NIGHTLAYERS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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16th May 2023

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE

Mr Chairman, Lady and Gentlemen

Meeting of the Board
23rd May 2023

I enclose the Agenda for the Meeting of the Board to be held at the Middle Level Offices, March at 6.00 pm on **Tuesday 23rd MAY 2023**, with a meal afterwards at the Rose & Crown, March at 7.30pm.

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 confirm your attendance to the meeting and meal by email or phone as soon as possible.

Yours truly

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Board

To the Chairman and the Members of the Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board

AGENDA

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 7th February 2023.

   (Copy pages 14 – 15)

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

5. Election of Board Members

   The Clerk will report that the term of office of the Members of the Board will expire on the 31st October 2023 and will submit the proposed register of electors which is applicable to the 2023 election.

6. Appointment of Chairman

   To appoint the Chairman of the Board.
   (Present Chairman – A Edgley Esq)

7. Appointment of Vice Chairman

   To appoint the Vice Chairman of the Board.
   (Present Vice Chairman – S Edgley Esq)

8. Vacancy in Membership

   Further to minute B.1149, the Vice-Chairman to report.

9. 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.

10. Member Training Update

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

11. Fens Reservoir Update

The Clerk to update.

12. Land Drainage Act 1991 – Board Membership – Fenland District Council

The Clerk will report that the local elections has taken place at Fenland District Council, but as yet any changes to our appointed Councillors Miss S Hoy and Mrs J French have yet to be confirmed under the provision of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

13. Potential Grant-in-Aid Application - Replacement of Electric Pump and Control Panel

Further to minute B.1151, The Clerk to report.

14. Illegal Discharge – Cambridge Property Group

Further to minute B.1152, the Clerk to report.

15. Overgrown Watercourse from the Junction of A142, Isle of Ely Way, Chatteris bypass and short Nightlayers Drove East

Further to minute B.1153, the Clerk to report.

16. Proposed Agreement with Floorspan Contracts Ltd.

Further to minute B.1155, The Clerk to report.

17. 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) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the 85th Annual Conference of the Association was held on Wednesday 9th November 2022 at The Hive, Nocton, Lincolnshire.

This year marked another change in the arrangements for the National Conference and AGM, with the AGM being held virtually on 28th September 2022 followed by the national conference held as a hybrid meeting at the Dyson Farming complex in Lincolnshire on 9th November. The choice of venue was to avoid the risk of being impacted by rail strikes and it also represented significant cost savings. The event had limited numbers and was fully subscribed.

Following an introduction by the President of ADA Robert Caudwell who noted the good work being done by ADA but also noted that with COP27 ahead climate change was the single biggest challenge facing everybody and that IDBs would need to play their part in delivering carbon reduction.

The opening address was given by Councillor Matthew Riddle, Chairperson, Lower Severn Internal Drainage Board and Councillor, South Gloucestershire Council who spoke on options which could be pursued to change the way Special Levy is reported and dealt with by the Councils. The challenge at the moment was perceived as the lack of transparency with Special Levy payments not being itemised on rate bills in the same way that police and ambulance services are. There is also the issue that by not disaggregating the Special Levy payments, increases in them can currently (for Councils who pay large Special Levys) trigger a local election under the current rules.

Key note speakers were Hazel Durant Waterway & Flood Water Management Policy Team, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and Luzette Kroon Board member: Innovation & International, Dutch Water Authorities, Dykgraaf (chairperson), Wetterskip Fryslân. Hazel spoke of the challenges ahead and noted that it would be foolhardy to expect revenue expenditure to be increased by treasury given the current economic climate. The best we could hope for would be last years' figures to be matched. She praised the work of IDBs and noted the important role they play in delivering flood risk benefits through their direct works and also through PSCAs. Luzette spoke of the similarities and differences between IDBs and their Dutch equivalents and went on to describe the challenges faced arising from climate change.

A panel discussion followed and the MLC Chief Executive was invited to sit on this panel. He took the opportunity to outline the work of WRE but also to express his concerns that currently Land Drainage Act legislation was holding back the full potential of IDBs in terms of water resource management and investment. A review is urgently required and the support of the EA and DEFRA is needed. Hazel agreed that there was a need but hope a way forward could be found that didn't require primary legislation.

The day concluded with a field visit to showcase the Dunston Beck Improvement Project. The improvement project, completed by Dyson Farming with the Environment Agency, Wild Trout Trust and other partners, seeks to improve the biodiversity and water quality of the beck with a sensitive mosaic of wetland habitats delivered through excavations recreating a meandering river system with the retention of water providing ecological and also some modest flood risk benefits.

b) <u>Annual Flood & Water Conference 2023</u>

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

c) Meeting of the River Great Ouse Branch

The Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse ADA Branch was held on Tuesday 7th March 2023

Morning workshops were re-introduced for the first time since the COVID-19 outbreak and members who attended took part in an excellent discussion focussed on three topic areas; Fens2100; Water Resources East and Climate Change. Steven Trewhella (consultant to the EA on Fens2100) and Daniel Johns (Chief Exec, WRE) took away a wide range of ideas centred around how the two topics were connected by the work of IDBs.

Within the AGM, Marc Heading was re-appointed as Chairman and Doug McMurdo as Vice Chair with approval that the secretariat of the branch be transitioned from the Middle Level Commissioners to the Bedford Group of IDBs over the coming months. Ian Moodie (Technical Manager, ADA) gave an overview of ADA's activities, including their important inputs on behalf of IDBs into the long-awaited implementation of schedule 3 of the Floods & Water Management Act. Tom Pickover introduced himself ahead of starting as Operations Manager at the Environment Agency (covering the lower Great Ouse catchment) and was joined by Darren Trumper who between them gave an overview of Environment Agency flood management activities and budgets.

iii) National Drainage Show & Floodex 2023

That the National Drainage Show & Floodex 2023 will be held at ExCel, London on the 22nd and 23rd November 2023.

iv) 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 from1st April 2023.

