UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Upwell Internal Drainage Board
hosted at the William Marshall Centre, Welney on Wednesday 17h May 2023

PRESENT

K Goodger Esq (Chairman)	P Hartley Esq
P Clabon Esq (Vice Chairman)	S Hartley Esq
H G Bliss Esq	P M Tegerdine Esq
R Means Esq	A Quail Esq
C J Crofts (KLWN)	J Quail Esq
R D Gladwin Esq	B Scott Esq
C N T Rose (KLWN)	G W Gowler Esq

Miss Samantha Ablett (representing the Clerk to the Board), Mr Paul Burrows, Clerk to the Board and Mrs Nicola Oldfield, Chief Engineer were in attendance.

The Chairman enquired whether ALL Board members were happy for the meeting to be recorded. All members were in agreement.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from R Gott Esq and B Rackley (FDC).

B.2078 Declarations of Interest

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

The Chairman declared an interest in minute B.2091.

Cllr C Crofts declared an interest minute B.2105.

B.2079 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 23rd January 2023 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.2080 Bank Mandate Update

Miss Ablett reported that it may be necessary to update the signatories for Barclays after April 2023.

RESOLVED

That Mr P Burrows be added as an authorised signatory of the Barclays Bank Account, should this be required in the future.

B.2081 Rates Outstanding for more than One Year

Miss Ablett reported on the rates outstanding for more than one and the amount owing relating to missing rates. She explained this was generally due to the records linking ownership of rateable land with specific land parcels having evolved from historic records and there were land details for rates billed that are not held in a spatial record.

She advised that a comprehensive GIS mapping exercise would need to be undertaken to resolve the issues, but this would not be a quick exercise.

Miss Ablett reported the Clerk was recommending that a project be scoped and costed, which would require additional dedicated resources to deliver and funding of the project could be apportioned based on the proportion of missing rates for each Board. She advised there would be efficiencies if this was packaged and delivered for all Boards together and enquired whether the Board wished to be included in this exercise.

RESOLVED

That the Board be included in the GIS mapping project when obtaining a quote.

B.2082 Ouse Washes Update

Further to minute B.2053, Miss Ablett referred to a Newsletter from the Environment Agency dated March 2023, viz;

Ouse Washes Flood Storage Reservoir

Update

March 2023

Middle Level Barrier Bank

Following our update in January 2023.

During the autumn reservoir inspection, our engineers identified cracks in the embankment between Welney and the A142 Mepal, following the prolonged period of hot, dry weather.

We undertook repair work throughout January and February and has now been complete. We will continue monitoring of the repaired cracks monthly until December 2023.

Our contractor Jackson Civil Engineering will start demobilising from the site and compound area in Welney from Monday 6 March, this will take approximately 1 week.

We will continue to carry out regular inspections and maintenance of the bank and monitor the grass growth for the next 2 years until the reservoir engineer gives a final sign-off in autumn 2024. This will include regular grass cuts, surveys and repairs to damage that may happen over the winter months.

Public footpath

The Middle Level Barrier Bank will remain open.

Please continue to be careful when accessing and walking on the bank and stay away from the patches of grass that haven't grown fully yet.

Keeping your community up to date

We would like to thank you for your co-operation and patience, and we will continue to work with you and the community to minimise disruption.

Our Public Liaison Officers will continue to keep you updated during the maintenance period of the project. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Public Liaison Officers: Monica Stonham or Yazmin Parry via email ousewashesprojectea@gmail.com

B.2083 Member Training Update

Miss Ablett reported that in the past year twelve members from a total of twenty had undertaken the ADA Governance & Accountability training via the video link provided.

She encouraged members to undertake some training by watching the videos, as this was an area, which had to be reported to the Environment Agency and DEFRA on the IDB 1 Return.

B.2084 Complaints and abusive emails from a ratepayer

Further to minute B.2056, Miss Ablett confirmed a consent application for the installation of the land drain was received and it was issued on 14th February 2023. The clerk reported that he had met with the complainant.

B.2085 Roadway to Nordelph Pumping Station

Further to minute B.2057, Miss Ablett reported the plannings for repair to the roadway were in hand. (Post meeting note - delivery on 9th June 2023)

She further reported that Land Registry records had confirmed that no rights of way had been granted over the gravel road to the Pumping Station to other land owners/occupiers.

Mr Means advised that he had been using the track for access for a number of years as there was no other way of accessing the field. In response Mr Nunn, the District Foreman advised the previous landowner had never gained access by using the track passed the bungalow at as at the bottom of the farm there was a track up the bank, which is why there is a culvert installed so access can be made over the bank. Mr Means advised he was not aware of any track at the bottom of the farm and there hadn't been since he'd been farming. In response Mr Nunn advised the new landowner had ploughed the all the land including the track when he took over the land, therefore removing their own access to their land.

The Chairman advised that using the track pass the bungalow was not to be used as an official access and Mr Nunn had a right to block any access by erecting a gate.

The Chairman reported the District Foreman had advised a sink hole had appeared at the front of the bungalow. He advised that a chequer plate had been placed over the hole to make it safe whilst repairs were being arranged. He further advised that access to the track passed the bungalow would be blocked off for Health & Safety reasons until repairs had been undertaken.

B.2086 Complaint to Middle Level

Further to minute B.2058, the Chairman to reported that Mr Burrows had proactively contacted him and arranged for a district visit with he and the Vice Chairman. The conversations were positive and improvements are already being made.

B.2087 Contravention of Byelaws

Trees Planted at drain from the Nordelph Pump to Crouches Reservoir, running parallel to Popham Eau.

Further to minute B.2061, Miss Ablett reported the trees had been removed by Mr P Sons in February.

