

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM AND PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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1st June 2023

My Lord, Ladies & Gentlemen

Meeting of the Board
8th June 2023

I enclose the Agenda for the Meeting of the Board to be held at Lakeside Lodge, Pidley at 5.30pm on Thursday 8th June 2023. Inspection to be held at 4pm prior to meeting.

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

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

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

Yours truly

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Board

To the Chairman and the Members of the Warboys Somersham and Pidley Internal Drainage Board

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare any interests relating to the agenda.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 1st December 2022.

(Copy pages 13 - 21)

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

5. Rental Agreement, Puddock Pumping Station Bungalow

Further to minute B.1839, The Clerk to report.

6. Bank Mandate

The Clerk will request authorisation to add the Chief Executive to the Barclays bank signatories if necessary.

7. Member Training Update

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

8. Proposed Reconstitution of the Board

Further to Minute B.1801, The Clerk to report

(Copy Pages 22 - 23)

9. Fenton Lode New Cut (Tesco Site)

Further to minute B.1840, the Clerk to report.

10. Outstanding Drainage Rates

Further to minute B.1841, the Clerk to report.

11. Access requirements, Fenton Lode New Cut

Further to minute B.1842, The Clerk to report.

12. Lafarge Restoration/Pumping Agreement

Further to minute B.1806, The Clerk to report.

13. Review of Easement Agreements – (A Bartlett & Sons Ltd)

Further to minute B.1807, The Chairman to report.

14. Land Drainage Act 1991

The Clerk will report on recent correspondence from Huntingdonshire District Council to advise that Cllr Adela Costello & Cllr Charlotte Lowe had been appointed to the Board until 2026.

15. Finance Committee

To consider the minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 23rd May 2023.

(Copy pages 24 - 33)

16. Charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work

Further to minute B.1810, to consider whether any revisions are necessary in the Board's charges for hiring of plant for private work (last reviewed – May 2022).

(i) Doosan DX 140W Excavator

£60 per hour inside the District) (inclusive of operator's wages)

£65 per hour outside the District)

(ii) Flail Mower

£65 per hour inside the District) (inclusive of operator's wages)

£70 per hour outside the District)

(NB – Travelling time being charged in addition to working time).

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 contact 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) Annual Flood & Water Conference 2023

Invitation to ADA Flood & Water Conference 2023

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

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

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

- maximise the time available for networking between delegates and suppliers to the sector,
- invite a greater variety of guest speakers, and
- provide more convenient timing for those travelling to and from London.

The Conference will open at 11.00 for networking with delegates and an expanded Exhibition of ADA's Associate Members in the Great Hall. A buffet lunch will be served

from 12.00 before the conference presentations commence at 13.20 in the Thomas Telford Theatre. The Conference will close at 17.00.

Discussion forum

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

Book your place

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

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

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 from 1st 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 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.

viii) Local Government Support - Special Levies

Thanks to lobbying by the Association of Drainage Authorities and Local Authorities, the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities announced an additional financial

support package totalling £3m for 2023/24 to support the 15 Local Authorities most impacted by increases in special levies from Internal Drainage Boards driven by unprecedented increases in energy costs. We provided ADA with information to support this case and Fenland District Council have secured £177,281 and King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council £205,451. The Ministerial Statement is available [here](#). Disappointingly it is explicit that this is a one-off exceptional payment and clear that the government will not provide additional grant to Local Authorities to cover special levies on an ongoing basis.

18. Consulting Engineers' Report

- a) To consider the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

(Enc 1)

- b) To consider the Supplementary Report Improving Capital Delivery.

(Copy pages 34 - 36)

19. Capital Improvement Programme

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

(Copy pages 37 - 38)

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 39 - 46)

22. Clerk's fee

To consider the fee of the Clerk.

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. District Labour - District Officer's Salary

The Finance Committee will report that the salary of the District Officer will be increased in accordance with the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award.

Salary of the District Officer – Mr R Wilmer (Jr)
(Present salary - £33,915.12)

25. 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 £22,314.

26. 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 £6,478.75 (£18,300.92 less £11,822.17 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 £13,015.31 in respect of 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2022/2023.

27. Determination of annual value(s) for rate purposes

The Clerk will submit the recommendation for the determination of annual value for rating purposes.

(See Confidential Papers)

28. Rate arrears

To consider writing off rate arrears.

(See Confidential Papers)

29. Health and Safety

Further to minute B.1848, the Chairman will refer to the report from Cope Safety Management after their visit on 18th January 2023.

(Copy pages 47 - 52)

30. Review of Internal Controls

To consider the system of Internal Controls

31. 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 53)

32. 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.

33. Annual Governance Statement – 2022/2023

To review and complete the Annual Governance Statement.

(Copy page 54)

34. Payments 2022/2023

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

(Copy pages 55 - 56)

35. 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 57 - 62)

36. 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 63 - 67)

37. Date of next Meeting

To confirm the date of the December 2023 meeting.

38. Any other business

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM AND PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Warboys Somersham and Pidley Internal Drainage Board
held at the Lakeside Lodge, Pidley on Thursday 1st December 2022

PRESENT

C Leadbetter Esq (Chairman)	S Johnson Esq
J C Armstrong Esq	D D Brown Esq
D W Cornwell Esq	Cllr A Costello
S Edgley Esq	D J Edwards
J German Esq	Cllr C Lowe
I Johnson Esq	T E A Noble Esq
R Waters Esq	D W England Esq
M England Esq	J M Short Esq
H W Whittome Esq	S W Whittome Esq

Mr David Thomas (Clerk to the Board), Mr R Wilmer (District Officer) and Mr Richard Wilmer (Dep DO) was in attendance.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from, Lord De Ramsey, D R A Fabb Esq, L C A Munns.

B.1832 Declarations of Interest

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

B.1833 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 2nd December 2021 are confirmed and signed, with one amendment:

It was reported that the Board had confirmed its objection in principle to a new treated effluent sewer pipe being installed at Puddock Pumping Station.

B.1834 Matters arising from the Minutes

None

B.1835 Resignation of G Munns Esq

Mr Thomas advised that Mr G Munns had tendered his resignation from the Board on 26th May 2022, and that a letter of Thanks had been sent.

B.1836 Vacancy in Membership

The Board considered the vacancy on the Board left by Mr Munns resignation. Members felt that as they would be discussing reducing the overall membership of the Board, it would be inappropriate to seek to fill the vacancy at this time.

The Clerk reported that he had been contacted by Lord De Ramsey, who had advised that it was his intention to step down as a Board member next year.

RESOLVED

That the vacancy not to be filled at this time.

B.1837 Election of Board Members

The Board noted that the election had been concluded successfully.

B.1838 Appointments 2022/2023

- a) The clerk advised that the previous Chairman, C Leadbetter Esq had indicated his willingness to stand again. No other members put forward alternative proposals and Mr Leadbetter was again elected to the position of Chairman.
- b) The Clerk advised that the previous Vice Chairman D Brown Esq had indicated his willingness to stand again. No other members put forward alternative proposals and That Mr Brown was again elected to the position of Vice Chairman.
- c) The Board confirmed they wished to continue to employ Middle Level Commissioners to provide Clerking and Administrative Services.
- d) The Finance Committee were voted back in with no changes proposed on-block.

The Chairman states that he considered communications between the office and the Board Chairman & Vice Chairman needed to be improved and suggested regular emails to both on matters affecting the Board.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman appointed be C Leadbetter Esq.

That the Vice Chairman appointed be D Brown Esq.

That the Middle Level Commissioners be retained as Clerk to the Boards.

That the Finance Committee continue to comprise of D Brown Esq, Lord De Ramsey, D England Esq, M England Esq, D Fabb Esq, J German Esq, C Leadbetter Esq, T Noble Esq & H Whittome Esq.

B.1839 Rental Agreement, Puddock Pumping Station Bungalow

Further to minute B.1802, the Board discussed the current rental arrangements for Puddock Pumping Station bungalow. It was noted that the current 6-month lease had expired but could continue as long as the Board and current occupier wished it to. The current replacement District Officer, Richard Wilmer advised that he did not wish to occupy the property at this time.

RESOLVED

The Board agreed to allow the current occupant to remain as tenant at this time with no immediate plan for review of this arrangement.

B.1840 Fenton Lode New Cut – (Tesco Site)

The Clerk reported that at the site inspection, which preceded the meeting, members had expressed significant concern that Persimmon Homes had carried out work within the Board's byelaw strip without first obtaining consent. The matter was discussed and the view of the Chairman (which was supported by the members) was that a hard line should be taken when protecting the Board's interests. There was also a general view that Middle Level staff should have been more pro-active in dealing with the breach. The Clerk pointed out that the Board had no control over land use, cannot unreasonably withhold its consent and had in the past taken a softer line. He did, however, advise that the Board could and should endeavour to protect the interests of its ratepayers and part of this was ensuring all watercourses under the control of the Board can be maintained to a serviceable standard without incurring unnecessary difficulty or cost.

The Board discussed the pipeline and outfall constructed within the byelaw strip and were of the general view that the outfall may be recommended for consent but that the manholes in the strip would cause problems if it was likely they would be damaged when tracked over by excavators.

The Clerk noted that if this matter ended up legally contested, then the legal costs would be expected to be incurred. The Board considered that it was necessary to draw a clear line and the risk of incurring charges should not be seen as a reason not to stand firm.