The Board are asked to approve the Chairmans actions.

v) 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.

vi) 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 the 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.

vii) 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.

18. 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 16 - 18)

19. Capital Improvement Programme

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

(Copy page 19)

20. District Officer's Report

To consider the Report of the District Officer.

21. Environment Officer's Report

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

(Copy pages 20 - 27)

22. District Officer's Fee

The Board will give consideration to the District Officer's Fee for 2023/24.

23. 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.

24. Environment Agency – Precept

The Clerk will report that at the Anglian (Great Ouse) Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC) determined that there were exceptional circumstances to consider on the agreed 2% increase on the precepts on Internal Drainage Boards. The Committee voted for an additional 1% increase (reflecting exceptional circumstances) above the agreed 2% for the year ending 31st March 2024 – total of a 3% increase on the level of precept on Internal Drainage Boards for the year ending 31st March 2024.

The precept for 2022/2023 was £3,438.

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

The Clerk will report that following his submission of claims for contributions the gross sum of £1,377.55 (£4,261.61 less £2,884.06 received on account) (inclusive of supervision) has been received from the Environment Agency for the financial year 2021/2022 based on the Board's actual expenditure on maintenance work for that financial year and the sum of £4,197.95in respect of 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2022/2023.

26. Association of Drainage Authorities Subscriptions

The Clerk will report that ADA has increased subscriptions by 4.5% for 2022, from £571 to £597.

27. Contributions from Developers

With reference to minute B.181, the Clerk will report that contributions towards the cost of dealing with the increased flow or volume or surface water run-off and treated effluent volume have been received.

(See Confidential Papers)

28. Health and Safety

Further to minute B.1168, the Vice Chairman will report and will refer to the report received from Cope Safety Management following their visit to the District on the 17th January 2023.

(Copy pages 28 - 31)

29. Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2022/2023

a) To consider the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2023.

(Copy pages 32 - 35)

b) To consider the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2023.

(Copy pages 36 - 45)

30. Defra IDB1 Returns

The Clerk to refer to the completed IDB1 form for 2022/2023.

(Copy pages 46 - 55)

31. Budgeting

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

(Copy page 56)

32. Review of Internal Controls

To consider the system of Internal Control and appointment of Internal Auditor.

33. Risk Management Assessment

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

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

(Copy page 57)

34. 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.

35. Annual Governance Statement – 2022/2023

To review and complete the Annual Governance Statement.

(Copy page 58)

36. Payments 2022/2023

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

(Schedule page 59)

37. 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 60 - 64)

38. Future use of development account funds

To give consideration to the future use of the development account funds – the Clerk to report

39. 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 65 - 67)

40. Date of next Meeting

41. Any other business

NIGHTLAYERS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board
held at the Middle Level Offices, March on Tuesday 7th February 2023 at 9am

PRESENT

A Edgley Esq (Chairman)	T Edgley Esq
S Edgley Esq (Vice Chairman)	S P Graves Esq
J Edgley Esq	P Murphy Esq
L Edgley Esq	M Smalley Esq

Mr David Thomas (the Clerk to the Board) was in attendance.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from D Collett Esq, Mrs A Hay and Miss S Hoy.

B.1182 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 26th May 2022 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1183 Adding length of Drain to be maintained by the Board

This item was to discuss the actions members wish to take in relation to ongoing issues with the riparian watercourse upstream of point 12.

The Clerk outlined the history of the site based upon the knowledge he had and also the actions taken to date. It was believed that the previous owner of the triangular site, bounded on two side by the watercourse in question, had an entrance which was piped (members suspected with either a 12" or 18" pipe). The width of this entrance was however extended with loose material by the now deceased owner without extending the pipework. Also, most recently the occupier of the site has put in an application to pipe and fill the entire length of boundary ditch.

It was reported that the MLC Environment Officer had visited the site and considered the ditch on the northern boundary to be of reasonable conservation value and hence should be retained as open. The southern ditch had significantly less value, but that was largely down to how it had been managed and the quantity of fly tipping that had taken place. Her view was that should any culverting take place then compensation by way of construction of new length of open ditch should be called for. Also, that the creation of any new ditch should match that lost. It was also noted that this approach meshed well with the normal requirement to ensure that there is no loss of in channel storage arising from such a scheme.

It was noted also that land drains discharge directly into the northern length of drain. It is not known but considered less likely that land drains discharge into the southern length.
A land registry enquiry suggests that the land owner of the triangle of land in question may not own the southern ditch length and there appears also to be some dispute in regard to the northern length

of ditch. It was noted however that the Board's only interest is in consenting matters and that any issuing of consent does not include the right to enter or construct works on third party land.

After extensive discussion it was agreed that there must be no loss of ditch length overall and that it would not be appropriate to culvert the ditch from the current site access upstream. It was also agreed that if a proposal to divert the watercourse route from its existing path such that water discharged via a new ditch length on the eastern boundary of the triangle of land, then subject to the usual checks and balances the Board would look favourably upon the application. This to be in combination with piping (with a porous pipe) the southern length of watercourse. The option of adopting the boundary watercourses was discussed but on balance it was felt that all other options should be exhausted before this option is seriously considered.

RESOLVED

i) To reject the current application to pipe and fill the entire boundary length of watercourse

ii) Not to pursue adopting for maintenance purposes the private length of watercourse upstream of point 12.

iii) That should the land occupier apply to pipe and fill the southern watercourse from the site access to the eastern land boundary the Board will look favourably upon it as long as it included creation of a new watercourse (of equivalent length) along the sites eastern boundary.

B.1184 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday 23rd May 2023.

B.1185 Any other Business

The Clerk noted that a request had been made by Floorspan to reduce the agreed sale value of the Board's old pumping station land by £10K. This requested was on the basis that it appears that the Board did not own a slither of land adjacent to the roadway which would be required for access to the site. As a consequence, Floorspan were having to negotiate purchase of the additional land from a third party. For this matter The Chair, Vice Chair and Luke Edgely declared interests and agreed to take no further part in dealing with the request.