B.2088 Clearance of Trees at Mumbys Drove.

Further to minute B.2062 (b), Miss Ablett reported that following the last Board meeting a letter had been sent advising the Board had offered to erect a post and wire fence along the boundary of the land at a cost to the Board. She further reported that a reply had been received expressing dis-satisfaction with the Board’s proposal. Miss Ablett advised that they had requested both the erection of a post and wire fence and the planting of a new hedge, to replace the boundary hedge that had been removed.

Miss Ablett reported the Assistant Clerk had advised she had discussed this with the Board’s Chairman, who was concerned that replacing the hedge would impede access when required in the future to undertake maintenance of the Old Croft River and he had requested the Assistant Clerk to contact the owner of Rallingham Hall to see if the land owner would agree to a gate being installed on the edge of the land, which would provide access to the river. Miss Ablett confirmed that the landowner had been advised he would be contacted regarding the proposals for the boundary when the issue of access had been resolved.

Miss Ablett enquired whether the Board wished to authorise the Chairman and Vice Chairman to resolve the issue regarding the boundary, once access for the Board had been secured.

RESOLVED

That once access has been secured, the Assistant Clerk is to discuss the options regarding the boundary with the Chairman and Vice Chairman before contacting the land owners.

That the Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to take any action considered necessary.

B.2089 The Old Croft Joint Maintenance Agreement

Further to minute B.2062 (a),

i) The Chairman reported that there was no formal written agreement relating to the maintenance of the old Croft River between Upwell IDB and Manea & Welney DDC. He advised that both he and the Chairman of Manea & Welney DDC considered it appropriate to formalise the arrangement and requested the Clerk to draw up an agreement on their behalf.

   The Chairman reported he had approved a draft agreement received from the Clerk and confirmed this had been sent to the Chairman of Manea & Welney DDC for his approval also.

   The Chairman advised the agreement stated the costs of maintaining the Old Croft River would be shared equally, however no changes had been made regarding the receipt of discharge contributions.

ii) The Chairman reminded Members that the inlet at the Old Bedford River brings the water into the Old Croft River to keep it full of water.

   He reported that the Environment Agency wanted to put a restriction on all inlets when irrigation was restricted so landowners within the District would receive an email advising them to close all inlets. The Chairman considered it was important to keep the inlet into the Old Croft River open as it was more of an environmental river rather than for irrigation purposes and none of the landowners used it for irrigation. He advised that after several conversations and various correspondence with the Environment Agency they had agreed not to apply the same rules to the inlet.

The Chairman considered this was an important result for the habitat of all the various wildlife.

Members thanked the Chairman for his input in regarding this matter.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman's actions be approved and the final agreement be signed.

B.2090 Clerk's Report

Miss Ablett advised;

i) 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

ii) 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.

iii) Changes to Electricity Supply Contracts

Miss Ablett reported 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.

Miss Ablett reported this was considered a positive move and recommended the Board also move to this alternative arrangement.

Miss Ablett reported 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.

Miss Ablett advised that the Middle Level Commissioners and its administered Boards have entered into a fixed rate energy supply with Corona Energy for an 18-month period from1st April 2023.

iv) 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.

v) Delegation of signatory on consents

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

vi) Service Delivery Frameworks

The Board were 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.

RESOLVED

a) Electricity Contract – that the Chairman’s actions be approved.

b) Delegation of signatories – that the Board approved delegation.

c) Service Delivery Frameworks - that Miss Ablett is authorised to enter into user and/or access agreements.

B.2091 Consulting Engineers’ Report.

The Board considered the Reports of the Consulting Engineers, viz;

Upwell I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – May 2023

Pumping Stations

Other than matters previously reported or detailed below only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant at each of the Stations appears to be mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition.

Cock Fen

The Board is asked to consider the information and recommendations presented in the Exception Report contained as Appendix 1 and to confirm its preferred approach based on the recommendations of the Consulting Engineer.

Nordelph

Anglia Farmers (AF) has still not been able to arrange a meeting with all parties to resolve the electricity meter issues. AF has been provided with estimates of monthly usage up to the end of the contract with them on 31st March 2023. AF has been asked not to take any further direct debit payments for Nordelph pumping station MPAN NO 1014572333330 until we have reviewed and agreed the usage.

Cranbrook/Counter Drain (CCD) Flood Risk Management (FRM) Strategy

The Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer continues to represent the Board on the Stakeholder Group and associated engagement with the relevant interested parties.

Ouse Washes Counter Drain Water Resources

At the time of writing, we are awaiting a final plan from the Environment Agency (EA) for operation of the Old Bedford sluice for the 2023 irrigation season. The Clerk will provide an update at the meeting.

Upwell Assets and other FDGiA Schemes

The cutting works were carried out by the District Officer and then the surveying of the culverts, as planned. A small additional piece of survey is needed to complete everything needed for the culvert at Duck Puddle Drove (Point 113). This is planned to be completed imminently to facilitate the drawings, cost estimates and project appraisal report to be produced and grant applied for as programmed.

Discussions have been held with the District Officer regarding the current condition of other culverts of the Old Croft River which solely serve access to private property and are therefore not deemed to be eligible for FDGiA money. The formal agreement with Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners regarding maintenance of the Old Croft River is in progress and contact with the property owners informing them of any maintenance, remedial works or replacement will be required after this.