RESOLVED

That as a matter of urgency, the Clerk write to Persimmon Homes giving notice that they are to remove works carried out within the area of Byelaw control.

That the Chairman & Vice Chairman be empowered to take decisions in relation to the byelaw breach including the appointment of legal experts.

B.1841 Outstanding Drainage Rates

Further to minute B.11803, The Clerk reported significant work had been done to bring the Boards Rating area plans up to date. It was hoped to get this finalised soon and to take any actions needed to identify any land that remained unallocated to a ratepayer and then to seek to identify occupation.

RESOLVED

That the current position be noted.

B.1842 Review of Easement Agreements (A Barlett & Sons Ltd)

Further to minute B.1807, The Clerk reported that the Chairman had met with the landowners who had confirmed that there would be no additional control measures in place restricting the historically agreed access arrangements for the Board's machinery through the site.

B.1843 Clerk's Report

The Clerk advised: -

i) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

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

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

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

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

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

A proposal to move from time charges to lump sum annual fees for planning and consenting matters was discussed and it was agreed that a proposal to move to this more efficient and

effective way of working would be put to each Board. For similar reasons it was resolved that a proposal should be put forward which would reduce the scale of content reported to Boards under planning matters.

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

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

ii) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

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

The Clerk to reported that the Annual ADA Conference had been held at the Dyson farming complex in Lincolnshire, and the representatives from DEFRA, the Netherlands Water Boards and an IDB Clerk had spoken. The IDB Clerk wished to promote the view that drainage rates should be disaggregated from general rates on Council Tax demands, just as the police and fire service are. This would raise the profile of IDBs and would remove the risk of a referendum being triggered by an IDB rate rise pushing the Council Tax increase over the threshold. The counter view expressed, was that this risk only affected a few councils and that the change could lead to a wider review of the work of IDBs when one is not required.

The Netherlands representative spoke on the similarities and differences between flood risk management in the two countries and the current aims and objectives of her Board. Finally, DEFRA representative spoke generally on matters which may affect IDBs and commended the Boards on the work they do.

The MLC Chief Executive also spoke at the event, and stated his opinion that IDBs had evolved into seasonal water provision and control managers, from simple flood risk managers and that the current legislation and steer from government neither acknowledged this nor supported it, hence change was required. The DEFRA representative agreed but felt that before considering primary legislative changes, it would be necessary to explore if any current legislation could be used to support the wider work of IDBs.

b) Meeting of the River Great Ouse Branch

That the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association will take place on Tuesday 7th March 2023 at Prickwillow Village Hall, and will be preceded by a morning

workshop. The theme of the workshop will be water resources and climate change and will cover the newly proposed Fenland reservoir.

iii) Smart Level System/District Wide Telemetry Bid

Further to minute B.1811(x), the Clerk noted the success of the telemetry installation, which the District Officer acknowledged and the Chairman asked that the login details be provided to him.

B.1844 Consulting Engineer's Report, including planning and consenting matters

The Board considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

RESOLVED

- i) High Fen – not to replace the pump at High Fen at this time as a spare is available.
- ii) To check and report at the next meeting on whether or not one of the pumps has already been refurbished at Puddock Pumping Station and if so, which one and when.
- iii) Check to see if there is a smart charger at Washways as overcharging may be causing the life of batteries to be shortened. Contact the Chairman with findings.
- iv) Email all members the background information to the reported lack of success on the residential development on land to the west of Richmond Lodge, Pidley.

The fence around Metalcraft's new training centre was discussed and it was agreed no further action would be required at this time.

B.1845 District Officers Report

The District Officer reported that the majority of the works planned had been undertaken and gone well. Also, that they had been delivered at a lower cost than last year. He also noted that there were a number of issues which required the Boards instruction, that were highlighted during the morning's inspection, as follows:

Washways Pumping Station

The inlet for taking water into the system is seized. This appears to be pipe which would allow water to be back-fed into the system and it would be worth surveying it and seeing if it could be made operable. At the moment, the handle for it is placed below deck level, so it could not be operated safely. However, it should be possible to extend the spindle to make it usable.

Puddock Pumping Station

The inlet leaks and contributed to the system being overfull during the summer months when most IDB sub-catchments were without water. It will, therefore, be necessary to dam off and inspect the inlet penstock, prior to repairing or replacing it.

RESOLVED

That the Middle Level Commissioners be asked to investigate further the possibility of fixing the Washways inlet pipe, so it can be used to bring water into the system.

That the Middle Level Commissioners price for repair or replacement of the inlet penstock at Puddock Pumping Station.

A discussion took place over the costs borne by the Board in feeding water around the District for irrigation purposes. This includes pumping which will be considerably more expensive this year. After a lengthy discussion, the Board expressed its view that it should, for the time being, continue with the current arrangement. It was noted, that whilst primarily water was moved around in summer to support the growing of crops, there was also a benefit to the environment which helped deliver on the environmental duty placed upon the Board.

The Chairman expressed his thanks on behalf of the Board to Bob & Richard for all their hard work for the preceding year.

B.1846 Association of Drainage Authorities – Subscriptions

The Clerk reported that ADA have increased subscriptions by 4.5% for 2023.

ADA subscriptions for 2022 were £875, will be £915 for 2023.

RESOLVED

That the ADA subscription for 2023 be paid.

B.1847 Contribution from Developers

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

B.1848 Health & Safety

The Clerk advised that the next Cope Safety Management visit will be 18th January 2023. The report from this visit will be included in the next meeting's agenda.

The Board confirmed that they were happy with the work of Cope Safety Management, which had delivered positive outcomes in a practical way.

B.1849 Financial Statement

The Clerk reported:

- a) Board's revenue cash balance at 16th November 2022:-

Clients Premium Account	£862,772.17
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- b) Drainage rates and special levies outstanding at 2nd November 2022 £80,241.40

B.1850 Risk Management Assessment

Further to minute B.1824(b), the Board considered the valuation of their buildings and whether to index-link these values from April 2023.

The Board noted that construction labour and material costs were running ahead of inflation and considered that the building should be adequately insured.

RESOLVED

That the properties owned by the Board should be revalued this year and then the Board will start applying annual index-linked building inflation following on from this.

B.1851 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2021/2022

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

B.1852 Defra IDB1 Returns

The Board noted and approved the completed IDB1 form for 2021/2022.

B.1853 Expenditure/Estimate Update

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

B.1854 Electricity

The Chairman reported on current costs, cost of pumping to retain levels throughout the District and possible renewable energy provision.

It was noted that the electricity bill can vary dramatically and that any opportunities should be taken to fine tune the system to save energy and reduce costs. It was also pointed out that there is inbuilt apparatus, such as panel heaters, which may be left on all year round, consequently Boards can be using between 40 – 300KWh per month per Pumping Station without running pumps.

RESOLVED

That the Mechanical and Electrical Engineer check each station, to see if electricity use can be lowered whilst the stations are dormant. This to be done as part of the station services. In addition, the possibility of including a setting which precludes day running during periods of low flood risk to be investigated.

The Chairman to have the delegated power to instruct any changes which are likely to save the Board money long term in this respect.

B.1855 Date of next Meeting

Date of next meeting 10th May 2023

B.1856 Any Other Business

Members noted that the current District Officer retires this year and wished to record their thanks for his hard work and dedications over his many years of service.

Richard, his son, will take over from him.

Warboys, Somersham & Pidley Internal Drainage Board

Proposed Reconstitution

Resolutions Required

The Board are asked to

- i) Confirm if they wish to reduce number of elected members by changing the constitution and reducing the quorum by changing the standing orders.
- ii) Reaffirm their rationale for the proposal
- iii) Assess and advise on how they aim to achieve the reduction in elected members
- iv) Confirm the option they wish to progress from Table 1
- v) Instruct the Clerk to write to Hunts DC and Fenland DC seeking their support to the proposals and if support is received then i) initiate the reconstitution with Defra and the Environment Agency, or ii) if support is not received then review the way forward and options at the Board's next meeting

Supporting Information:

The Board first discussed a potential reconstitution on 3 June 2021 and have had discussions on that theme at subsequent meetings. The last resolution on this topic was on 26 May 2022:

That the Clerk contact Defra about the Board's wish to amend their standing orders to require a quorum of 7 Members rather than carry out a formal reconstitution of the Board.

The previous clerk spoke to colleagues at Defra and the indication was that a quorum of that level would not be considered representative. The Board therefore need to consider options and issue a clear resolution at their meeting on 8 June 2023.

From experiences with previous reconstitutions, a very clear resolution is required preferably accompanied by an indication of support from levy paying Councils, as a reduction in elected members will mean a reduction in appointed members.

Any resolution needs to be clear in the proposal to i) reduce number of elected members by changing the constitution and ii) reducing the quorum by changing the standing orders.

The Board also need to be comfortable in the pathway to reduce elected members, eg are there sufficient members willing to step down to avoid triggering elections, or are elections palatable?