Members discussed the situation, the potential gains on offer for the package overall and the history of the negotiated figure. As views on the request were split a vote proceeded.

RESOLVED

Not to reduce the agreed sale price of £80K.

Nightlayers 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 is 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 delivery 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 wholescale 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

Nightlayers 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
Nightlayers p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,500.0	1500.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	0	0	70.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	70.0
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	25.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Telemetry	4.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.8
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Drainage Channels														
		4.8	**0**	**70**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**25**	**1,500**	**1,600**

Updated from engineers Asset Apraisal Report - April 2021

No needs identified in PAFS submission May 2020.

Engineer to update on possible grant-in-aid application for replacement pump and control.

Programme to be developed in line with grant-in-aid business case development and application

MIDDLE LEVEL COMMISSIONERS

MIDDLE LEVEL OFFICES
85 WHITTLESEY ROAD
MARCH
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
PE15 0AH

Telephone: 01354 602965
07977 068864
Email: sofi.lloyd@middlelevel.gov.uk
Website: www.middlelevel.gov.uk

Sofi Lloyd
Environment Officer

Nightlayers 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.

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. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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 adaptions 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.

6. 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) Reptiles

Just a reminder that reptiles, particularly grass snakes will be found basking on south facing slopes or in direct sun on reeds slopes this time of year. Operations should aim to move as slowly as possible to allow them time to move away from the works area and to allow operatives a better chance of spotting them. Cutting blades should be set as high as possible to minimise the risk of blade strikes. Clear egress routes should be maintained to allow them to move into a safe area and out of harm's way. Please report sightings of any reptiles, all information is welcome so we can better understand population status and trends.

d) 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

I understand that you have at least one barn owl frequenting the area near Fenton Lode, so please keep an eye on where it may be roosting, and we can monitor the nest if you believe there may be young in it.

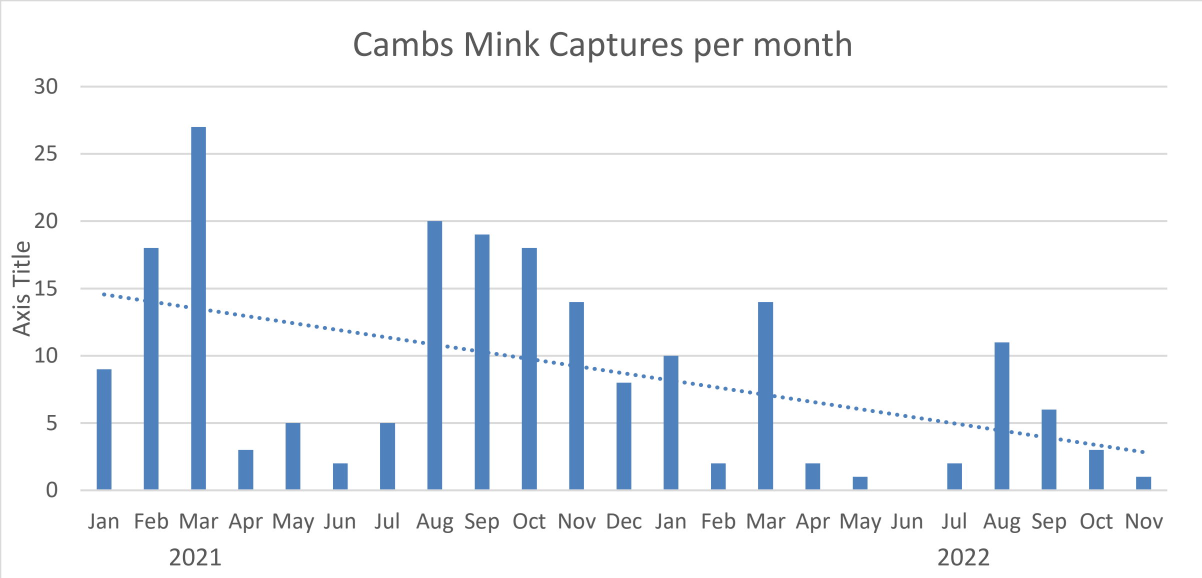
ii. Avian Flu

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.

e) 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	Stonea 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	Ransonmoor: 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.

7. 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 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

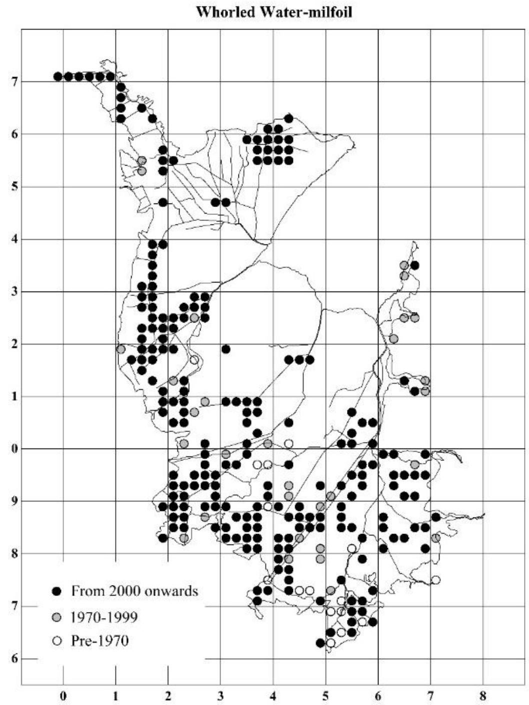
8. Fenland Flora Project

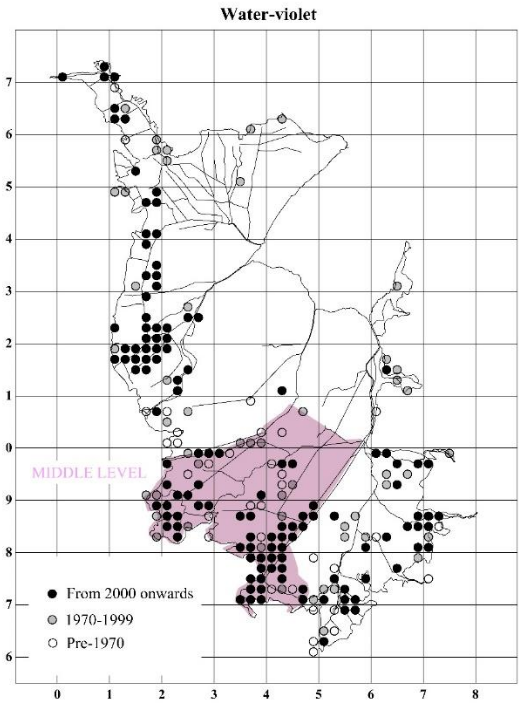
The long-running fenland flora project, headed up by botanist Jonathan Graham, to identify and record the presence of rare, threatened and notable aquatic plants in the fens, is nearing completion. The results highlight:

- 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 planed works, and will be added to BAPs. The data will also be useful in identifying any opportunities to enhance these valuable plant populations.

9. 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.

10. 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.

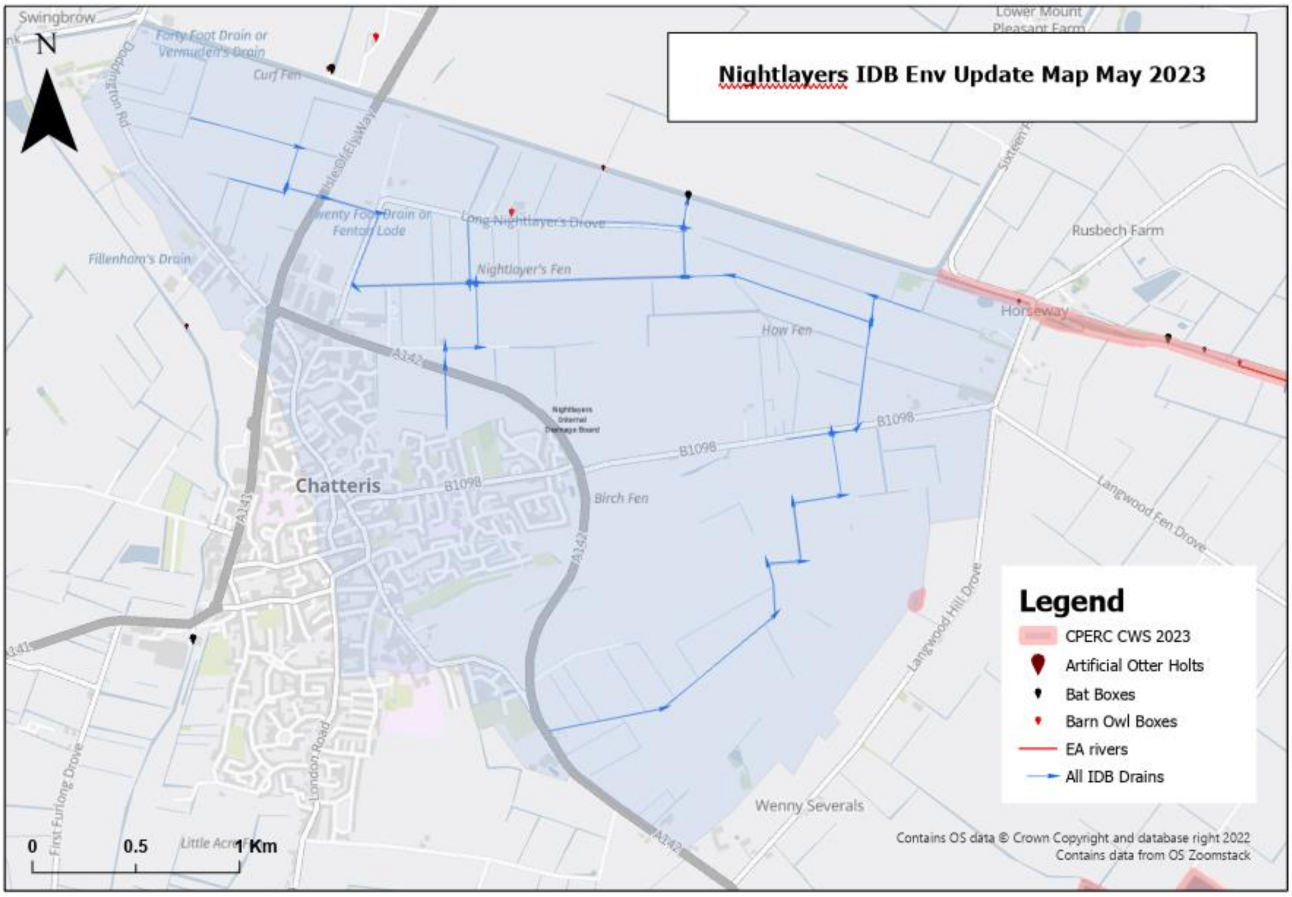
Last year ADA published a Carbon Accounting Guide for IDBs, which is available from their website. The process of calculating carbon emissions does not have to be as complicated as some may think. If you have reviewed the guide and would like some help to progress with calculating your carbon emissions,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

11. 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 CO_2 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.

12. 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.



Cope
SAFETY MANAGEMENT

Site Safety Inspection Record

Nightlayers IDB SSI 170123 Complete

Name of organisation:	Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board
Date of site visit	17.01.2023 13:00 GMT
Address of inspected premises	Nightlayers Pumping Station.
Name of Advisor	Simon Cross
Time of arrival at site:	17.01.2023 12:50 GMT
Audit Name	Nightlayers IDB SSI 170123

Audit

An opening meeting was held with

S Edgley

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

1

Introduction. During the visit the opportunity was taken to discuss previous observations and progress made on recommendations. It was reported that there were no issues or concerns raised by yourselves.

2

Fire Extinguishers. It was reported that the new dry powder fire extinguisher was just awaiting the installation of a wall bracket and signage, which had been provided. It is recommended that the old extinguisher is removed and disposed of appropriately.