Upwell IDB System Study

The FCRM7 form is due to commence, which will be used to apply for grant to have a full catchment study carried out by consultants. This study will allow for looking at the options for the various pumping stations and drain network as a whole and inform the business cases needed for future works to these assets. The Chief Engineer is currently reviewing all the IDB projects on the EA's FDGiA programme to ensure they can be delivered in the most efficient and timely manner possible. Please refer to the Supplementary Report – April 2023 Improving Capital Delivery for more information.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following new development related matters have been received and, where appropriate, dealt with since the last meeting:

MLC Ref.	Council Ref.	Applicant	Type of Development	Location
546	22/02099/F	Norse Commercial Services	Agricultural (Grain store)	Birchfield Road, Nordelph
547	F/YR22/1418/AG1	J A Scott & Partners	Agricultural (Extension)	Sixteen Foot Bank, Christchurch
548	F/YR23/0105/AG1	J A Scott & Partners	Agricultural (Extension)	Sixteen Foot Bank, Christchurch
549	23/00179/O	Elgood & Sons Ltd	Residential (4 plots)	Bedford Bank, Welney*
550	Pre-app	Client of Swann Edwards Architecture	Residential (3 plots)	Church Road, Christchurch
551	23/00079/F	Mrs I Forth	Residence (Conversion)	Squires Drove, Three Holes

Planning applications ending 'AG1' relate to Agricultural Notification

A development that is known to propose direct discharge is indicated with an asterisk. The remainder propose, where applicable and where known, disposal to soakaways, infiltration devices and/or Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The applicants have been notified of the Board's requirements.

Some of the above may discharge treated foul effluent water into the Board's system either via private treatment plants or Water Recycling Centres (WRC).

No applications for Infiltration Device Self Certification or the Checking Service have been received since the last meeting report.

Following the Board's resolution that detailed entries not be included in the planning section unless specifically requested, no detailed entries have been made within this report.

Planning Updates & Consultations

Please note that this document, which was prepared for the previous reporting period, is no longer available on the website; an update is currently being prepared and will hopefully be available shortly.

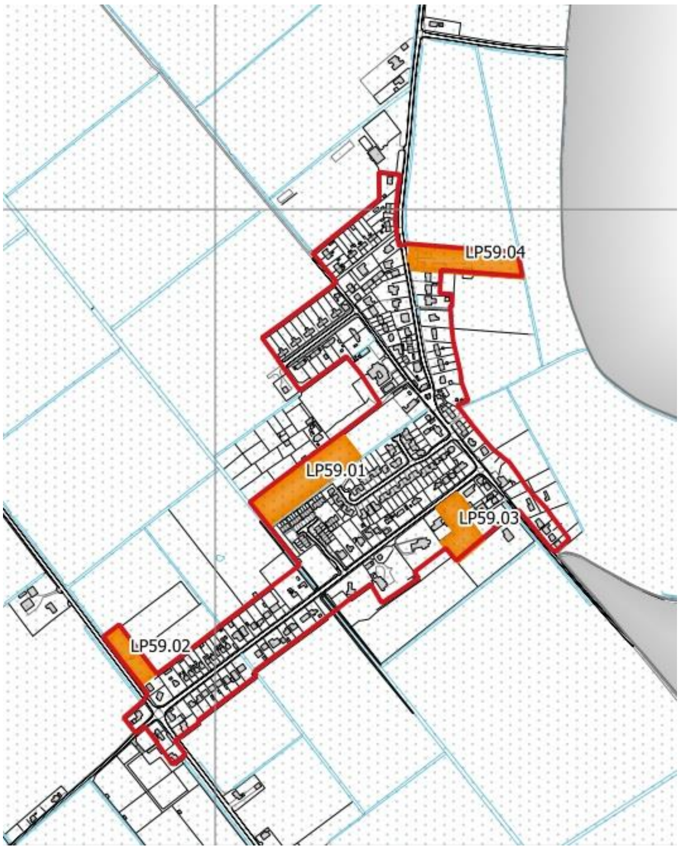
All responses to consultation documents were made on behalf of both the Middle Level Commissioners and the associated Boards.

Emerging Fenland Local Plan

The draft Local Plan which sets out the emerging policies and proposals for growth and regeneration, and the "proposed sites" to deliver this growth, was the subject of a Public Participation Consultation during September and October.

Proposed sites within the Board's catchment

The "proposed sites", are shown on the extract below from the Draft Policies Map (August 2022) Christchurch (Inset 03).



Extract from the Draft Policies Map (August 2022) Christchurch (Inset 03) showing the proposed sites in the Board's catchment

These sites are:

A. Policy Reference LP59.01 (Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment [SHELAA] Site reference 40463) – Land north west Syringa House – 23 dwellings.

B. Policy Reference LP59.02 (SHELAA Site reference 40369) – Land adjacent to the Ferns, Padgetts Road – 10 dwellings

A previous planning application for two dwellings on the south eastern part of this proposed site was refused planning permission with a subsequent appeal dismissed by The Planning Inspector FDC Ref No F/YR16/0472/O (MLC Ref No 438). This proposed site abuts the current floodplain extent as shown on the EA's Flood Map for Planning.

C. Policy Reference LP59.03 (SHELAA Site reference 40028) – Christchurch Memorial Hall – 9 dwellings

This site was the subject of previous planning applications FDC Ref No F/YR11/0693/F & F/YR12/0630/F (MLC Ref No 350 & 374).

D. Policy Reference LP59.04 (SHELAA Site reference 40059) – CFC Disposals Ltd – 16 dwellings

This site has been the subject of several previous planning applications including FDC Ref No F/YR16/1170/O (MLC Ref No 454) for 16 dwellings, a decision for which remains pending.