Within any resolution the Board would need to reaffirm the rationale for the proposal. Within the May 2022 minutes was the following statement "*....due to the reduction in the number of farms in the area and some of the older Members retiring from farming*"

Initial Pathway:

- 1 Resolution by the Board at their June 2023 meeting
If resolved to progress a reconstitution:
- 2 Clerk to write to Hunts DC and Fenland DC asking to support for the proposal
If support is received:
- 3 Clerk to initiate reconstitution with the Environment Agency & Defra

Table 1: Reconstitution options:

Option	Elected Members (Constitution)	Appointed Members*		Total Members	Quorum (Standing Orders)
		HDC	FDC		
Existing	21	2	1	24	12
A	15	1	0	16	8 or 9
B	13	1	0	14	7 or 8
Recommendation^	15	1	0	16	8

^ Recommendation from the Finance Committee

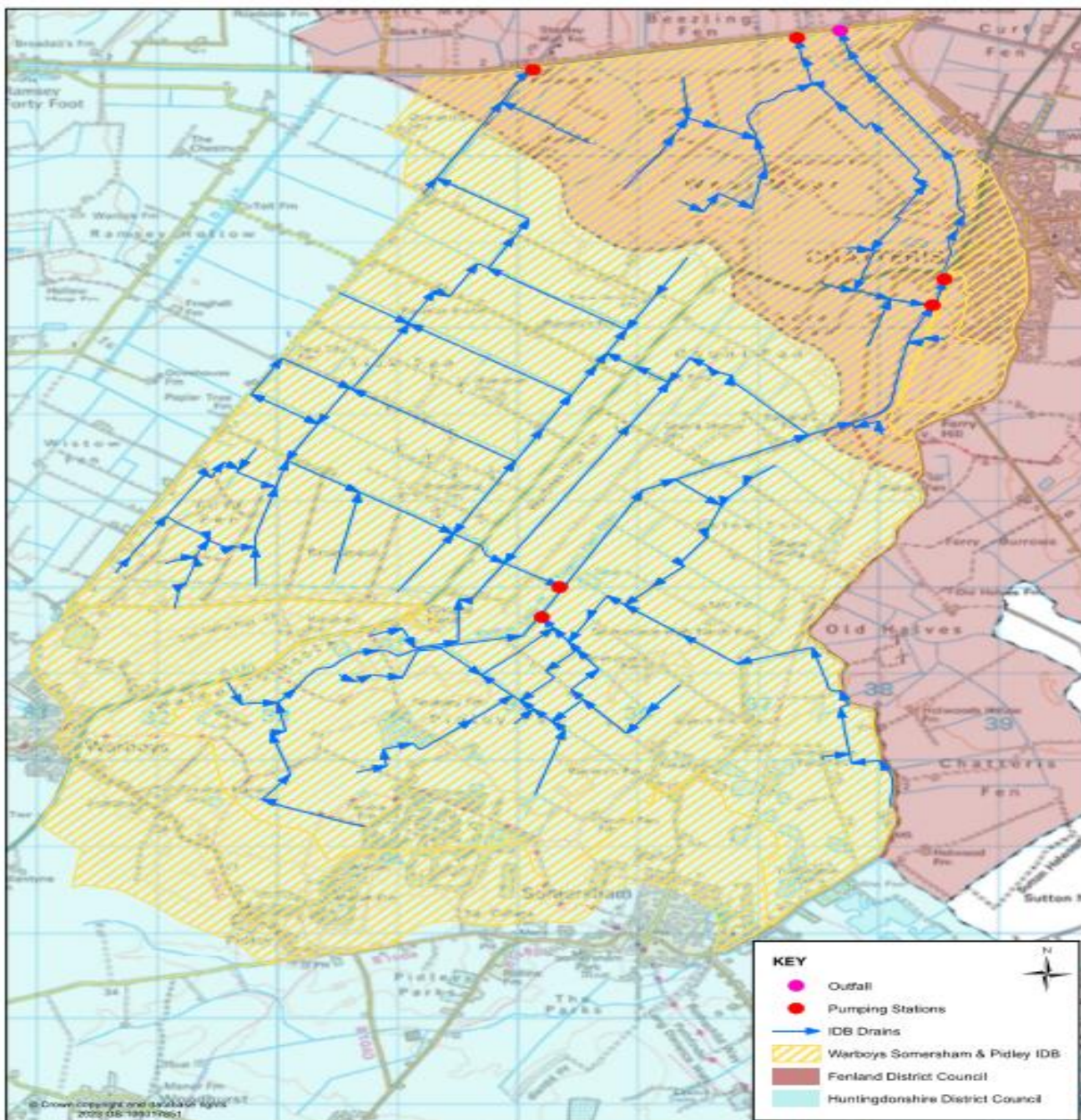
* Appointed members places based on 2022/23 accounts

89.15% agricultural rates

8.09% Hunts DC

2.76% FDC

Paul Burrows, Clerk, June 2023



Warboys Somersham & Pidley Internal Drainage Board

Meeting of the finance committee – Tuesday 23rd May 2023

Present:

C Leadbetter - Chairman
D Brown
J German
T Noble
H Whittome

P Burrows (Clerk to the Board) and R Hill attended the meeting

Apologies received from:

The Lord de Ramsey
M England
D Fabb

Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2023

Mr Hill outlined the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2023. Concerning the income during the year, a rate of 22.00p was set, raising £182,784.16 and the calculated balance for the highland water contribution of £19,125.76 due from the Environment Agency had been received in the year.

At last years meeting the Boards District Officer informed the Board of his planned retirement at the end of March 2023 and put in place succession planning with the appointment of Mr Richard Wilmer from July 2022 to work alongside the District Officer to allow for a smoother transfer on the retirement of the post holder.

Although the succession planning was approved by the Board there was no provision or allowances made within the budget and these additional staff costs were unbudgeted.

Although there was an underspend of £9,734 against the drain maintenance budget with other heads of expenditure being around budget provisions there was an overspend of approx. £28,000 for labour costs. It is proposed that this can be off-set by use of capital funds budgeted to be raised, £10,000 for the pump overhaul programme and the provision of £12,461 for future works funding. Expenditure for electricity (pumping) and gas oil was over budget by approx. £3,300, with the majority of this being fuel for the hired excavator.

It was budgeted to replace a pumping unit at Puddock pumping station and for the installation of telemetry at the pumping stations. During the year the Puddock pumping station pump replacement did not happen and the telemetry installations were completed. The telemetry installations were 50% funded by grant-in-aid and the remainder, £13,877.49 has been funded from the capital reserve account.

Mr Hill reported that during the year, the Boards revenue balances, without any transfers for future works to the capital reserve account had decreased by £9,447 to £153,223, and the Board had a balance of £1,388.20 for the annual depreciation of the plant assets.

The Development charges account, after transferring the sum of £606.50 for engineering consultancy fees for further investigations concerning the Low-Level restoration was

£358,488.03, the capital reserve fund, after transferring the sum of £13,877.49 for the installation of telemetry was £122,457.37 and the Low-Level Restoration Fund £50,000.00.

The Committee gave consideration to the current balance within the Low-Level Restoration Fund.

Mr Hill reported that following continuing discussions with Lafarge and the land owner concerning the pumping arrangements the Middle Level engineer has drawn up proposals for the future drainage of the application land. Members considered that until further information was available and there had been a commitment to the future drainage arrangements they were not in a position to recommend changes to the funding arrangements. They therefore agreed that no changes could be proposed at this time.

The Committee reviewed the current balance in the Capital Reserve Fund (£122,457.37) and Mr Hill referred to the fund being for future refurbishment of pumping units and pumping stations, with current approximate costs for a pump overhaul were between £15,000 and £20,000 per unit and the Board had thirteen pumping units. Members agreed to retain balances for future works.

The finance committee approved to recommend to the Board:

- i That no transfer to the Capital Reserve Account be made for 2022/2023.:
- ii To retain the sum of £50,000 transferred from the development charges account to the low-level restoration scheme, and for this fund to be reviewed following the review of drainage arrangements for the scheme.
- iii To approve the accounts.

Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023

Mr Hill referred to the current Practitioners' guide to proper practices to be applied in the preparation of statutory annual accounts and governance statements which had recently been updated, and to the additional documentation for Board members to review.

Members reviewed:

Budget monitoring

Internal Controls

Internal Auditor

Mr Hill reported that after tendering Whiting LLP had been appointed as internal auditor for a five-year period commencing 1st April 2023.

Risk Management Assessment

- i) Consideration to the Board's Risk management policy
- ii) The insured value of the Boards buildings.

Asset valuation/insurances

Mr Hill reminded members that they had previously approved for the engineer to revalue all pumping stations and when this was completed to then index link the valuations for insurance purposes.

The chairman considered that the valuation for the bungalow was low and should be valued by a qualified agent.

Exercise of Public Rights

Mr Hill referred to the publishing of the Notice of public rights and publication of unaudited annual return, statement of accounts, annual governance statement and the notice of conclusion of the audit and right to inspect the Annual Return.

Payment's year ended 31.03.2023.

Bank Reconciliation – Year ended 31.03.2023.

The finance committee approved the budget monitoring for the 2022/2023 financial year, the internal controls, the appointment of Whiting LLP as Internal auditor for a five-year period, risk management, insured value of properties, bank reconciliation and payments for the year ended 31st March 2023, and to recommend the Board to approve these reviews, to include the valuation of the bungalow by a qualified agent.

Members reviewed the Annual Governance Statement.

The finance committee approved to recommend to the Board that the Chairman be authorised to sign the Statement for 2022/2023 on behalf of the Board.

Determination of annual values

Mr Hill referred to the schedule for determination of annual values for rating purposes.

The finance committee agreed to recommend the Board approved the determination.

Private works

The meeting gave consideration to the current rates charged for private works using the Boards machinery. The Chairman considered there was likely to be little opportunity to carry out these works, but that the Board should have approved rates should any works be completed.

