undertaken with due regard to the requirements of Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations having cognition of the Practitioners Guide.

It covers aspects of all financial systems annually, rather than just on a strict 3 year cyclical basis which is a fairly common alternative for Internal Audit functions. The plan is for minimal 'systems review' days as the financial systems are undertaken on a common basis due to the administration of the boards by the Middle Level Commissioners, so using a risk based audit approach these only require to be audited on a sample basis across the IDBs on an annual basis. The normal level of both System confirmation and Transaction testing is set to ensure that some transactions of all individual boards within the Middle Level Commissioners' administered area are covered each year such as will be appropriate to the Board's level of activity and/or strength of assessed internal controls; nonetheless all Boards will be covered in all areas across a 3 year period.

Even so, where issues are identified, major internal control systems/personnel changes occur, or problems are encountered in conduct or results of the internal audit then the scheduled rota may be amended on year by year basis.

In addition, substantial work is carried each year on every Board on certain areas to ensure compliance and correctness of the Annual Return form.



The following list summarises the main work done and frequency, taking into account the objectives set out in the Annual Internal Audit Report within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return:

A -Return, Accounts & Completion (Annually)

- Ensure IDB/DDC cashbook kept up to date
- Ensure that monthly bank reconciliations are carried out
- Check that verification of bank reconciliations has been carried out
- Ensure that the annual return and accounting record opening and comparative figures agree to prior years records
- Ensure that figures stated on the annual return agree to underlying accounting records
- Checking casting and arithmetic of schedules
- Review variance report and investigate reasons excessive variances
- Ensure that the IDB/DDC publishes information on a free to access website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit
- Ensure that the IDB/DDC has complied with the publication requirements as set out in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

B - Purchases (Cyclically)

- Ensure that the IDB/DDC has complied with its financial regulations and these are reviewed with sufficient regularity by the board
- Check proper purchase authority is recorded by the board in relation to IDB/DDC payments
- Carry out walkthrough testing in relation to IDB/DDC purchase system
- Agreement of purchase ledger balances to trial balance
- Ensuring payment of principal and interest in respect of loans is in accordance with agreed terms
- Confirm list of payments issued agrees to minutes
- Ensure that individual purchases are authorised by a relevant person



C - Minutes, Value for Money, Risk Management, Ethical Standard and Sustainability (Annually)

Minutes

- Review of minutes to check that risks relating to the boards are discussed
- Ensure that a formal risk assessment is carried out by the board
- Review the budget setting process
- Review minutes for unusual or extraordinary activities
- Check insurance review

Value for Money

- Ensure that value for money principles are being observed
- Obtain relevant tenders for capital purchases to ensure VFM principles are being considered.

Risk Management

- Ensure that the boards risk register is kept up to date and adequately covers potential areas of risk facing the board.
- Ensure that risk factors are taken into account in the board's decision making and implementation processes

Ethical Standards and Sustainability

- Ensure that decisions are made in an ethical manner by the board, bearing in mind environmental and other socioeconomic circumstances/responsibilities within the local community.
- Ensure that ethics is taken into account within the boards defined policies
- Ensure that long term sustainability is being taken into account in operational decisions.

D - Budget and Variance Analysis (Cyclically)

- Review variance analysis issued by the board
- Check that progress against budgets are regularly monitored
- Check that budgets are used for determining rates for the following year
- Review accruals for reasonableness and completeness

E - Sales (Cyclically)

- Perform walkthrough testing on the IDB/DDC rates system, including the treatment of special levies
- Review any rates write offs and ensure received board approval
- Perform walkthrough testing of other sales made by IDB/DDCs
- Review minutes to ensure all expected other income has been received and banked



F - Petty Cash (Cyclically)

- Not applicable at present, no petty cash function for any IDB/DDCs currently administered.