Response to the Consultation

A response was submitted to FDC on behalf of both the MLC and the associated Boards with catchments within the Council's area and included comments on:

The Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside – Frontage Infill Development
Growth Strategy – Neighbourhood Areas;
Health and Well-being; Renewable Energy – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Infrastructure
Design and Amenity – Policy LP 7: Design – Nature, Public Spaces, Homes and Buildings + Policy LP 11: Community Safety
Housing – Policy LP 12: Meeting Housing Needs - Homes for Permanent Caravan Dwellers/Park Homes and Boat Dwellers
Town Centres – Policy LP 17: Culture, Leisure, Tourism and Community Facilities - Community Facilities
Transport and Infrastructure – Strategic Infrastructure, Transport Infrastructure, Community Infrastructure, Wisbech Rail, Wisbech Access Strategy, Whittlesey Relief Road, Local Projects, Public Rights of Way (PRoW)
Natural Environment – Policy LP 24: Natural Environment_- Designated Sites, Local Sites, Habitats and Species of Principal Importance, Biodiversity and Geodiversity in development, Mitigation of Potential Adverse Impacts of Development
Policy LP 25: Biodiversity Net Gain + Policy LP 26: Carbon Sinks and Carbon Sequestration - Trees & Hedgerows + Table 8: Landscape Character Areas + Policy LP 29: Green Infrastructure
Flood and Water Management - Policy LP 32: Flood and Water Management

Specific comments included:

Disappointment was expressed that most of the contents of Part (B) Flood Risk and Drainage of Policy LP14 – Responding to Climate Change and Managing the Risk of Flooding in Fenland within the current Local Plan have not been included in this policy contained within the draft Local Plan 2021-2040. As a result, it is considered that the new policy is much weaker which is disappointing given the special water level and flood risk management requirements within the Fens.

Concerns were raised about the piecemeal development encountered within the Council's area, for example, along Upwell Road in March or the Bridge Lane area in Wimblington, which is resulting in many small and isolated attenuation systems which will be difficult to maintain and will be a future liability for the parties concerned, the failure of which could potentially increase flood risk. The Council was advised that the Middle Level Commissioners and associated Boards would prefer more holistic solutions to be utilised such as the pond excavated by Hutchinson's in conjunction with the Hundred of Wisbech IDB which will serve several developments in the area close to the A47/Cromwell Road junction.

Policies for Sites and Settlements

When responding to similar documents it has been noted that having prepared detailed responses to specific site allocations, which has taken a significant amount of officer time and expense, the responses made are ignored.

Therefore, as a result, with a few exceptions detailed responses on individual sites were not prepared but a list of minimum requirements that need to be considered was provided when determining the suitability of a proposed site.

Specific responses

Specific responses were made on the following sites:

Policy LP 6: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Infrastructure – Site Allocations LP06.01 SHELAA Site reference 40468 - 98.79 ha at Coldham Wind Farm, Elm + LP06.02 SHELAA Site reference 40469 174.29 ha at land adjacent to Graysmoor Drove, Elm.

Policy LP36: Residential site allocations for Wisbech (Page 118) (Map 28 Wisbech (Inset))

Policy LP46: Residential site allocations in Chatteris (Page 137) (Map 02 Chatteris (Inset))

Next Steps

All comments received during the consultation period are being reviewed with any changes arising being made to the draft Local Plan.

A Proposed Submission version is due to be published in summer 2023 for public consultation. This version of the plan will then be submitted together with any responses to the Secretary of State who will appoint an independent Planning Inspector to carry out a public examination into the document.

High Rainfall Event and Flooding Incident – December 2020

When attending meetings of the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Flood and Water (FloW) Partnership, the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer has raised concerns about the issues experienced within Cambridgeshire during or following high rainfall and/or exceptional circumstance type events and has enquired of other partners whether given the time that has elapsed any progress is being made to resolve some of the issues. To date the response has been limited.

In view of the above it is considered appropriate to advise the appropriate RMA, where relevant, on areas which experience problems, particularly within the urban environment, and requires protection, intervention and/or investment.

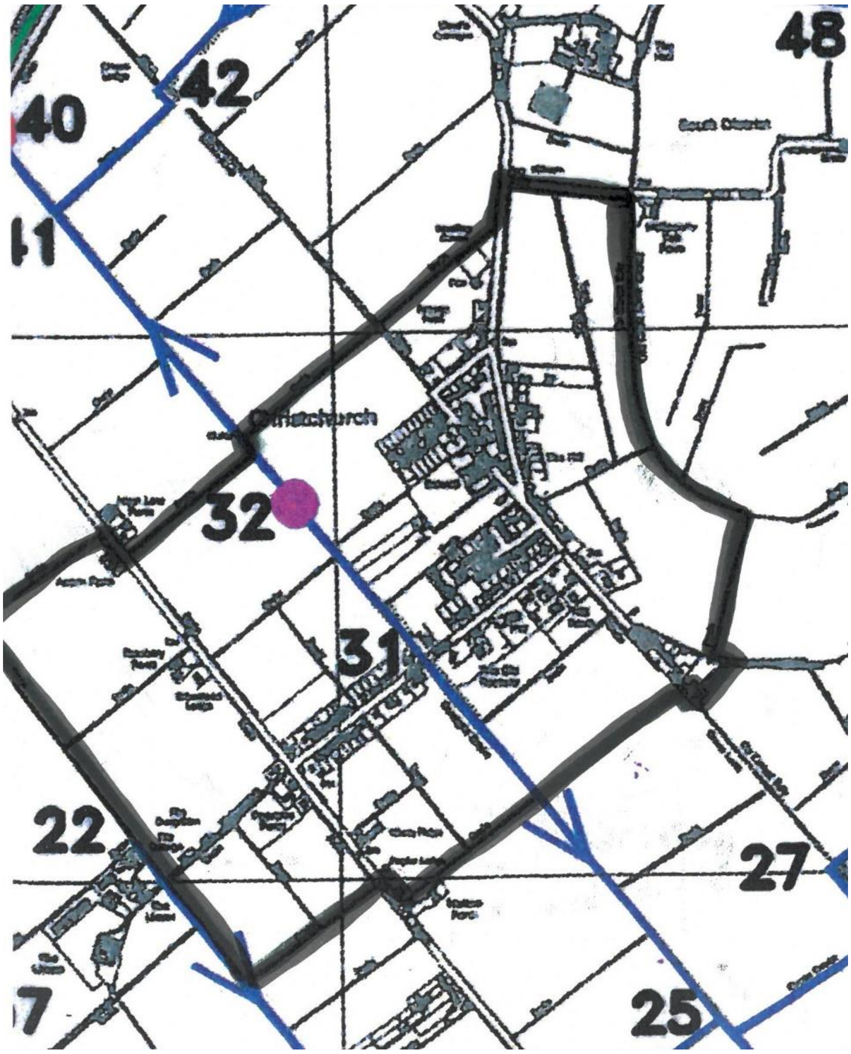
Initially, three areas of designation are proposed:

A. Business as usual - Areas where there are no known problems with the local water level and flood risk management systems that cannot be solved through the Boards "day-to-day activities".

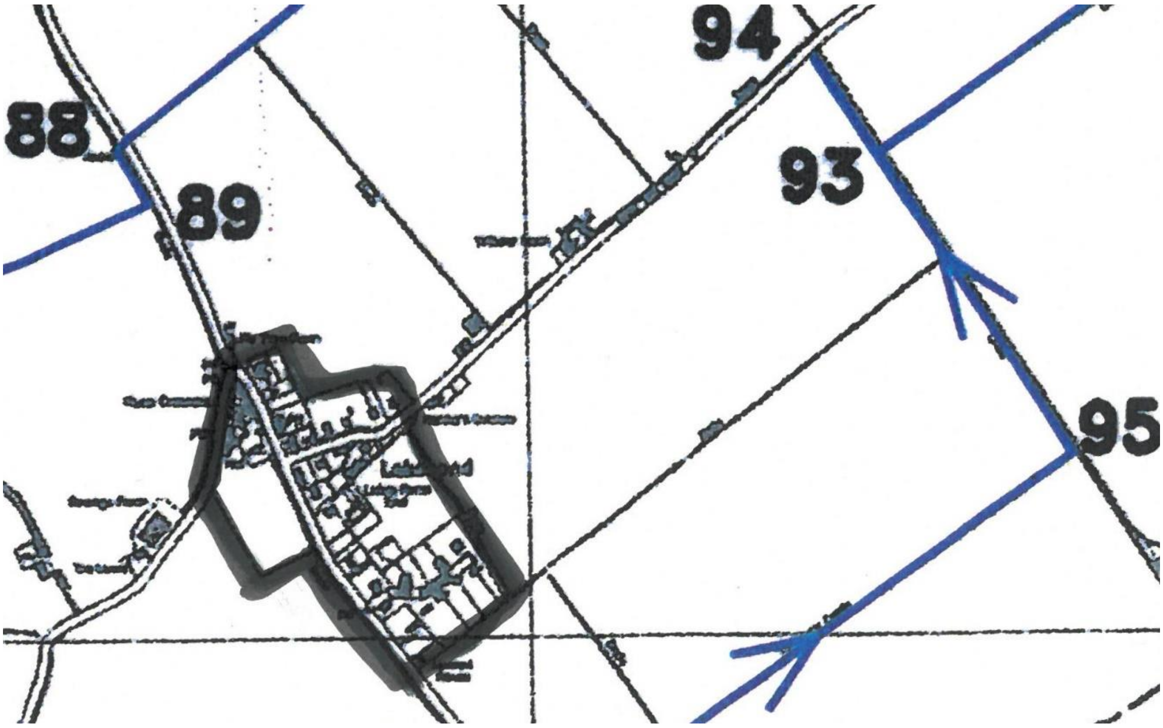
B. Areas of concern - An area served by a water level and flood risk management system that can approach capacity during rainfall events which has been the subject of or is at an increased risk of flooding that is unlikely to be solved through the Board's "day-to-day activities" and may require protection, intervention and/or investment by the relevant RMA(s).
C. Acute drainage areas – A geographical area with multiple or interlinked sources of flood risk where there is a need for a higher standard of water level and flood risk management than normal to ensure that any new development will not increase flood risk that affects people, properties and local infrastructure and may require protection, intervention and/or investment by the relevant RMA(s).

Neither items B nor C are the same as a "critical drainage area" which has a specific meaning in flood risk terms i.e., "A Critical Drainage Area (CDA) is an area that has critical drainage problems and which has been notified to the local planning authority as such by the Environment Agency in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)."