The finance committee approved to recommend to the Board:

i That there should be no changes to the charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work for:

Doosan DX 140W excavator.

Current rates: £60.00 per hour inside the District
£65.00 per hour outside the District.

Flail mower

Current rates: £65.00 per hour inside the District
£70.00 per hour outside the District

Reviews and updates.

Access issues – Womb Farm development (Abbotts Walk, Chatteris)

The chairman updated the meeting on the ongoing issues concerning the development and considered the Board were being let down by Middle Level in dealing with this matter. He considered it was important for the Board to take a firm stance in protecting their access along this vitally important channel.

Mr Brown referred to the meeting at the Middle Level offices in January (2023) at which, the two representatives from Persimmon Home had not visited the site.

The meeting discussed the possible legal costs should it become necessary to take enforcement action.

The clerk referred to capacity issues at the Middle Level offices and the chairman considered that if out-sourcing was required then these costs should be picked up by Middle Level.

Mr Hill out-lined the likely timetable that would need to be followed if enforcement action became necessary. The chairman reported that there had been an agreed course of action from Persimmon Homes following the January meeting and expressed dis-satisfaction that these matters had not been actively pursued by staff at the Middle Level offices.

Approved:

The clerk to contact Persimmon Homes for an update and a firm commitment to meet their obligations as had been agreed at the January 2023 meeting.

That an update be made at the next scheduled Board meeting together with a strategy for the Board to approve to resolve matters through enforcement action should this be considered to be necessary.

Discharge channel new cut – performance deed

Mr Hill out-lined the position concerning the performance deed for the new cut on the Washways discharge channel and that the final payment was scheduled to be made back to the developer December 2023. He reported that the engineer had suggested a site inspection after maintenance works to check that there were no matters that could lead to a claim against the developer.

Resolved:

That the engineer check the detail of the performance deed with regards to time-scales for lodging claims.

The engineer arrange a site inspection with the Chairman and District Officer at an appropriate time to comply with the time-scales for lodging claims and when drain maintenance works offered the clearest view of the works.

Review of Bartletts agreements

Mr Hill referred to the agreements in place with Albert Bartlett and Son for access and services over the Washways pumping station discharge channel and concerning the agreements for the carting and disposal of spoil from the Fenton Lode upstream of Washways pumping station on Bartletts side of the drain and that Mr Toby Bartlett had been in contact concerning these agreements.

Resolved:

That the clerk update the Chairman on the agreements in place and for him to arrange a meeting with Mr Toby Bartlett to review and update the agreements as may be necessary.

Drain maintenance issues

The Chairman did not consider there were any further significant drain maintenance issues and that he would, with the District officer, continue to monitor the District.

Drain maintenance contract

The Chairman reported that the use of a self-drive hired machine had worked very well last year and that in combination with the Boards machine all planned works had been completed.

He informed the meeting that the retired former District officer has been in agreement to return for digger work and that he proposed to use a self-drive hired machine again this year and to engage Mr Robert Wilmer to operate the machine when on hire.

Mr Whittome queried the hourly rate to be paid and considered that it should be the current hourly rate of the Boards employee.

Resolved

To recommend to the Board that the Board use a self-drive hired machine for this year's drain maintenance slubbing works and engage Mr Robert Wilmer to operate the machine.

Puddock bungalow

Members discussed the current position and the Chairman reported that the new District officer did not currently wish to use the premises.

Mr Whittome referred to the importance of making sure that the agreement was in the name of Mrs Kent only and that, if necessary, the contractual agreement was updated at every six months to ensure the agreement remained a short-term tenancy only.

Standing Orders – reduction of elected members

The clerk reported on his findings from the minutes and his proposals for a clear pathway to progress a reconstitution with the Environment Agency and Defra. Members discussed the matter and the implications of reducing the number of elected members and correspondingly numbers of local authority appointees.

The chairman referred to members arriving for the meal provided at the inspection who had not taken part in the inspection and considered refreshment should only be provided for those members who had attended the inspection.

Resolved:

That the committee recommend to the Board that the number of elected members be reduced from 21 to 15 with the quorum reduced to 8

That refreshments only be provided for those members attending the inspection.

Lafarge low level restoration/pumping agreement

Mr Hill outlined the background to the agreement in place and to the consulting engineers supplementary report concerning this matter.

The Chairman declared an interest in this matter as land-owner and the meeting agreed that it was important for him to take part in the discussion to make them aware of the issues, but as land-owner, would not be able to be part of the decision process.

The Chairman reported that there was a land-owner agreement in place with the County Council to provide an area which was used as a “pocket park”, but due to water levels during the winter, paths through the park became flooded and areas of trees/planting experienced damage which had led to complaints from local residents. He further reported that there was a suitable electricity supply and generally, for a short period during the winter Lafarge installed a temporary pump to relieve this localised flooding. He considered that it was necessary to have a pumping facility available. He informed the meeting that the consulting engineer had been out to site on three separate occasions over an eighteen-month period and that he was of the opinion that the area would gravity drain, a position which had been challenged by the Chairman and that on the third visit levels were taken which the Chairman considered supported his view that gravity drainage would not work effectively.

Members considered it was a complex issue and Mr Whittome reported that it had originally been the view of the Board that the area would gravity drain but accepted that over time things can change, which made it vitally important to ensure that any solution agreed now would remain effective in the future.

Mr Noble considered that it was unlikely that gravity drainage would be effective for the area. The Chairman informed the meeting that as land-owners they had levels taken and had data for all pumping that had taken place which he had made available to the Middle Level engineers but from conversations was of the opinion that this information had not been used. Members considered that it would be beneficial to carry out an inspection of the site prior to the Board meeting and agreed that the Board should meet at Lakeside Lodge at 16:00 and inspect the site prior to the meeting on Thursday 8th June 2023.

District Officer

Mr Hill outlined the position regarding the District officer's salary and it had been the arrangements for the previous District officer's salary to be increased annually by the Middle Level Commissioners pay award. Mr Whittome gave a brief background on the mechanisms for the formula. The Chairman queried if it would be better for him to discuss and negotiate any increase with the District officer but members considered there to be a benefit to having an agreed process/formula in place. In response to Mr Whittome Mr Hill reported that the Middle Level pay award for 2023 was 7.14%.

Mr Brown referred to conversations with the new District Officer concerning certification for digger work and spraying and for additional tools to carry out his duties, the Officer requiring a new knap-sack sprayer and a strimmer.

Resolved:

That the Chairman organise suitable relevant training courses for the District Officer and the Officer be authorised to purchase new equipment for spraying and strimming.

That the committee recommend to the Board that the District officers' salary be increased by the Middle Level pay award for 2023 and that this indicator be used annually for the District officer salary.

Engineer report - Pumping stations

Mr Hill referred to the Boards pump overhaul policy and that no overhaul had been completed since 2015. A pump motor at High Fen pumping station had been overhauled in 2019/2020 and a pump replaced in 2021. It was reported that the old pump at High Fen pumping station had been retained and was stored in case of future problems.

Mr Hill reminded the meeting of the schedule produced by the engineer for last year's meeting detailing the dates of the last overhaul of the pumping units at each pumping station:

Last pumping plant overhaul dates

Acre Fen pumping station

No.1 2012

High Fen pumping station

No.1 2021 - Replaced 2021

No. 2 2009 - pump motor overhauled 2019/20

Weed-screen cleaner and control panel installed 2020/21

Pidley pumping station

No.1 2005

No.2 2006

Control equipment replaced 2016

Puddock pumping station

No.1 2004

No.2 None to-date

Washways pumping station

No.1 2014

No.2 2014

No.3 2014

No.4 2015

Control equipment replaced 2015

Westmoor pumping station

No.1 2007

No.2 2008

Control equipment replaced 2011

Mr Hill reported that this section of the engineer's report was currently in draft form and that there was nothing significant identified at the pumping stations. He informed the meeting that an indicative cost to replace the inlet penstock at Puddock pumping station was likely to be in excess of £40,000 and to dam off and repair the inlet at Washways pumping station was likely to be in excess of £30,000.

Mr Hill considered that if the Board were to consider damming off at Washways pumping station, due to concerns raised in the past as to the condition of the piling on the discharge side of the pumping station it would be beneficial (if practicable) to dam off at the end of the piling, de-water and carry out a full inspection of the piling while works were being carried out.

Members considered that the costs were very high for the benefit provided and they would continue to monitor at both stations. The Chairman suggested getting a dive team in to inspect the piling.

Resolved:

For the consulting engineer to get a quotation for divers to inspect the piling on the discharge side of Washways pumping station and also the inlet structure.

Replacement excavator

The Chairman reported that it had not been possible to find a suitable replacement excavator but he would continue to make enquiries and look out for one.

Mr Whittome reminded members of the previous approval given by the Board for the replacement of the excavator.

Meeting June 2021

B.1747 Replacement Excavator Machine

Further to minute 1725, there was an extended discussion on this item covering the merits of replacing the current machine verses retaining it. Possible changes to the skill base of employees at some point in the future together with the challenges with obtaining a machine within the current £30k budget were noted, as

was the up and coming Bartlett sales. In the end it was decided that the Chairman and Vice Chairman should have the flexibility to act should an opportunity arise now or in the future.

RESOLVED

To increase the approved net sum for a change of excavator to £50k and to leave the final decision on when and if to change the machine to the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

Capital Improvement programme

Mr Hill reported that the consulting engineer was currently compiling a programme of all IDB projects and looking at the resources needed to deliver them with a view to “packaging” some works together which should aid with grant allocations. To deliver these packaged projects it is likely that surveys of district systems will be required, however, it is likely that these surveys will be grant funded.