3

Ladder / step ladder. It was noted that a wooden ladder and wooden folding stepladders were still stored within the pumping station, although it was reported that they are unlikely to be used as not required. If either are intended for use, they should only be for infrequent, short duration, non-routine tasks and they should be visually checked for defects prior to use. Use should only be by those suitably trained for work at height.
If they are no longer in use, then it is recommended that they are removed from site.

4

Edge protection. It was observed that some minor damage had occurred to the top rails of the edge protection around the automatic weedscreen cleaner. See photo 1 below. It is recommended that they are repaired or replaced as necessary when practical.

Photo 1

5

Signage. Although a sign with name and written hazard warning is displayed on the building wall, some of the hazard warning signage has become faded and illegible. See photo 2 below. In line with other IDBs, it is recommended that appropriate signage is displayed in a suitable position, such as on the security fence or building indicating the hazards on site with approved pictograms. Ideally signage should also include the name of the pumping station, location details (e.g. grid ref, 'What Three Words') and emergency contact details (e.g. name, telephone). An example of a similar sign is shown below in photo 3.

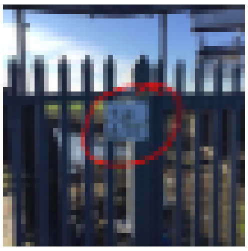


Photo 2

Photo 3

Photographic Risk Assessment

Advisor's signature

Simon Cross
17.01.2023 18:46 GMT

Departure time	17.01.2023 13:45 GMT

Photographic Risk Assessments closed out during the visit.

No PRAs

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

Appendix

Photo 1

Photo 2

Photo 3

Nightlayers IDB

SUMMARY OF PHOTOGRAPHIC RISK ASSESSMENTS

NO OUTSTANDING PRA’S

Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board

Notice of conclusion of the audit

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

Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014
Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015 /234)

1 The Audit of accounts for the Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board for the year ended 31st March 2022 has been completed and the accounts have been published.

2 The Annual Governance & Accountability Return is available for inspection by any local government elector of the area of Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board on application to:

The Clerk
Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board
85 Whittlesey Road
March
Cambridgeshire
PE15 0AH

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

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

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

Date of Announcement: 26th September 2022

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2021/22

We acknowledge as the members of:

NIGHTLAYERS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022, that:

	Agreed			'Yes' 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 electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✔			*during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.*
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✔			*considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.*
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✔			*arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.*
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✔			*responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.*
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✔			*disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.*
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A	*has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.*

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

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

26/05/22

and recorded as minute reference:

B.1175

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

Chairman [signature]

Clerk [signature]

WWW.MIDDLELEVEL.GOV.UK

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2021/22 for

NIGHTLAYERS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

	Year ending 31 March 2021 £	Year ending 31 March 2022 £	Notes and guidance: Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.
1. Balances brought forward	222,163	210,508	*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	27,495	24,733	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	7,827	17,216	*Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.*
4. (-) Staff costs	0	0	*Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.*
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	46,977	44,368	*Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).*
7. (=) Balances carried forward	210,508	208,089	*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	223,148	217,779	*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	1,100,000	1,100,000	*The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.*
10. Total borrowings	0	0	*The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).*

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

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2022 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

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

Date 11th May 2022

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

26/05/22

as recorded in minute reference:

B.1178

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

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2021/22

In respect of **NIGHTLAYERS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD – DB0059**

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

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

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

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

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2022; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor report 2021/22

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

None.

3 External auditor certificate 2021/22

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2022.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature PKF Littlejohn LLP Date 13/09/2022

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

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

BB/MM053
11 October 2022

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

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

MLC administered Internal Drainage Boards - Internal Audit 2021-2022

Having completed the internal audit work for the various Internal Drainage Boards administered by the Middle Level Commissioners officers for the year ended 31 March 2022, we are pleased to provide you with the following recommendations to be considered for implementation. We have included some general points and some points which are related to specific boards.

<u>General points</u>

1. **Asset Valuations and Insurances**

   It is noted that, whilst a large proportion of boards took the option to revalue for insurance purposes their pumping station and residential assets during recent years, there are still some boards that have not followed suit. We have seen elsewhere that such revaluations have sometimes resulted in significant uplifts in value, and as such we would suggest that any remaining boards that have yet to carry out such an exercise do so at the earliest convenience. Should a pumping station or residential property require a complete rebuild following an unforeseen catastrophic event, current valuations may no longer be appropriate given today's prices which may lead to a shortfall in funds which have to be met by surplus funds.

   We would recommend that in the absence of specific information to the contrary suggesting need for earlier review, that a revaluation exercise be performed for insurance purposes at least every 5 years on all major Board assets. This is especially important given the significant increase in material and labour costs seen in recent times as a result of rising inflation and global material shortages. However we are pleased to note that boards are being asked whether they wish for insurance to be index linked going forward and would strong suggest that all boards agree to this proposal.

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

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

2. **Employee Benefits - Vehicle Usage**
   In 2020 a high level tax case was brought by HM Revenue & Customs against Coca-Cola European Partners Great Britain Limited relating to vehicles provided to employees of Coca-Cola and whether these 'dual purpose' vehicles should be classed as a van or a car for benefit-in-kind (BIK) and other taxation purposes. Typical example of such a vehicle being a double-cab pickup as operated by some boards. The Court of Appeal ruled in favour of HMRC and, as a result HMRC are now reminding employers of the importance to ensure that they have classified their vehicles correctly and as a result we would advise that this matter is kept under review both now and into the future to mitigate the risk of an unexpected tax bill arising. We would advise that this is considered across all boards going forward if this is not being taken into account already.

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

3. Provisions

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

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

Client comment:

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

4. **Budget figures**

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

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

<u>Client comment:</u>

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

5. Surplus Funds

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

Client comment:

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

6. **Rental of Land**

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

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

<u>Client comment:</u>

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

Specific Points

Conington & Holme IDB

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

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

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

Client comment:

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

Waldersey IDB and Hundred of Wisbech IDB - Joint Pumping Arrangement

As in previous years it is noted that there is a discrepancy between debtor held in Waldersey IDB and the creditor held in Hundred of Wisbech IDB.