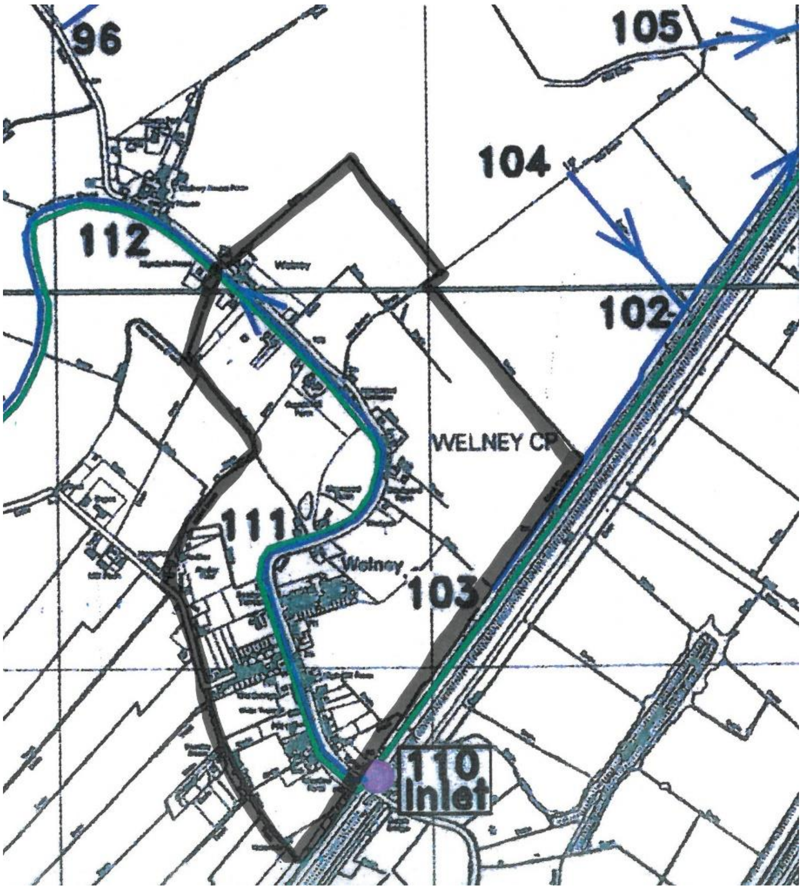
A review of the potential extents of either an "area of concern" and/or "Acute drainage areas" within the Board's catchment has been undertaken and are shown on the following extracts.



Extract showing the extent of the areas of concern within Christchurch



Extract showing the areas of concern within Lakes End



Extract showing the extent of the areas of concern in Welney

The intention is to highlight this area to the relevant RMA e.g., planning authorities, LLFA, Anglian Water, the EA etc., as an area which requires more involved management and will assist in protecting the local flood and water management systems including the Board's system.

As a result, apart from in the most exceptional circumstances, an initial request is that all water discharges within this area must be attenuated to current volumes and/or greenfield rates of run off, where practicable.

Following discussions, colleagues within the Middle Level Commissioners' Works Department advise that following the December 2020 event the MLC system took up to ten days, and IDB systems up to five days, to return to normal.

It is also considered that current surface water design practices do not allow for the weather conditions experienced prior to the December 2020 event or the complex network of water level and flood risk management systems within the Fens. Therefore, consideration is being given to requiring designs to:

1. Incorporate a higher Standard of Protection (SoP), possibly up to 0.5% AEP (1 in 200 year) event
2. Include a greater allowance for Climate Change, in excess of 40%, and
3. Be able to "store" water on site for several days until the peak flows have passed.

Strategic Drainage and Wastewater consultation and issues

A. The Right to Connect

Members will recall that during the passage of the Environment Act through the House of Lords an amendment was sought which aimed to minimise the impact of new housing development on levels of local flood risk and the likelihood of storm discharges of untreated sewerage effluent into the water environment. It aimed to ensure housing developers design systems according to a hierarchy of drainage options that seek to reduce to a minimum the volume of rainwater entering combined sewerage systems removing the current "right to connect" to public sewers.

On the basis that the various RMA involved could have been asked to consider taking the opportunity to write to the government and voice their concerns over the right to connect for new developments the views of the Boards administered by the Middle Level Commissioners were sought.

The amendment was not moved and the House of Lords were not invited to take a decision on it. The Environment Act received Royal Assent in November 2021.

However, the results of the Boards who provided a positive response is as follows:

For the removal of the Right To Connect	54%
Against the removal of the Right To Connect	23%
Neither for or against the Right To Connect	18%
Not an issue for the Board	5%

The discharge from sewers can cause several challenges including increased flood risk, pollution and water quality issues, the solution to which is often at the rate payers' expense. Unsurprisingly the majority, but not all, of the Boards supporting the removal of the right either served or were detrimentally affected by areas of urban development.

Of those Boards against the removal some only served small urban areas with a limited number of sewers. Others served urban areas but only one received significant "benefit".

The Board that neither opposes nor supports the removal served a significant urban area but the remainder served a limited number of, or have no, adopted sewers within their catchments.

Other comments received expressed:

A. Concerns about the lack of investment and the need for improvement to the existing adopted infrastructure and;
B. Suggested that the permission to connect should be on an approval basis so that it can be controlled and any impacts managed and;
C. Required the Clerk to promote and lobby the Board's position.

Some Boards are more rural whilst others feature a larger urban area. Similarly, a larger individual Board may be predominantly rural but include a sub-catchment(s) which is largely, and increasingly, an urban environment which has to accommodate the resultant flows.

Therefore, it is considered that it would be difficult to have a simple yes/no solution within a complex system such as The Fens.

B. Anglian Water Drainage & Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP)

Draft DWMP

A more detailed review of the DWMP will be included in the updated version of the Strategic Planning Consultation Responses document currently being prepared. However, it is considered appropriate to include specific entries for the relevant WRCs of interest in the local area.

1. Draft DWMP Consultation

The draft DWMP document has been the subject of a consultation which provided an opportunity to comment on the document and included the following specific points:

Groundwater infiltration & surface water removal

The problems associated with groundwater infiltration and surface water within the sewer system, particularly within combined systems, are known and are a problem for all RMAs involved. Particularly when the water table is high and/or during the winter months.

The removal of groundwater infiltration and surface water from the sewerage system, to reduce the number of flood events, pollutions and storm overflow spills is considered to be an appropriate option in the correct circumstances and location.

The question that will need to be resolved in these situations is where will the surface water go instead? Most other surface water systems are approaching their finite capacity and will require the installation of significant infrastructure to deal with the flows. Who will pay and be responsible for this? Care will also need to be taken to ensure that flood risk is not being increased elsewhere within the WRCs catchment for another RMA to deal with as a result.