He further reported that the capital programme would be updated with the results of these surveys/applications and for the meantime the programme was a “holding position”.

The finance committee approved to recommend to the Board;

That the revised programme be approved.

Rate budget 2023/2024

Mr Hill reported that he had used standard budget provisions in drafting a budget proposal, using an “average year” for the provision of electricity, which also included a provision for additional standing charges. In response to the Chairman Mr Whittome updated on the position regarding the electricity contract.

In response to Mr Whittome Mr Hill confirmed that the draft figures only allowed for receipt of average highland water claims. The clerk briefly out-lined the position concerning highland water. Mr Whittome considered that the Board should budget for receipt of the full calculated claims.

In response to the chairman Mr Hill confirmed that the draft figures included an allowance of £10,000 for the pump overhaul programme and the equivalent of 1.5p rate for future works (approx. £12,500).

Mr Whittome asked what the figures would look like if the full allowance for highland water was made and the future works funding was removed. He stressed that as this would hopefully be a one-off year due to electricity costs, it could be possible to rate for standard revenue expenditure only with a view to addressing the future works position the following year. He considered the Board were in a healthy position with regards to balances and accepted that the electricity was an estimate for an “average year” so could vary significantly if it was a wet year.

Mr Hill confirmed that the draft figures indicated a rate requirement of just under 30p and if the adjustments suggested were made it would give a figure of just over 26p.

Mr German considered that with the number of pumping stations the Board had it would not be long before the pumps would require either overhauling or replacing. He considered the Board should be wary of reducing future works funding.

Members discussed the proposal to make and were split on making a firm recommendation. In response to Mr Hill the meeting instructed that the budget should be presented without the future works funding but the narrative to clearly show how this was arrived at.

Note – post meeting figures were updated with additional information concerning electricity standing charges and a re-calculation of highland water which gave a revised rate requirement of 27p.

Warboys Somersham & Pidley IDB
Consulting Engineers' Supplementary Report - April 2023

Improving Capital Delivery

Introduction

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

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

Resources

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

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

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

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

IDB Projects

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

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

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

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

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

MLC Bank Raising Scheme

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

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

Most of the project work was being carried out by MLC staff putting a strain on their already stretched ability to 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 wholesale desilting works can be undertaken, including significant input from the MLC Environment Officer.

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

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

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

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

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



Consulting Engineer

5 April 2023

Warboys Somersham & Pidley 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
Acre Fen p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.6	252.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	356.6
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	90.0	0.0	90.0
	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	20.0	20.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
High Fen p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.6	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.6
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Pidley p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	45.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	49.6
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
	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	0.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Warboys Somersham & Pidley Internal Drainage Board

Capital Improvement Programme (2023/2024)

Puddock p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.6	0.0	25.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	150.0	0.0	0.0	194.6
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	90.0	0.0	90.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Westmoor p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.6	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	54.6
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0	15.0
	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	10.0	10.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Washways p/s	Refurbishment of pumping station	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.6
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	20.0
	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	30.0	30.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0
Plant	Toyota Hi-Lux - AJ11 BND	0	0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
	Doosan DX140W Excavator - AU09 FEW	0	0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0
Property	Puddock pumping station bungalow	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Drainage Channels	Washways discharge channel piling replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	75.0	0.0	0.0	75.0
Identified on PAFS 2020 submission		27.6	252.0	100	50	0	0	10	185	0	225	180	95	1,125

Identified on PAFS 2020 submission

updated from engineers asset appraisal

ammended for 2020/2021 following finance committee recommendations

Acre Fen and Puddock p/s weed-screen cleaners move to year 10

Pump overhaul/replacement policy ammended 2021 - figures left for guidance

Doosan excavator replacement put back a further year - to review 2023

December 2022 - approved telemetry at all 6 stations - £4,500 per station less 50% grant aid

Programme to be further developed following engineers review/system studies for possible grant aid packaged applications



Warboys, Somersham & Pidley Internal Drainage Board

Environmental Update – April 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 note that there are a number of valuable provisions for wildlife across the area, including a number of designated sites and boards' drains are generally very supportive of thriving populations of water vole. 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 adaptations to the proposed approach, such as altered timings or establishment of “no-work” buffers around sensitive areas.

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

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) 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

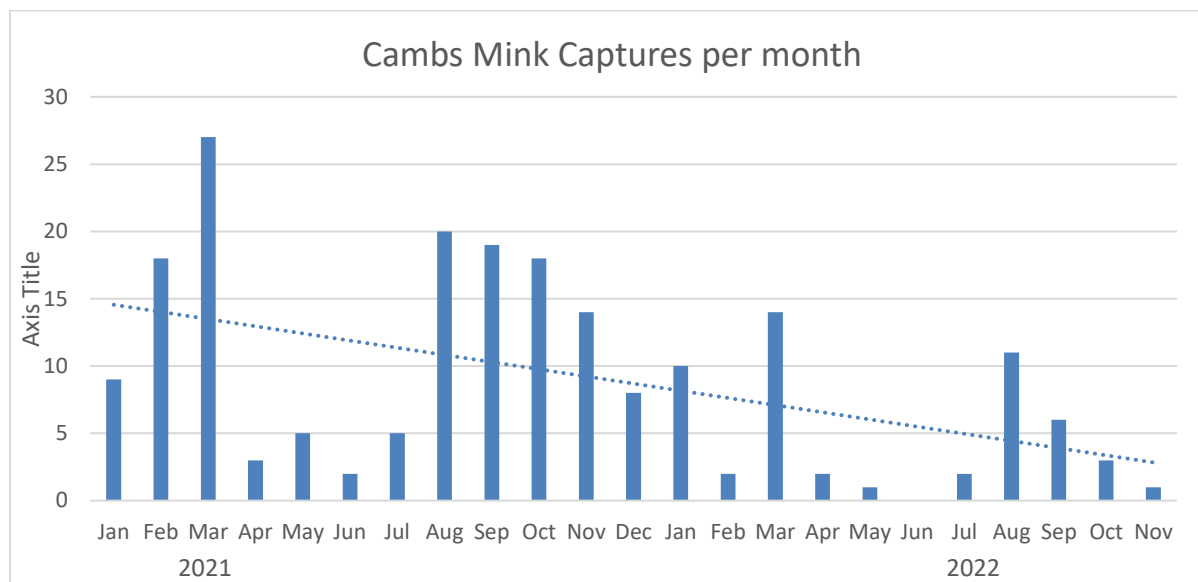
i. Avian Flu

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

d) Mink & Water Voles

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

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



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

Middle Level mink 2022_List

List of mink captures around the Middle Level in 2022

	Animal Code	Station/Location	Date	Sex
1	WRE/0761	Upwell & Outwell: Laddus Drove holt	09 Jan 2022	Male
2	WRE/0789		11 Jan 2022	Unrecorded
3	WRE/0917	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:

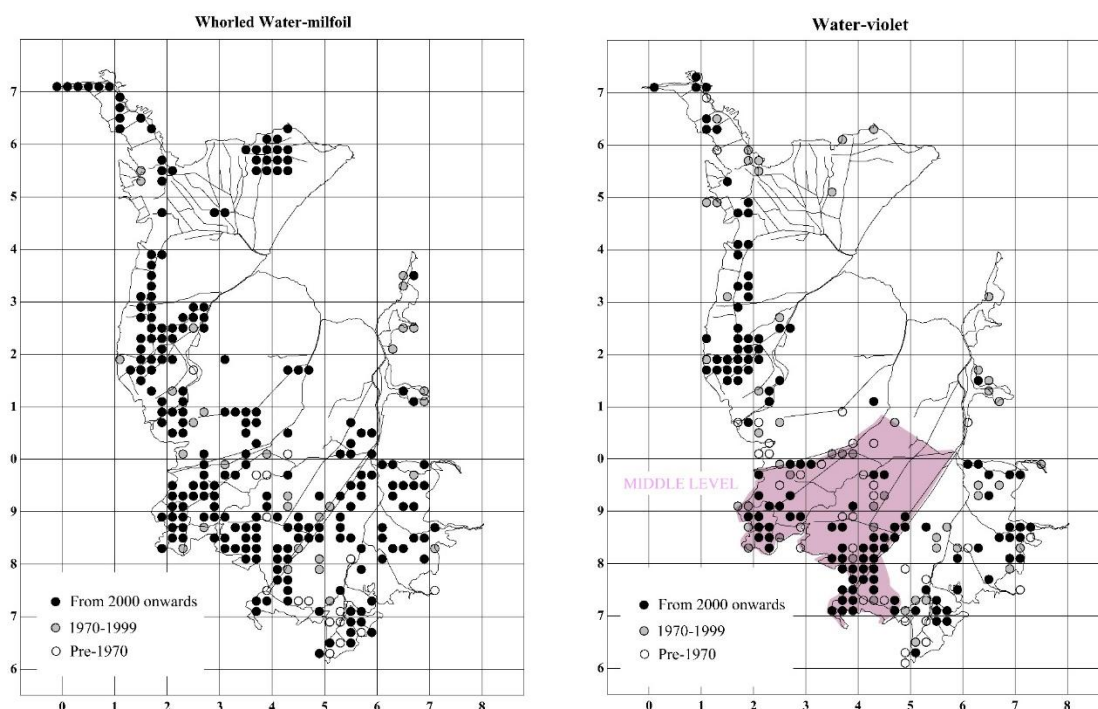
<https://www.nonnativespecies.org/non-native-species/information-portal/view/381>

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 planned 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.