G - Wages (Cyclically)

- Performance of wages walkthrough
- Ensure that authorisation granted for overtime paid
- Review of P11Ds (where applicable)
- Ensure that non-pay rolled staff have been correctly taxed
- Confirm contractor expenses to invoices and that pay rates and payments are authorised within the minutes by the board

H - Assets (Cyclically)

- Vouch additions and review sales of fixed assets in the year
- Ensure assets are adequately covered by IDB/DDC insurance policies
- Ensure that asset movements in the year are reasonable and consistent with prior years
- Review fixed assets for indicators or impairment, both through physical review and by reference to the minutes

I - Bank (Annually)

- Ensure that regular reconciliations have occurred in the year and that these are reviewed by a senior individual within the finance department
- Recalculation of interim and year end bank reconciliations, ensuring clearance of any outstanding payments or lodgements following the reconciliation date
- Ensure that cashbook entries are based on transactions as made rather than in order of appearance on the bank statements
- Consideration of treasury management, including returns where significant bank balances are held by IDB/DDCs

J - Trial Balance & Nominal (Cyclically)

- Ensure Opera trial balance transferred to the accounts correctly
- Scrutinise creditors, accruals, debtors and prepayments
- Identify any transactions that are held within the audited figures that relate to prior or future periods
- Review and scrutiny of adjustment journals posting during the year and as part of the year end accounts process

All financial systems are to be documented and reviewed on an annual basis to provide the required level of assurance. Where appropriate probity audit work will be undertaken and the propriety, accuracy and recording of transactions sample tested.



In addition to the main work carried out on each board, the below areas are also considered to be valuable components in delivering a high quality and well-rounded internal audit service.

Consultancy and Advice

Internal Audit will be available to assist the Board with control or operational issues. During the year there might be emerging risks or issues that need an independent view or review. In addition, internal audit will be pro-active with suggestions and advice to management from information gained through experience, other organisations and networking groups.

Anti-fraud, Bribery and Corruption

Internal Audit will be pro-active in counter fraud work. Although it is not a function of Internal Audit to detect fraud, bribery and corruption (this is a responsibility of management and good system control) work will be undertaken to help ensure there are adequate systems and procedures to highlight potential instances.

Value for Money (VFM), Risk Management, Ethical Standards and Sustainability

As a part of the internal audit review, systems and controls established by management to secure VFM, risk management, ethical standards and sustainability will be examined and evaluated. Matters of an overall nature are also addressed within the annual work programme. Auditors may initiate, conduct or participate additionally in special reviews in these areas where need arises.

The above covers Boards administered throughout the year by MLC but where a new Board is added to the group administration facility, a special additional / fuller review will occur in the first year of involvement.

At the completion of each audit a report will be produced and released to the Middle Level Commissioners for distribution to the Boards. This report details the terms of reference and scope of the audit, findings, recommendations and a management action plan. An executive summary that includes an audit opinion on controls will also be included.

An annual internal audit report shall be produced to the Board to provide an overall opinion on controls and detail the audit work for the year.



About Whittings LLP

Whittings LLP are a regional firm of Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers. At the time of writing, the firm has 12 partners and 7 associates who are supported by approximately 165 staff. The firm operates from 11 offices within the East Anglia counties of Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. We are registered by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales to undertake audit work.

Due to the size of the firm we are able to offer our clients with a comprehensive range of services whilst also providing specific insights into industry sectors which represent the key sectors that our client base operates within, these are detailed below:

Service Offerings

- Audit and Assurance
- Business Support
- Business Tax
- General Practice
- IT Services
- Payroll
- Private Client Tax
- Probate and Estate Administration
- Start Ups
- Tax Enquiry and Investigation Service
- Wealth Management

Sector Specialisms

- Agriculture and related industries
- Construction
- Contractors
- Creative Industries
- Manufacturing
- Not for Profit
- Property
- Retail
- Road Haulage
- Technology

More comprehensive information on the firm, its services, specialisms and culture can be found on the website www.whittingsllp.co.uk



Our Fees

We believe the fee scales we propose for this assignment are competitive and reflective of the work required to ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations. We do not compromise on quality by issuing tenders for audit assignments that are clearly uneconomic.

Our fees for the year ended 31 March 2024 will be £21,250 (exc. VAT) for the Internal Drainage Boards and District Drainage Commissioners administered by the Middle Level Commissioners.