As the approval and consent of other RMAs may also be required, prior detailed consultation with the parties involved MUST be undertaken and agreed BEFORE work commences.

(NB: In respect of this document, infiltration refers to groundwater entering the sewer system which **increases hydraulic loadings and threatens wastewater treatment efficiency**.)

Water level Management Solutions

The use of SuDS, wetlands and other green structures is considered to be an appropriate option in the correct circumstances and location.

The management of SuDS and other water level management systems is an ongoing challenge for many RMAs. Without suitable arrangements being imposed these could simply become potential liabilities for the various rate/bill payers. Therefore, adequate arrangements MUST be made to ensure that the long-term ownership funding, management and maintenance for the upkeep of any green infrastructure, whether on or off site, in perpetuity is achieved.

Consideration also needs to be given to any restrictions upon maintenance of the drainage “facility” due to the presence of protected habitats and species.

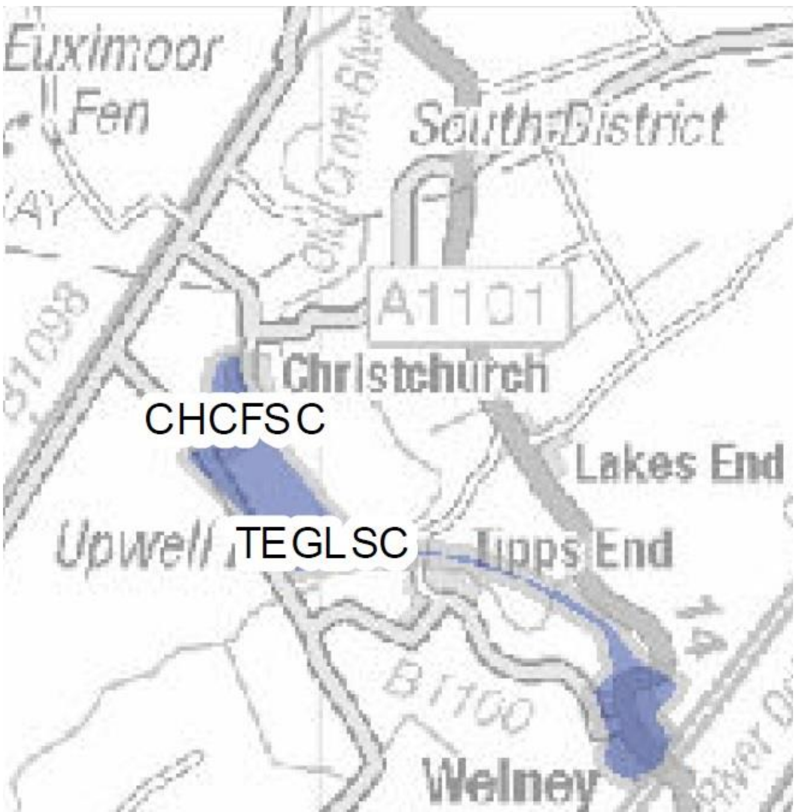
As the approval and consent of other RMAs may also be required, prior detailed consultation with the parties involved MUST be undertaken and agreed BEFORE work commences.

Partnership Working

The Commissioners and associated Boards are prepared to work in partnership with the local community, private and public partners to contribute to and deliver schemes for conservation, navigation, water resources, water level & flood risk management where there is a mutual benefit to the partners concerned.

However, to what extent they are prepared to contribute would be the subject of a decision for the respective authority and this may vary dependent upon their views.

2. Programme outputs



Tipps End WRC

This WRC serves Welney, Tipps End and Christchurch. An increase in population of 138 by 2050 was used in the BRAVA/RBCS process but, being a relatively new facility, this increase is likely to have been included in the original design. Despite the raising of concerns no risk has been identified and a “wait and see” approach has been suggested by Anglian Water.

Extract from Anglian Water’s Risk Based Catchment Screening (RBCS) Map showing the extent of the WRC catchments in the Board’s area

Christchurch - Fen View WRC

This WRC currently serves a population of 346. An increase in population across the catchment of 72 (21%) by 2050 was used in the BRAVA/RBCS process. Several concerns were raised during the process but a strategy has not been proposed for either the medium or long term.

WRC Compliance

The quality of the discharge does not appear to be a cause for concern. However, members will be aware of Natural England’s concerns about nutrients affecting the aquatic environment.

L3 water recycling catchment	2021 population	2035 population	2050 population	Passed RBCS	Resilience score
CHRISTCHURCH - FEN VIEW	346	392	418	No	0
TIPPS END	236	360	374	Yes	0

Extracts from Anglian Water’s draft Drainage and Wastewater Management plan showing the results and proposed plans for Christchurch – Fen View and Tipps End WRC

Planning objective themes reviewed	Stakeholder concerns/comments	Medium term strategy	2050 strategy	Partnership opportunitie identified
-	Flood risk implications.	-	-	-
Escape from sewers WRC compliance Environment and wellbeing	Flood risk implications.	No risk identified.	Wait and see.	-

The final DWMP document is currently being prepared and is due to be published this spring.

3. Storm Overflow Consultation

A consultation exercise on Storm Overflow Discharges was held during February. In view of the concerns discussed above it was considered appropriate to consult all the administered Boards even though many would not be directly affected.

The main means of providing a response was to provide answers to five specific questions and, whilst responses were provided, in view of the nature of the matter; the responses received from the Boards consulted and given that the issue is rising up the political agenda it was considered that a more detailed and focused response was required.