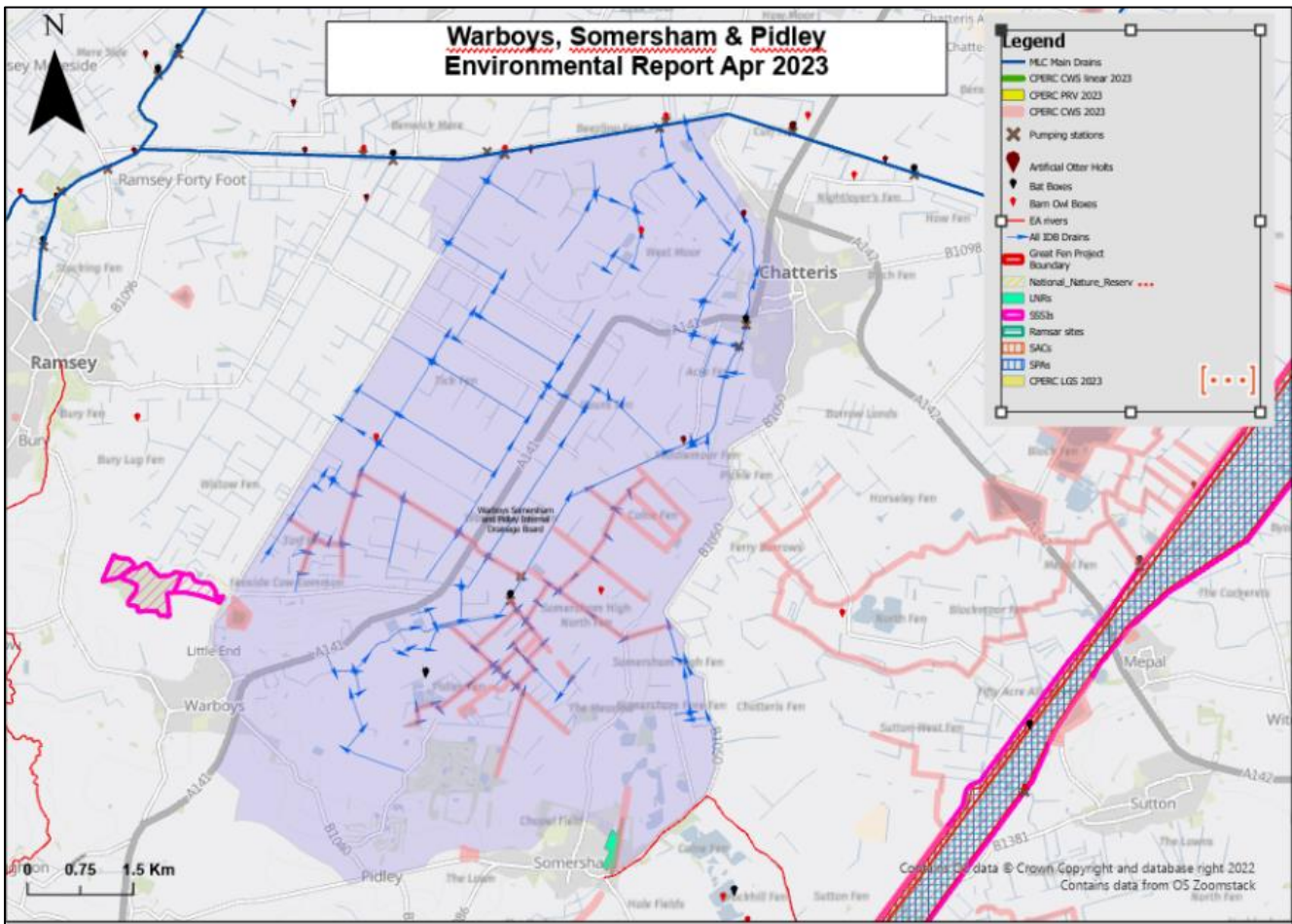
Last year ADA published a Carbon Accounting Guide for IDBs, which is available from their website. The process of calculating carbon emissions does not have to be as complicated as some may think. If you have reviewed the guide and would like some help to progress with calculating your carbon emissions, 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 CO₂ emissions from degraded peat. This is known as paludiculture. This includes the potential for receiving an income for carbon sequestration from such approaches. As you would expect, there is a focus on the Cambridgeshire fens as a key area for development of this approach along with Somerset, Lancashire and the Lincs fens. If you would like to know more about how this topic is progressing, would like to get involved in some trials or would like to have a go at growing a paludiculture crop such as *Typha latifolia* (Bullrush or cattail) or Sphagnum moss yourself commercially, then please do get in touch.

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.





Site Safety Inspection Record

Warboys Somersham and Pidley WSP

Complete

Name of organisation:	Warboys Somersham and Pidley WSP
Date of site visit	18.01.2023 09:00 GMT
Address of inspected premises	Washways pumping Station PE16 6EG
Name of Advisor	Martin Clark
Time of arrival at site:	18.01.2023 09:00 GMT
Audit Name	Warboys Somersham and Pidley WSP

Audit

An opening meeting was held with

Bob Wilmer/Richard Wilmer

Have there been any accidents since our last visit?

No

None recorded

Have there been any new starters since our last visit?

No

None recorded.

1

Washways pumping station was visited and it was pleasing to note that an additional barrier has been fitted to prevent access to the weed screen cleaner.

Housekeeping was noted to be very good at all pumping stations visited.



Photo 1

2

Fire extinguishers were discussed, it was noted that some do not have evidence of having been inspected in the last two years.

It is recommended that fire extinguishers are inspected periodically, where dry powder extinguishers are present these should be replaced in due course with Co2 extinguishers and as discussed it is recommended that consideration is given to an additional extinguisher being carried in the vehicle.



Photo 2

3

It was understood that the building at Acre Fen has recently had some remedial repairs as a result of vandalism. It is recommended that consideration is given to erecting security fencing at Acre Fen to discourage a reoccurrence of vandalism attacks.

4

Pidley pumping station was visited and it was pleasing to note the the floor has now been repaired effectively.



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5

5

The new weed screen cleaner at High Fen was discussed and no operating issues have arisen since it was installed.



Photo 6



Photo 7

6

The pumping station at West Moore was visited and as discussed requires some additional signage to indicate that high voltage is present and also that automated machinery may operate without warning. (As is displayed at other pump stations.)



Photo 8

7

It was understood that the old buildings at Puddock Bridge pumping station have been sold off and are being redeveloped into private dwellings. At the time of this visit these were not yet completed and therefore public access to the pumping station is not likely.

The gate and fencing at the pumping station do not yet extend around the pumping station and this will be required before any occupation of the private dwellings.

It was also understood that some issues are extant with drainage from the private dwellings which may impact pumping station operations.

It is recommended that the developer is informed of the requirement to keep the pumping station separate from the general public and this should include any services such as drainage that may require maintenance.



Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11

Photographic Risk Assessment

Signature of person informed

Signature of person informed 1

Signature of person informed



Signed on behalf of Bob Wilmer by advisor
18.01.2023 13:31 GMT

Advisor's signature



Martin Clark
18.01.2023 13:31 GMT

Departure time

18.01.2023 13:31 GMT

Photographic Risk Assessments closed out during the visit.

Nil

Number of outstanding Photographic Risk Assessments

0
From 0 to 99

Appendix



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY IDB
INSURED VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS

PUMPING STATIONS & BUNGALOW

As at
1st April 2023

Puddock Pumping Station	770,000.00
-------------------------	------------

Pidley Pumping Station	900,000.00
------------------------	------------

High Fen Pumping Station	734,000.00
--------------------------	------------

Acre Fen Pumping Station	460,000.00
--------------------------	------------

Washways Pumping Station	1,700,000.00
--------------------------	--------------

Westmoor Pumping Station	775,000.00
--------------------------	------------

5,339,000.00

Puddock Bungalow	126,291.00
------------------	------------

5,465,291.00

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023, that:

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

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WARBOYS SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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