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

We are pleased to note that this difference is insignificant for the current year. The difference arises due to the accounts of Hundred of Wisbech IDB being completed before Waldersey IDB, leading to a provision being required in the former's books in the absence of more accurate information being available. The difference is adjusted in the following year's Accounts for Hundred of Wisbech but in the short term could be considered slightly misleading.

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

Client comment:

These costs relate to the contribution for the costs of the shared pumping facility and at the time of production of the year end accounting statements discussions were taking place concerning potential changes to the contribution as a result of changes in land use. A new proposal had been put forward which was broadly approved by both Boards.

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

March East IDB

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

Client comment:

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

March Sixth DDC

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

Client comment:

Every effort is made to update the relevant pages of all authorities in an efficient and timely manner and in accordance with the regulations. It should be noted that as well as display on the website, notices are also displayed in paper format withing the District.

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

We take this opportunity to thank your staff involved in our audit for their assistance and cooperation in achieving substantial completion by the stated target deadlines. We trust that the engagement team have not caused significant disruption during the execution of their procedures.

Yours sincerely,

Whitings LLP

Whitings LLP

Internal Drainage Boards in England

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Annual Report for the year ended
31 March 2022

The Law – the following annual report is provided in accordance with Paragraph 4 of Schedule 2 to the Land Drainage Act 1991.

No later than 31 October 2022 a copy must be provided to:

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

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

Please round all cash figures down to nearest whole £.

NIGHTLAYERS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Section A – Financial information

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

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

Special levies information for financial year 2022-23 (forecast)	
Name of local authority	**2022-23 forecast £**
1. FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL	27,214
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
Total	**27,214**

Section A – Financial information (continued)

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31 March 2022

All Internal Drainage Boards must ensure that the Income and Expenditure information provided below is consistent with the Board's annual accounting statements which have been prepared in accordance with proper practices found in *Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – A Practitioners' Guide to proper practices to be applied in the preparation of statutory annual accounts and governance statements March 2017*

	Notes	Year ending 31 March 2022 £
INCOME		
1. Drainage Rates		2,467
2. Special Levies		22,266
3. Higher Land Water Contributions from the Environment Agency		5,762
4. Contributions received from developers/other beneficiaries		11,392
5. Government Grants (includes capital grants from EA and levy contributions)		0
6. PSCAs from EA and other RMAs		0
7. Loans		0
8. Rechargeable Works		0
9. Interest and Investment Income		11
10. Rents and Acknowledgements		0
11. Other Income		50
Total income		**41,948**
EXPENDITURE		
12. New Works and Improvement Works		0
13. Total precept to the Environment Agency		3,370
14. Watercourse maintenance		22,010
15. Pumping Stations, Sluices and Water level control structures		11,190
16. Administration		7,049
17. PSCAs		0
18. Rechargeable Works		0
19. Finance Charges		0
20. SSSIs		0
21. IDB Biodiversity and conservation (other than item 20 expenditure)		545
22. Other Expenditure		203
Total expenditure		**44,367**

EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS		
23. Profits/(losses) arising from the disposal of fixed assets		0
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		**(2,419)**
24. Developers Funds income not applied in year		166,782
25. Grant income not applied in year		0

Notes:

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

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

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

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

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

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

17. State all costs associated with the PSCA

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

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

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

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

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

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

24. Total balance of developer fund year end.

25. Unspent grant at year end.

Section B –IDB Reporting

Policy Delivery Statement

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

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

Biodiversity

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

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

What year was your Biodiversity Action Plan last updated?)............................. 2022

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

When was biodiversity last discussed at a Board meeting (date)?.................................. 26/05/2022

Do you have a biosecurity process?..Yes ☒ No ☐

SSSI water level management plans

Please indicate whether your Board is responsible for any SSSI water level management plans?.................. ....Yes ☐ No ☒

If so, which ones:

Area of SSSI with IDB water level management plans...............................

Area of SSSI where IDB water level management activities are contributing to recovering or favourable condition?

Area of SSSI where IDB water level management actions are required to achieve recovering or favourable condition?

Access to environmental expertise

Does your IDB have access to environmental expertise? If so please tick all those options below through which environmental expertise is regularly provided to your IDB:

Appropriately skilled Board Members (e.g. Board member from an Environmental Body/Authority)	☐
Co-opted members	☐
Directly employed staff	☒
Contracted persons or consultants	☐
Environmental Partners/NGOs	☐
Other (please describe)	☐

Asset Management

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

ADIS	☐
Paper Records	☒
Other Electronic System	☒

Has your Board continued to undertake visual inspections and update asset databases on an annual basis? Yes ☒ No ☐

What is the cumulative total of identified watercourse (in km) that the Board periodically maintains?

10.8

How many pumping stations does the Board operate?

1

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

2.2 cumecs

Health and Safety

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

If so, please summarise in the box below:

Guidance and Best Practice

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Has your Board adopted the following governance documents?

Standing Orders .... Yes ☒ No ☐

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

Byelaws ....Yes ☒ No ☐

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

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

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

Financial Regulations..Yes ☒ No ☐

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

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

Board membership and attendance

How many Board members (in total – elected and appointed) do you have on your IDB?	13
Seats available to appointed members under the Land Drainage Act 1991.	10
Number of elected members on the board at year end.	9
Number of appointed members on the board at year end.	4
Mean average number of elected members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year.	4
Mean average number of appointed members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year.	3

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

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

Complaints procedure

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

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

Public Engagement

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

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

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

2.68%

Section B: NOTES

Guidance and Best Practice

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

Board membership and attendance

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

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

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

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

Section C – Declaration

NIGHTLAYERS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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

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

NIGHTLAYERS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET MONITORING 2022/2023