With regard to fees for future years, we would expect, on the assumption that the level of activities and quality of accounting records do not alter significantly that our fees would rise by no more than in line with our wage rate inflation, assumed to be 5% per annum. If, through efficiencies that we can introduce, we can provide the same services at a lower guide fee, then we shall pass on this discount to you.

On this premise, we quote the following four years' fees, excluding VAT, as: -

2024-25	£22,300
2025-26	£23,400
2026-27	£24,600
2027-28	£25,800

For normal ongoing continuous supply services, the initial payment request issued will not be a tax invoice for VAT purposes but will include a notional amount for VAT. On receipt of your payment a tax invoice will be issued to enable you to recover input tax where applicable. However, please note that a VAT invoice will be issued in certain rare circumstances for exceptional "non-continuous" work only.

You will be billed at appropriate intervals during the course of the year. We would expect most of the fees to be billed in a single fee note raised soon after the completion of the Internal Audit Report and issue of our management letter to the board. We would also propose to raise fee notes for any further specially agreed work on a quarterly basis. Payment of fees will be due within 30 days of the date of the payment request.



Key Personnel and Career Summaries

Our philosophy is to provide each client with a dedicated team responsible for their affairs, thus ensuring that we can provide both expertise and continuity of service.

All our audit staff are either qualified or studying for professional qualifications in either AAT, ACCA, or ACA. Our partners, associates and staff undertake a vigorous ongoing programme of continuing professional development, to maintain high technical standards.

Over many years we have experienced extremely high levels of staff retention, enabling us to staff audits with the same individual's year on year. This allows us to accumulate high levels of background understanding of your organisation and these mature relationships with clients makes two way communication both easy and friendly.

The proposed core audit team will be:

Your Audit Principle

It is intended that the audit principle responsible for this assignment will be Ben Beech, an Associate of the firm who is based at our March office. Ben began working for Whittings in 2011, qualifying as a Chartered Accountant in 2016. He is in charge of the firm's audit and assurance offering within the Fenland and surrounding areas, dealing with many of the firm's larger clients operating in a range of sectors. He is also involved in the monitoring and development of the firm's professional standards and compliance procedures.

Your Relationship Manager

Your designated relationship manager for this assignment will be Aston Hinson who is also based at our March office. Aston has worked with Ben for many years supporting him in the provision of high quality audits to some of the firm's largest clients. Aston is also part of the firm's Not for Profit team, assisting these organisations with their accounting and tax requirements.

Your Audit Team

The audit team will include a range of staff appropriate to the varying tasks involved ranging from qualified accountants to junior accounts technicians.



Appendix A - Internal Audit Plan - Year Ending 31 March 2024

The below is an indication of the number of working days required to carry out the internal audit of the 29 Internal Drainage Boards and District Drainage Commissioners under the administration of the Middle Level Commissioners. As a result, and taking into account the engagement timeframe, we are confident that we will be able to meet the deadlines set.

Audit Areas	Planned Days
Planning - discussions, clarification, summarising, AGAR requirement review	4
Systems - review and confirmation work	20
Transactions - testing and verification	20
Completion - collation of issues and recommendations, enquiries of management, reporting via the AGAR and management letter	6
TOTAL	50



Appendix B - List of Administered Boards

Benwick Internal Drainage Board
Bluntisham Internal Drainage Board
Churchfield and Plawfield Internal Drainage Board
Conington and Holme Internal Drainage Board
Curf and Wimblington Combined Internal Drainage Board
Euximoor Internal Drainage Board
Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners
Hundred Foot Washes Internal Drainage Board
Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board
Manea and Welney District Drainage Commissioners
March West and White Fen Internal Drainage Board
March East Internal Drainage Board
March Fifth District Drainage Commissioners
March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners
March Third District Drainage Commissioners
Needham and Laddus Internal Drainage Board
Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board
Nordelph Internal Drainage Board
Over and Willingham IDB
Ramsey First (Hollow) Internal Drainage Board
Ramsey Fourth (Middlemoor) Internal Drainage Board
Ramsey Upwood and Great Raveley Internal Drainage Board
Ransonmoor District Drainage Commissioners
Sawtry Internal Drainage Board
Sutton and Mepal Internal Drainage Board
Swavesey Internal Drainage Board
Upwell Internal Drainage Board
Waldersey Internal Drainage Board
Warboys, Somersham and Pidley Internal Drainage Board



Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

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 2023, that:

	Agreed		Yes! means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of elections' 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:

DATE

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chairman

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER FULL PAGE ADDRESS WWW.MIDDLELEVEL.GOV.UK

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Payments 2022/2023 (1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023)

GENERAL ACCOUNT

Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery and Health and Safety contract	11,009.78
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	928.92
Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd - Maintenance work from October 2021 to February 2022, clearance of ditch behind Crown Packaging, removal of shed from drain, slubbing and hedge-trimming	20,465.10
I A Smith - Fees for work in connection with the culverts under the A47 Trunk Road	837.50
Needham & Laddus IDB - Contribution in lieu of drainage rates (Drainage of land through Needham Bank)	142.00
Environment Agency - Precept	8,890.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution in lieu of drainage rates (Drainage of land through Needham Bank)	544.32
Water Resources East (WRE) Ltd - Contribution to operating costs	300.00
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2022	1,050.00
W Norman & Sons Ltd - District Officers fees to May 2022	840.00
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	24,866.38
Susan Hilland - Ex-gratia payment for co-operation for the main outfall installation	100.00
Mr N Buttress - District Officers fees from 19th November 2021 to 16th May 2022	762.50
Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd - Quarterly maintenance work, piling work, slubbing, tree cutting, creating security bank on attenuation pond and diesel surcharge	17,028.67
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	12,447.77
Fen Group - Release of 5% retention for works in connection with the replacement of the main outfall at Crooked Bank	18,925.01
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	389.32
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit Fee (2021-2022 accounts)	1,920.00
Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd - Quarterly maintenance work, diesel surcharge, slubbing and clearing of Cold Store culverts	17,940.67
Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2021-2022 accounts)	1,506.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages and telephone charges	9,427.31
Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution - Conservation officer	352.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, attendance at meetings, work in connection with Cromwell Road Drain between Points 33-36, planning & Development applications)	3,932.32
Environment Agency - Precept	8,890.00
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	24,866.38
The Crown Lodge Hotel - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	409.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, work in connection with the attenuation pond, planning & development applications)	2,771.09
W Norman & Sons Ltd - District Officers fees to 31st October 2022	525.00
Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd - Quarterly maintenance work, slubbing, 5 litres of Roundup and land rent on Holly Bank for culvert dyke spoil	11,280.97
Mr N Buttress - District Officers fees to 30th November 2022	650.00
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	12,447.77
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2023	1,098.00
Mr S A Pinder - Ex-gratia payment for inconvenience caused during drain maintenance operations and culvert lining works	750.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, attendance at meeting, work in connection with the proposal to transfer the access strip to the Board, planning & development applications)	1,593.61
Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd - Quarterly maintenance work, clearing ditch at Point 65-66, clearing area in Porters and land rent on Holly Bank for culvert dyke spoil	10,745.17
Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal	40.00
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply 2022/2023 - Redmoor Depot	45.93
	230,718.99

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

[illegible]

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2023

DEVELOPMENT CHARGES ACCOUNT

2023				2022			
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year			Apr-01	Balance brought forward		112.17
				2023			
	Middle Level charges	0.00		Mar-31			
	Joint Pumping Station Replacement Fund	5,398.00					
	To General Fund	137.25					
	- Sleeving pipework	139.50					
	- Storage area - point 29 (Hutchinsc	14,643.94			Contributions Holding Account:-	53,980.09	
	- Gravity outfall pipe replacement	1,286.98			Receipts during the year	0.00	
	- Holly Bank culvert	0.00	16,207.67		Prior year adjustment	0.00	
	Balance carried forward		32,486.59		Interest		0.00
			<u>54,092.26</u>				<u>54,092.26</u>