GENERAL ACCOUNT

Middle Level Commissioners - Test level controller for fault	128.72
Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution (Environmental Officer)	672.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery and Health & safety contract	12,731.35
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply padlocks for pumping station, service and repair brakes AU17 MWW	1,075.74
Middle Level Commissioners - Fit new handrail to end of automatic weedscreen cleaner and set winter levels	259.45
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,638.24
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	260.10
Lakeside Lodge Golf Centre - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	110.00
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges, derv and supply of gas oil	5,160.03
Cambridgeshire County Council - Right of way (Warners Drove, Somersham)	30.00
Environment Agency - Precept	11,157.19
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges and derv	452.90
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	282.74
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2022	1,050.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	170.64
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges, derv, pipe and coupling	1,167.67
L R Boon & Sons Ltd - Flexi jubilee driver, 2 long screw drivers, tube red hermitite, disposable gloves, blow gun, air hose with chuck and probe, 50 litre compressor, tube of Draper PTFE and 3 air Q/R probes	424.83
Cole & Day - MOT and service of Isuzu D-Max AO17 WMW	714.67
Cole & Day - Puncture repair	24.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,587.84
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of Roundup	62.18
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges and derv	524.02
Barrie Coulson Plumbing & Heating - Replacement of immersion heater and repairs to overflowing toilet at bungalow	197.00
Mervyn Lambert Plant Ltd - Repairs to excavator AU09 FEW	822.58
L R Boon & Sons Ltd - 5 litres of battery water, 1 box of grease cartridges, disposable gloves and a pack of black stretch gloves	123.12
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges, derv, supply of gas oil, puncture repair and purchase of mobile telephone	7,437.96
L R Boon & Sons Ltd - Roll of handpaper, hand wipes, 5 litres of screen wash, 5 litres of distilled water, face masks, hydraulic cap, filters, 25 litres of SAE 90 gear oil, 25 litres of hydraulic 46 oil, 25 litres of Eurofleet oil, WD40, safety glasses, mole grips, pump pliers, magnetic base beacon, repairs to excavator and bucket	1,906.53
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges and derv	429.25
Mervyn Lambert Plant Ltd - Repairs to excavator AU09 FEW	1,657.46
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	3,976.65
Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal	40.00
L R Boon & Sons Ltd - 50 litres of hydraulic oil, 25 litres of Eurofleet oil, tractor funnel, grease gun, combination spanner, hand wipes and a H/d 1/2" drive sealey breaker bar	442.67
Barrie Coulson Plumbing & Heating - Call out and repair overflowing header tank at bungalow	75.00
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit fee (2021-2022 accounts)	720.00
WM Plant Hire Ltd - Hire of long reach excavator with slubbing bucket and transport to site - Self drive	8,010.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution (Environmental Officer)	672.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages and telephone charges,	11,022.67
Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners 2021-2022 accounts)	1,506.00
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges, derv and supply of gas oil	6,438.36

Mervyn Lambert Plant Ltd - Repairs to excavator AU09 FEW	327.30
Lakeside Lodge Golf Centre - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	110.00
WM Plant Hire Ltd - Hire of long reach excavator with slubbing bucket and transport to site - Self drive	3,330.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	424.08
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,163.76
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	901.04
L R Boon & Sons Ltd - Tractor funnel, 200 litres of fuel station, hydraulic hose with elbows attached, core cable, croc clips, filter straps and 25 litres of hydraulic oil	1,053.67
Environment Agency - Precept	11,157.18
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to automatic weedscreen cleaner at Pidley pumping station	749.66
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply road tax - AU09 FEW	165.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply road tax - AO17 WMW	290.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply business cards for R. Wilmer and C. Leadbetter, spare number plate and padlock	100.08
Youngs Agricultural Services Ltd - Supply and fit battery to excavator	729.02
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	1,593.41
Middle Level Commissioners - Fee (Discharge consent application)	54.93
WM Plant Hire Ltd - Post hire inspection and replacement door lock following vandalism	90.00
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges, derv and supply of gas oil	7,149.40
L R Boon & Sons Ltd - Handpaper, grease cartridges, grease gun, steel spade and repairs to excavator	1,310.54
Lakeside Lodge Golf Centre - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	407.00
Association of Drainage Authorities (River Great Ouse branch) - Subscription 2021-2022	30.00
L R Boon & Sons Ltd - 5 litres of battery water, compact elbow, hydraulic probe, washer and fit new flails to mower	577.89
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges, derv and supply of gas oil	385.63
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	390.18
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply water transfer licence	115.00
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges and derv	397.15
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,587.84
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, work in connection with energy survey, planning and development applications)	1,164.90
Middle Level Commissioners - Land Registry searches (Account from Land Registry)	18.00
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges and derv	399.53
Middle Level Commissioners - Preparation of highland water claims	441.96
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Data Collection Charges (Westmoor pumping station)	131.98
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Data Collection Charges (High Fen pumping station)	131.98
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Data Collection Charges (Pidley pumping station)	146.84
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Data Collection Charges (Puddock pumping station)	146.84
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Data Collection Charges (Washways pumping station)	146.84
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Meter Operator Charges (Westmoor pumping station)	209.70
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Meter Operator Charges (High Fen pumping station)	209.70
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Meter Operator Charges (Pidley pumping station)	209.70
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Meter Operator Charges (Puddock pumping station)	209.70
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Meter Operator Charges (Washways pumping station)	209.70
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Meter Operator Charges (Acre Fen pumping station)	133.49
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply (Acre Fen pumping station)	5,696.34
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply (High Fen pumping station)	4,196.08
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply (Pidley pumping station)	10,244.80
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply (Puddock pumping station)	7,083.52
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply (Westmoor pumping station)	3,502.37
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply (Washways pumping station)	22,612.17
District Labour	62,157.23
	<u>239,155.69</u>

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM AND PIDLEY 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	168,703.51
	Precept	22,314.37	2023		
	Rates, insurances, telephones	4,615.66	Mar-31	Rate income & Special levies	182,784.16
	Repairs & Renewals	17,121.71		Landowners consent (Washways)	0.00
	Fuel	68,791.80		Consents	100.00
	Drainworks	16,266.65		Rent	6,600.00
	District Labour	65,746.67		Highland Water Contributions	19,125.76
	Administration charge, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising etc	23,974.71		Vehicle Contribution	500.04
		196,517.20		Private works	300.00
	<u>Improvement works</u>				
	Low Level Restoration - consultancy fee	606.50		<u>Grant-in-aid</u>	
	Installation of telemetry	27,754.98		Installation of telemetry	13,877.49
		28,361.48			
				<u>Capital Reserve Account</u>	
				Installation of telemetry	13,877.49
	<u>Transfers to Capital Reserve Fund:</u>				
	Rates Raised 2022/2023	0.00		<u>Development Fund</u>	
	Pump overhaul provision	0.00		Low Level Restoration - consultancy fees	606.50
		0.00			
	Depreciation charge	4,645.59			
	Balance carried forward	154,636.31			
		406,474.95			406,474.95

BALANCE SHEET

Capital Section

Liabilities

Capital Provisions	5,139,791.00
	5,139,791.00

Assets

Bungalow, Puddock Pumping Station	126,291.00
Pumping Stations	5,013,500.00
Plant Assets	1,388.20
Stock	7,545.68
	5,148,724.88

Revenue Section

General Fund

Revenue	153,248.11
Capital	1,388.20
	154,636.31
Development Charges Account	358,488.03
Grant in Aid	164,011.21
Sundry Creditors	58,582.70
Capital Reserve Fund	122,457.37
Low Level Restoration Fund	50,000.00
	6,047,966.62

Ratepayers' Account - Arrears	25,672.07
Sundry Debtors	820.00
Value Added Tax	11,396.93
Balance in hand -	
Treasurer's Account	861,352.74
Labour Account	0.00
	861,352.74

6,047,966.62

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM AND PIDLEY 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	358,682.57
	Middle Level Charges	45.77	2023		
	Transfer to General Fund		Mar-31	Receipts during the year	457.73
	Low Level restoration - consultancy fees	606.50			
	Balance carried forward	358,488.03			
		<u>359,140.30</u>			<u>359,140.30</u>

CAPITAL RESERVE ACCOUNT

2023			2022		
Mar-31			Apr-01	Balance brought forward	136,334.86
	<u>General Fund</u>		2023		
	Installation of telemetry	27,754.98	Mar-31	Rates Raised 2022/2023	0.00
	Less grant-in-aid (50%)	<u>-13,877.49</u>		Pump overhaul provision	0.00
		13,877.49			
	Balance carried forward	122,457.37			
		<u>136,334.86</u>			<u>136,334.86</u>

Warboys Somersham & Pidley Internal Drainage Board

Summary of Bank Reconciliations as at 31st March 2023

Treasurers Account 2022/2023

1st April 2022			31st March 2023		
Balance brought forward		866,133.69	Payments made during the year	239,155.69	
31st March 2023			To Transfer to Labour Account	<u>0.00</u>	239,155.69
Receipts during the year					
Clerk's collection account	234,374.74		Balance carried forward		861,352.74
Interest on deposit accounts	<u>0.00</u>	234,374.74			
		<u><u>1,100,508.43</u></u>			<u><u>1,100,508.43</u></u>

Barclays Bank PLC

Clients Premium Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2023	861,352.74
Less unpresented cheques:	0.00
Add outstanding lodgements:	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	<u><u>861,352.74</u></u>

Cash balances as at 31st March 2023

Barclays Bank PLC

Clients Premium Account	861,352.74
<u>Total reconciled cash balances per accounts</u>	<u><u>861,352.74</u></u>

Warboys Somersham & Pidley IDB**Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return****Financial year ended 31st March 2023****Per Annual
Return**

<u>Line 1</u>	<u>Balances brought forward</u> General Fund Development charges account Capital reserve account Low level restoration fund	199,568.43 358,682.57 99,436.15 50,000.00 707,687.15	707,687
<u>Line 2</u>	<u>Rates and Special Levies</u> Agricultural rates Special Levies Penalty Costs Write-off	162,938.16 19,821.00 0.00 25.00 0.00 182,784.16	182,784
<u>Line 3</u>	<u>Total other receipts</u> Interest General fund Development charges account Capital reserve account Consent applications Rent Vehicle Contribution Highland Water Grant in Aid Discharge contributions Land owners consent Private Works Write back of provisions	 0.00 0.00 0.00 100.00 6,600.00 500.04 19,125.76 13,877.49 457.73 0.00 300.00 0.00 40,961.02	40,961
<u>Line 4</u>	<u>Staff costs</u> Wages/salaries National insurance contributions Pension costs Travelling expenses	58,228.03 6,523.07 995.57 0.00 65,746.67	65,746
<u>Line 5</u>	<u>Loan repayments</u> PWLB - Principal PWLB - Interest	0.00 0.00 0.00	0