		Estimated 2022/2023 £	Actual to 31/12/2022 £	Forecast to 31/03/2023 £	Remarks
1	Insurances and telephone	1,100	779	1,025	
2	Repairs and renewals	4,000	2,698	4,000	
3	Drainworks (including Environmental measures)	13,500	6,877	14,000	
4	Fuel (oil and electricity)	9,400	5,234	10,500	- Accounts received to November
5	District labour	4,600	0	4,600	
6	Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	5,725	3,559	7,425	- Includes for additional meetings and professional fees
7	Environment Agency Precept	3,438	3,438	3,438	
8	Improvement works	4,500	4,500	4,500	
		46,263	27,085	49,488	
	LESS Deposit Accounts interest, Development Charges etc	13,988	13,781	14,756	
		32,275	13,303	34,732	

Rate requirement: 5.92 p

Rates raised 2022/2023 (5.50p) £32,275

NIGHTLAYERS IDB
INSURED VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS

PUMPING STATION

	As At 1st April 2023
NIGHTLAYERS PUMPING STATION	1,421,400.00
	1,421,400.00

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

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

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

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

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chairman SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk SIGNATURE REQUIRED

WWW.MIDDLELEVEL.GOV.UK

NIGHTLAYERS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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

Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery and Health and Safety contract	3,614.90
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of padlock	21.70
Middle Level Commissioners - Call out and repair alarm (Account from Focus Security)	93.60
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	279.84
Middle Level Commisssioners - Fees (Weed control and drain maintenance 2021/2022, planning and development applications)	1,617.60
Environment Agency - Precept	1,718.91
The Rose & Crown - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	200.00
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2022	685.20
G Ashman - Flail mowing	2,112.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	260.64
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	894.96
Middle Level Commisssioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	1,236.00
G Ashman - Flail mowing	1,968.00
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit Fee (2021-2022 accounts)	240.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2021-2022 accounts)	558.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages and telephone charges	2,641.30
Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution (Environmental Officer)	545.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	260.64
Environment Agency - Precept	1,718.91
Middle Level Commissioners - Repair to handrail on pump bridge and assist digger across Chatteris bypass for programmed machine cleansing	1,963.81
Middle Level Commisssioners - Measure up for new motor protection and source, return to site to fit new overload & thermistor relay	914.07
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Work in connection with potential GIA for pumping station works, planning and development applications)	579.29
Hunt & Coombs Solicitors - Professional fees in connection with sale of land at Fenton Way, Chatteris	940.80
Association of Drainage Authorities (River Great Ouse branch) - Subscription 2022-2023	6.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Land registry charges	12.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Chemical weed control of District Drains	725.58
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	260.64
B J Plant Hire Ltd - Drain maintenance	3,978.00
Information Commissioner - Renewal of Data Protection registration	40.00
A. Edgley - District Officer's Fees and expenses 2022/2023	4,270.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Preparation of highland water claims	334.16
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Discharge consent application)	146.90
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	1,031.69
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to gate at old pumping station site	123.07
Barclays Bank - Returned Labour Account Funds refunded twice	1,811.70
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply	13,467.41
Anglia Farmers - Electricity metering charges	209.70
Anglia Farmers - Electricity data collection charges	131.99
	51,614.01

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

NIGHTLAYERS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023
GENERAL FUND

2023				2022			
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year:-			Apr-01	Balance brought forward		41,317.08
	Precept		3,437.82	2023	Rate income & Special levy	32,300.31	
				Mar-31	Interest on Deposit Accounts	1.19	
	Insurances	892.77			Highland Water Contributions -	5,297.03	
	Repairs & Renewals	4,046.59			Consents	50.00	
	Fuel	9,915.91			Grant-in-aid - Telemetry installation	2,421.42	
	Drainworks	13,019.14					40,069.95
	Contractors Charges	4,255.00			By Development Charges Account		
	Administration charge, Audit fee,				Maintenance	3,780.00	
	printing, stationery, advertising etc	6,691.62	38,821.03		Floorspan Fees	2,173.80	
					Telemetry installation	2,421.41	8,375.21
	Improvements - Telemetry installation		4,842.83				
	Balance carried forward		42,660.56				
			89,762.24				89,762.24

BALANCE SHEET

Capital Section

Liabilities		Assets		
Capital Provisions	1,100,000.00	Pumping Station		1,100,000.00
		Stock		114.00

Revenue Section

General Fund	42,660.56	Value added Tax - Refunds due		2,311.50
Development Charges Account	148,410.33	Sundry Debtors		789.00
Sundry Creditors	16,278.76	Ratepayers' Account - Arrears		961.41
Contributions Holding Account	12,664.34	Balance in hand -		
		Barclays - Treasurer's Account	209,383.90	
		National Savings - Treasurer's Account	6,454.18	
		Labour Account	0.00	215,838.08
	1,320,013.99			1,320,013.99

NIGHTLAYERS 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	155,679.24
	Middle Level charges	122.42		2023		
	General Fund (Maintenance)	3,780.00	3,902.42	Mar-31		
					Clerk's Collection Account	1,224.23
	To General Fund - Floorspan Fees	2,421.41				
	To General Fund - Telemetry installation	2,173.80	4595.21			
					Write Back of Provisions - Fees	0.00
	Balance carried forward		148,410.33		Interest	4.49
			156,907.96			156,907.96

Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board

Barclays - Treasurers Account 2022/2023

1st April 2022			31st March 2023	
Balance brought forward		211,330.80	Payments made during the year	51,614.01
31st M 31st March 2023				
Receipts during the year				
Clerk's collection account	49,667.11			
Interest on deposit accounts	0.00	49,667.11	Balance carried forward	209,383.90
		260,997.91		**260,997.91**

National Savings - Treasurers Account 2022/2023

1st April 2022		31st March 2023	
Balance brought forward	6,448.18	Payments made during the year	0.00
31st March 2023			
Interest on deposit accounts	6.00	Balance carried forward	6,454.18
	6,454.18		**6,454.18**

Summary of Bank Reconciliations as at 31st March 2023

Barclays Bank PLc

Clients Premium Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2023	209,383.90
Less unpresented cheques	0.00
Add outstanding lodgements	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	**209,383.90**