REPLACEMENT ASSET FUND

2023				2022			
Apr-01	Transfer to General Fund			Apr-01	Balance brought forward		
	- Sleeving pipework	0.00			Asset replacement fund	132,931.83	
	- Storage area - point 29 (Hutchinsc	0.00			Capital Improvement Scheme fund	<u>495,498.42</u>	628,430.25
	- Gravity outfall pipe replacement	0.00					
	- Highway culverts - A47	274.50					
	- Culvert point 66	672.00					
			946.50	2023			
	Balance carried forward			Mar-31	By Loan Draw Down		0.00
	Asset replacement fund	132,657.33					
	Capital Improvement scheme fund	<u>494,826.42</u>	627,483.75				
			<u>628,430.25</u>				<u>628,430.25</u>

Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board

Treasurers Account 2022/2023

1st April 2022		31st March 2023	
Balance brought forward	1,314,687.66	Payments made during the year	230718.99
		Returned Direct Debit - Rates	<u>0.00</u> 230,718.99
31st March 2023			
Receipts during the year			
Clerk's collection account	240,020.35		
Interest on deposit accounts	<u>0.00</u> 240,020.35		
Write back of old outstanding cheques	119.58		
		Balance carried forward	1,324,108.60
	<u><u>1,554,827.59</u></u>		<u><u>1,554,827.59</u></u>

National Savings - Treasurers Account 2020/2021

1st April 2022		31st March 2023	
Balance brought forward	5,259.70	Payments made during the year	0.00
31st March 2023			
Interest on deposit accounts	4.90	Balance carried forward	5,264.60
	<u><u>5,264.60</u></u>		<u><u>5,264.60</u></u>

Summary of Bank Reconciliations as at 31st March 2023

Barclays Bank PLC

Clients Premium Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2023	1,324,108.60
Less unrepresented cheques	0.00
Add outstanding lodgements	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	<u><u>1,324,108.60</u></u>

Cash balances as at 31st March 2023

Barclays Bank PLC

Clients Premium Account	1,324,108.60
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National Savings

Investment Account per passbook	5,264.60
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<u>Total reconciled cash balances per accounts</u>	<u><u>1,329,373.20</u></u>
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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	693,524	1,264,110	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	201,858	215,434	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	562,909	830	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	62,181	74,628	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	132,000	141,075	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	1,264,110	1,264,671	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	1,319,947	1,329,373	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	239,500	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	1,410,762	1,361,074	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2023 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 of Responsible Financial Officer

Date

3rd May 2023

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

Signature of Chairman

as recorded in minute reference:

Minute Reference

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

Signature Required

Hundred of Wisbech IDB**Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return****Financial year ended 31st March 2023****Per Annual
Return**

<u>Line 1</u>	<u>Balances brought forward</u> General Fund Development charges account Pumping station replacement fund Asset replacement fund Contributions holding account Future works account	286,728.05 112.17 174,433.94 628,430.25 121,154.02 53,252.00 1,264,110.43	1,264,110
<u>Line 2</u>	<u>Rates and Special Levies</u> Agricultural rates Special Levies Penalty Costs Write-off	10,536.40 204,823.00 0.00 75.00 0.00 215,434.40	215,434
<u>Line 3</u>	<u>Total other receipts</u> Interest General fund Development charges account Joint pumping account Consent applications Private works Discharge contributions Write Back of Provisions Sale of Assets Loan Advance	3.05 0.00 1.85 350.00 0.00 474.59 0.00 0.00 0.00 829.49	830
<u>Line 4</u>	<u>Staff costs</u> Wages/salaries National insurance contributions Pension costs Travelling expenses	0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00	0
<u>Line 5</u>	<u>Loan repayments</u> PWLB - Principal PWLB - Interest	49,688.07 24,940.23 74,628.30	74,628

Hundred of Wisbech IDB**Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return****Financial year ended 31st March 2023****Per Annual
Return**