Warboys Somersham & Pidley IDB**Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return****Financial year ended 31st March 2023****Per Annual
Return**

<u>Line 6</u>	All other payments		
	Precept	22,314.37	
	Rates, insurances, telephones	4,615.66	
	Repairs and renewals	17,121.71	
	Fuel	68,791.80	
	Drainworks	16,266.65	
	Administration	23,974.71	
	Development charges fees	45.77	
	Bad Debt Provision	0.00	
	Write back of provisions	0.00	
	High Fen p/s Pump Overhaul	0.00	
	High Fen p/s Weedscreen Cleaner	0.00	
	Improvements	0.00	
	Telemetry	27,754.98	
	Pocket Park Improvements : Low Level restoration	606.50	
		181,492.15	181,492

<u>Line 7</u>	Balances carried forward		
	General Fund	190,146.82	
	Development charges account	358,488.03	
	Capital reserve account	85,558.66	
	Low level restoration fund	50,000.00	
		684,193.51	684,194

Reconciliation

Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6 684,193.51

Reconciliation to Accounts

Balances carried forward per Annual Return - As above 684,193.51

Rounding adj previous year

Add Back:-

Restatement of Assets 6,033.79

Depreciation -4,645.59

Assets acquired in year 0.00

Assets disposed of in year 0.00

Profit on disposal 0.00

1,388.20

Balances carried forward per Accounts

General Fund 154,636.31

Development charges account 358,488.03

Capital reserve account 122,457.37

Low level restoration fund 50,000.00

685,581.71

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	751,869	707,687	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	175,442	182,784	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	28,372	40,961	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	36,089	65,746	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	211,907	181,492	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	707,687	684,194	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	866,134	861,353	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	5,226,826	5,226,826	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

29th April 2023

Date

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

SIGNATURE

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

SIGNATURE APPROVED

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM AND PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

BUDGET PROPOSAL 2023/2024

	<u>Actual</u> <u>2018/2019</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>2019/2020</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>2020/2021</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>2021/2022</u>	<u>Approved budget</u> <u>2022/2023</u> £	<u>Actual</u> <u>2022/2023</u> £	<u>Proposed budget</u> <u>2023/2024</u> £
1 District labour (including District Officer's salary)	33,057	34,055	35,077	36,089	37,750	65,747 ^A	41,500 ^{AA}
2 Rates, insurances and telephones	4,495	4,622	4,430	4,452	5,000	4,616 ^B	6,000 ^B
3 Repairs and renewals	16,539	27,260	16,700	19,401	26,000 ^C	17,122 ^C	17,000 ^C
4 Drainworks Piling works	19,291	21,813	26,894	83,345	26,000 ^D	16,267 ^D	20,000 ^{D/E}
5 Fuel (oil and electricity)-including District Officer's travelling	33,109	48,319	61,477	48,545	65,500 ^F	68,792	125,000 ^F
6 Administration charge, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	26,589	26,570	23,218	23,516	24,500	23,975	25,250 ^G
7 Environment Agency - Precept	20,327	21,343	21,877	21,877	22,315	22,314	22,984
8 Re-alignment of Fenton Lode	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 Capital Reserve Fund	22,533	17,532	22,532	12,532	12,461 ^H	0 ^H	0 ^H
	175,940	201,514	212,205	249,757	219,526	218,832	257,734
Bad debt provision	5,813	0	0	0		0	
Improvement works	2,411	48,181	99,562	10,632	67,000 ^I	28,361 ^I	0 ^I
Washways improvement scheme	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LESS Interest on Deposit Accounts, private works, Highland water contributions, contributions from Development Charges Account etc	24,977	85,880	122,844	72,719	103,767 ^J	54,987 ^J	33,448 ^J
Net Expenditure	159,187	163,815	188,923	187,669	182,759	192,206	224,286
Rate Requirement					182,759		0.2700 ^p
Rate set	20.00p	20.00p	20.00p	21.00p	22.00 ^p	22.00 ^p	

<u>General Fund</u>			
Opening balance	162,670	162,670	153,248
Rate income	182,759	182,784	224,286
Write back of provisions		0	
Net expenditure	182,759	192,206	224,286
use of balances	-12,167	0	0
Closing balance	150,503	153,248	153,248

<u>Budget 2023/2024</u>			
<u>Remarks</u>	<u>Budget 2022/2023</u>	<u>Actual 2022/2023</u>	<u>Budget 2023/2024</u>
A - Includes unbudgeted succession planning costs for April 2023 retirement of District Officer.			
AA - Includes provision for increase at July 2023			
B - Includes provision for increased insurances, telephones			
C - <u>Includes provisions for:</u>			
Pump overhaul provision	10,000	0	0
Excavator repairs (Doosan)	0	4,827	0
	0	0	0
	10,000	4,827	0
Pump overhaul provision 2022/23 not raised			
D - <u>Includes contractors accounts:-</u>			
Flail Mowing	4,000	0	0
Slubbing (machine hire)	12,000	10,132	10,000
Chemical weed control	500	52	250
	16,500	10,184	10,250
E - <u>Provision for proposed drain maintenance programme 2023/2024:</u>			
F - Provision based on average	65,500	68,792	125,000
Includes provision for new increased contract rates			
G - Increase in administration charge from previous year			
Includes for new Health & Safety arrangements			
H - <u>Capital Reserve fund</u>			
Provision at 1.50p	12,461	0	0
Pump overhaul provision	0	0	0
	12,461	0	0
I - <u>Improvement works:</u>			
Replacement pump - Puddock pumping station	40,000	0	0
Telemetry installation at pumping stations	27,000	27,755	0
Consultancy fees - Low Level restoration drainage	0	606	0
	0	0	0
	0	0	0
	67,000	28,361	0

J - Includes:

Transfer from Development account

High Fen p/s refurbishment works	0	0	0
Washways weed-screen cleaner gearbox	0	0	0
Piling - Fenton Lode	0	0	0
Piling - Pidley catchment	0	0	0

Capital Reserve Fund

Replacement pump - Puddock pumping station	40,000	0	0
Telemetry installation at pumping stations	13,500	13,877	0
Consultancy fees - Low Level restoration drainage	0	606	0
Puddock outfall flap valves	0	0	0
Piling - Pidley catchment	0	0	0
	<u>53,500</u>	<u>14,483</u>	<u>0</u>

aa Development charges account

Opening balance at 01.04.2023	358,683	358,683	358,488
Receipts in year	0	412	0
Expenditure in year	0	-607	0
Estimated closing balance -	<u>358,683</u>	<u>358,488</u>	<u>358,488</u>

ab Capital reserve Fund

Opening balance at 01.04.2023	136,335	136,335	122,457
Raised - Provision at 1.50p	12,461	0	0
Rates raised - Pump overhaul provision	0	0	0
Income in year	0	0	0
Replacement pump - Puddock pumping station	-40,000	0	0
Telemetry installation at pumping stations	-13,500	-13,877	0
High Fen p/s pump replacement	0	0	0
Puddock outfall flap valves	0	0	0
Piling - Pidley catchment	0	0	0
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Estimated closing balance -	<u>95,296</u>	<u>122,457</u>	<u>122,457</u>

Members should note that the actual out-turn will be dependent on pumping costs. The forecast indicates that general fund balances could be reduced to the level that they will only service the following years normal revenue cash flow requirements prior to the major collection of rates during October.

Warboys Somersham & Pidley 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	61,477	
Indicative current day costs	182,874	
Provision included for 2023/2024	<u>114,000</u>	- adj. for additional standing charges
Potential shortfall on budget	68,874	
<u>balances as at 31st March 2023</u>		
General Fund	153,248	
Development account	358,488	
Capital account	122,457	
Other	<u>50,000</u>	
	684,193	
Potential shortfall as % of balances	10.07%	

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

Warboys Somersham & Pidley 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 - | 89.15% |
| b) | Proportion to be borne by Special levies issued to Councils:- | |
| | Huntingdonshire District Council - | 8.09% |
| | Fenland District Council - | <u>2.76%</u> 10.85% |

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £7,406.

In 2023/2024 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levies would raise £8,307.

Revenue cash balance in hand on 31st March 2023 - £153,248.

The estimated net expenditure for the Boards Revenue and Capital Programmes in 2023/2024 is £249,207 and equivalent to:-

- | | |
|----|--|
| a) | a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of <u>30.00p</u> |
| b) | a Special levy on Fenland District Council of <u>£6,887</u> and |
| c) | a Special levy on Huntingdonshire District Council of <u>£20,152</u> |

If adjustments are made to remove improvement works funding from the budget for 2023/2024 (pump overhaul £10,000 and future capital funding 12,461) and other reductions, the net expenditure becomes:

- | | |
|----|--|
| a) | a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of <u>27.00p</u> |
| b) | a Special levy on Fenland District Council of <u>£6,198</u> and |
| d) | a Special levy on Huntingdonshire District Council of <u>£18,136</u> |

In 2022/2023 a rate of 22.00p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £5,043 on Fenland District Council and a Special levy of £14,778 on Huntingdonshire District Council.

P BURROWS

Clerk of the Board