Cash balances as at 31st March 2023

Barclays Bank PLc	
Clients Premium Account	**209,383.90**
National Savings	
Investment Account per passbook	**6,454.18**
Total reconciled cash balances per accounts	**215,838.08**

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

NIGHTLAYERS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward	210,508	208,089	*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	24,733	32,300	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	17,216	10,570	*Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.*
4. (-) Staff costs	0	0	*Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.*
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	44,368	47,224	*Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).*
7. (=) Balances carried forward	208,089	203,735	*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	217,779	215,838	*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	1,100,000	1,100,000	*The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.*
10. Total borrowings	0	0	*The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).*

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 REQUIRED

Date 29th APRIL 2023

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

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Nightlayers IDB
Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return
Financial year ended 31st March 2023

				Per Annual
Line 1	**Balances brought forward**			
	General Fund	41,317.08		
	Development charges account	155,679.24		
	Contributions holding account	11,092.43		
			208,088.75	**208,089**
Line 2	**Rates and Special Levies**			
	Agricultural rates	5,061.31		
	Special Levies	27,214.00		
	Penalty	0.00		
	Costs	25.00		
	Write-off	0.00		
			32,300.31	**32,300**
Line 3	**Total other receipts**			
	Interest			
	General fund	1.19		
	Development charges account	4.49		
	Contributions holding account	0.32		
	Highland Water	5,297.03		
	Discharge contributions	2,795.82		
	Consents	50.00		
	Grant in Aid	2,421.42		
			10,570.27	**10,570**
Line 4	**Staff costs**			
	Wages/salaries	0.00		
	National insurance contributions	0.00		
	Pension costs	0.00		
	Travelling expenses	0.00		
			0.00	**0**
Line 5	**Loan repayments**			
	PWLB - Principal	0.00		
	PWLB - Interest	0.00		
			0.00	**0**
Line 6	**All other payments**			
	Precept	3,437.82		
	Rates, insurances, telephones	892.77		
	Repairs and renewals	4,046.59		
	Fuel	9,915.91		
	Drainworks	13,019.14		
	Administration	6,691.62		
	Development charges fees	122.42		
	Contractors charges	4,255.00		
	Improvements	4,842.83		
			47,224.10	**47,224**
Line 7	**Balances carried forward**			
	General Fund	42,660.56		
	Development charges account	148,410.33		
	Contributions holding account	12,664.34		
			203,735.23	**203,735**

Reconciliation
Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6 203,735.23

NIGHTLAYERS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET 2023/2024

		Estimated 2022/2023 £	Actual 2022/2023 £	Budget 2023/2024 £
1	Insurances and telephone	1,100	893	1,275 [A]
2	Repairs and renewals	4,000	4,047 [B]	3,000
3	Drainworks (including Environmental measures)	13,500	13,019 [C]	20,250 [D]
4	Fuel (oil and electricity)	9,400	9,916 [E]	17,250 [F]
5	District labour	4,600	4,255	4,600
6	Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	5,725	6,692	6,300
7	Environment Agency Precept	3,438	3,438	3,541
8	Improvement works	4,500	4,843 [G]	0
		46,263	47,102	56,216
	LESS Deposit Accounts interest, Development Charges etc	13,988	16,145 [H]	9,727 [i]
		32,275	30,957	46,489

Rate requirement: 7.82 p

Rates raised 2022/2023 (5.50p) £32,275

Remarks

A -	Includes estimate for increased premiums	
B -	Includes:	
	Motor protection relay	762
	Fit new handrails	1,502
C -	Includes for:	
	Fees (Floorspan)	1,424
D -	Includes engineer's items	17,350
E -	Usage to end of year estimated from meter reads	
F -	Provision based on 5 year average and increased for new contract rates - see separate note	
G -	Telemetry installation	
H -	Includes use of development account:	
	Maintenace contribution	3,780
	Fees and costs (Floorspan)	1,424
	Telemetry installation	2,421
	Grant-in-aid - telemetry installation	2,422
I -	Includes:	
	Development account - maintenace	3,700

Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board

Budget allocations 2023/2024 - electricity

There will be a new electricity contract commencing 1st April 2023 with significantly higher unit rates. For 2022/2023 the contract through Anglia Farmers was a "flex" contract, meaning the unit rates were changed monthly based on the wholesale price; also from October 2022 these charges were off-set by the Government price capping mechanism - this was based on the wholesale price with an adjustment made in addition to the monthly charges.
For 2023/2024 this capping has been significantly reduced, although ADA are lobbying Central Government to have Drainage Boards recognised as high users which could, if approved get the higher rate of capping.

We had previously started to base the electricity provision on a 5 year average, to take account of the impact of climate change and the provision suggested is based on an "average". It has not been policy to provide for possible extremes but members should be aware that, due to the increased unit rates, the direct pumping costs for an event will be significantly higher.
As an indicator, the indicative possible current-day costs for the 2020/2021 expenditure would be :-

Expenditure 2020/2021	9,436	
Indicative current day costs		33,025
Provision included for 2023/2024		17,250
Potential shortfall on budget		15,775
balances as at 31st March 2023		
General Fund		42,661
Development account		148,410
Capital account		0
Other		0
		191,071
Potential shortfall as % of balances		8.26%

Members are asked to note the position when considering the rate requirement for 2023/2024.

Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board

Rate and levy requirements

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

a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 15.44%

b) Proportion to be borne by Special levy issued to Fenland District Council – 84.56%

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £918.

In 2023/2024 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levy would raise £5,945.

Revenue cash balance in hand on 31st March 2023 - £42,661.

The estimated net expenditure for the Boards Revenue and Capital Programmes in 2023/2024, which does not include provision for improvement works to the pumping station intake is £46,489 and equivalent to:-

a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 7.82p and

b) a Special levy on Fenland District Council of £39,310.

In 2022/2023 a rate of 5.50p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £27,214 on Fenland District Council.

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Board

May 2023