<u>Line 6</u>	All other payments Precept Rates, insurances, telephones Repairs and renewals Fuel - Expenditure in year Drainworks Health & Safety Administration Costs for Sale of Depot Fees Development charges fees Write back of sales ledger balance Improvement works Joint pumping Under provision in previous year - Joint pumping	17,780.00 984.92 0.00 62.68 49,279.33 0.00 21,153.22 0.00 5,912.24 0.00 0.00 18,965.82 26,500.00 436.95 141,075.16	141,075
<u>Line 7</u>	Balances carried forward General Fund Development charges account Pumping station replacement fund Asset replacement fund Contributions holding account Future works	305,504.86 32,486.59 178,295.14 627,483.75 67,648.52 53,252.00 1,264,670.86	1,264,671
Reconciliation		1,264,670.86	
Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6		1,264,670.86	

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

BUDGET 2023/2024

Page no.

	<u>Approved budget</u> <u>2022/2023</u> £	<u>Actual</u> <u>2022/2023</u> £	<u>Budget</u> <u>2023/2024</u> £	<u>Remarks</u>
1 Rates, Insurances and telephones	500	985	1,250	A - Includes:- Contractors charges 30,858 Slubbing/slip repairs 10,710 Fuel changeover/surcharge 4,059 45,627
2 Fuel (Oil and electricity)	0	63	0	B - Includes provision for:
3 Drainworks (incl District Officer's fee & expenses and Environmental measures	74,750	49,279 ^A	81,500 ^B	Contractors charges 31,475 Proposed slubbing programme (year 3/5) 25,000 additional work/Fuel changeover/surcharge 14,000 Spoil disposal 6,000 76,475
4 Joint Plant Maintenance (with Waldersey IDB)	26,000	26,937 ^C	47,500 ^{C/D}	C - Provision based on new calculation D - Includes estimate for new electricity contract -
5 Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	21,250	21,153	22,075	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 1,463 311,463
6 Planning Applications	9,000	5,912	9,000	F - Expenditure per capital programme
7 Environment Agency Precept	17,780	17,780	17,780	G - Pipe and fill channel - point 66 (Scout hut) 250,000 Storage area - point 29 (Hutchinsons) 150,000 District wide flood alleviation study 25,000 H & S improvements to structures 6,000 Fees/balances from earlier schemes 600 <i>engineer to update on progress of schemes</i> 431,600
8 Loan Charges	74,628	74,628	74,628	H - Funding (Improvement programme)
9 Asset Replacement Fund	0	0	0	
10 Studies and Surveys	0	0	0	
11 Improvement Works - (per programme)	311,463 ^E	18,966 ^F	431,600 ^G	
	535,371	215,703	685,333	
Improvement works - Funding	310,000 ^H	18,693 ^H	425,600 ^H	
LESS Rents, Deposit Accounts interest etc	10,213 ^I	3,542 ^J	13,274 ^K	
annual value - 3,119,734	215,158	193,469	246,459	
GENERAL FUND				I,J,K Includes - asset fund -
Opening balance	286,728	286,728	305,505	I - provision towards new slubbing programme 10,000 J - provision towards new slubbing programme 3,189 K - provision towards new slubbing programme 10,000 K - Provision towards H & S improvements 3,000
rates raised (2022/23 6.90p)	215,158	215,434	246,459	
net expenditure	215,158	193,469	246,459	
Balances	-10,000	-3,189	0	
Close balance	276,728	305,505	305,505	

Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board

Rate and levy requirements

Under Section 37 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, the appropriate proportions in which the net expenditure of the Commissioners must be borne for 2023/2024 is:-

- | | | |
|----|--|--------------|
| a) | Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – | 4.85% |
| b) | Proportion to be borne by Special levies issued to:- | |
| | Fenland District Council – | 94.60% |
| | Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk – | <u>0.55%</u> |
| | | 95.15% |

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £1,513.

In 2023/2024 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levy would raise £31,120.

Revenue balance in hand on 31st March 2023 - £305,505

The estimated net expenditure of £246,459 in 2023/2024 is equivalent to:-

- a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 7.90p
- b) a Special levy on Fenland District Council of £233,140 and
- c) a Special levy on Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk of £1,367

In 2022/2023 a rate of 6.90p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £203,629 on Fenland District Council and £1,194 on Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk.

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Board

May 2023