The following are the headlines or a brief resume of the response:

A. **Existing sewer systems and problems**
   1. The Right to Connect – As discussed elsewhere in this Report
   2. Other issues – On going pollution problems, the surcharging of or high discharges during or following high rainfall events, the lack of capacity within WRCs.

B. **General**

   It is considered that all the current targets are too vague and will take too long to achieve any meaningful results and that the consultation was not open and transparent as the locations of the points of discharge are not readily identified within the document, therefore making it difficult to provide a meaningful comment.

   Advice was given that:

   Most of our systems are pumped often remaining stationary for extended periods thus dilution may not occur as expected; water is abstracted for various purposes – see High Priority Sites – Public Health below; the adverse impact on areas of interest including designated environmental sites; and that no "compensation" is provided for having to receive, transfer and dispose of the discharges from the overflows.

C. **Storm Flow Technical Overview**

High Priority Sites

1. Ecology

a. *Environment targets*

   It is considered that these targets should apply to **all** sites not just high priority ones, with solutions implemented much sooner than identified if the Government's target of halting biodiversity decline is to be achieved and the goals of the Water Framework Directive and the 25 year environment plan are to be achieved.

b. *Sensitive Inland Water*

Reference was made to the proximity of trigger points.

2. Public Health

The document refers to Designated Shellfish Water and Designated Bathing Water as trigger points which is understood, but it is not appreciated that vast quantities of water are abstracted from Fenland water level management systems for agricultural use, whether this is washing or irrigating crops for consumption within the food chain.

It was suggested that it would be prudent for the trigger points to be reviewed to include those other items which could affect public health on a wider scale.

Potable Water

Reference was made concerning the use of excess water from both the Commissioners' and surrounding systems to fill the proposed Fens Reservoir and the potential benefits of improving water quality from the discharges into these watercourses.

3. Amenity

Emphasis is given to bathing waters but no reference is made to other wider but perhaps smaller benefits on the Commissioners' largely navigable systems and the disposal of sewage into these watercourses may have an adverse impact on wider issues, for example, tourism, angling etc or if these wider "costs" are considered when assessing the adverse impacts of overflows on the local area.

4. Assessing spill frequency

Event data Monitors

a. From a closer review it was identified that some of the discharges of interest including Doddington, Nightlayers and Ramsey WRCs are not fitted with Event Data Monitors. Therefore, it is not known how the number of spills can be fully assessed.

   Event Duration Monitors will be installed on all of Anglian Water's overflows during Asset Management Plan (AMP) period 7 (2020-2025) and this will, hopefully, reduce the level of uncertainty during AMP 8 (2025-2030) and AMP 9 (2030-2035) by producing "real" data.

b. Rainfall target: Storm overflows will not be permitted to discharge above an average of 10 rainfall events per year by 2050 but this target should be more defined including restriction on the duration of spills and the volume discharged. This may be difficult to achieve. The Standard of Protection (SoP) provided, the use of "typical" rather than excessive rainfall events and modelling of the various systems to identify potential problem overflows rather than actual data – the number of spills, duration of the spills etc was questioned.

Growth

The growth that has occurred in the last fifty years has contributed to the increased number and length of spills and this will only become more severe as further growth continues unless adequate steps are taken <u>now</u> to resolve these as a matter of urgency.

Climate Change

It would be appropriate for all RMAs to prepare for the worst-case scenario and there is an aspiration to achieve this but this could be expensive, may prove unnecessary and wasteful leading to criticism. It was suggested that the most economic and environmentally acceptable standard should be achieved.

Screening

It would be beneficial to know where these initial overflows are located.

D. **Storm Overflow Consultation**

<u>Performance Guide</u>

It appears that priority is given to the number of spills rather than the length of time of the discharge, the volume of flow being discharged or the cumulative effects of the overflows due to their close proximity to each other.

<u>Preferred Plan</u>

It would be beneficial if the “headlines” from assessments and guidance on suggested solutions could be provided to identify and instigate any early engagement with the parties concerned, for example, land owners, developers etc.

<u>Customer Support</u>

Reference was made in the document to continual engagement with customers but there appears to be limited engagement with those RMA who have to receive the flows from the storm overflows.

It was suggested that such engagement commences and both the Commissioners and associated Boards look forward to continual engagement and transparency on storm overflows and networks in the future.

E. **Consultation Questionnaire**

The answers to the questionnaire were generally included in the response, but in reply to the question *How confident are you that this strategy aligns with our Purpose?* A very low confidence comment was provided adding that some of the systems cannot be managed without significant investment and improvement works being required on several networks.

F. **Summary**

Whilst it pleasing that the issue of sewage overflows is being progressed this appears to be primarily due to political pressure rather than at the instigation of the water industry.

There are concerns that priority will be given to resolving issues associated with storm overflows rather than those existing problems associated with WRCs and associated systems.

Greater transparency, early engagement and further discussions should be undertaken to any issues related to adoptable sewer systems and storm overflows if the current problems are to be resolved.

The final DWMP document is currently being prepared and is due to be published this spring.

C. Review for implementation of Schedule 3 to The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (F&WMA)

The Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) details the provision of comprehensive flood management to protect people, homes, and businesses. It is written to protect water supplies to the consumer and helps safeguard community groups from unaffordable rises in surface water drainage charges. The Act introduces into law the concept of flood risk management as the preferred approach rather than reliance on flood defences (existing or proposed) for protection of sites.

1. Schedule 3

   Schedule 3 of the FWMA was introduced to establish a SuDS approving body (SAB) at the county/unitary level for the regulation of new development and compliance with The Act. It was intended that this Schedule would be introduced into law around 2015/2016, following the original Act that achieved royal ascent in 2010 but this did not happen and Schedule 3 did not achieve approval due to concerns that it would restrict housing delivery and growth.

   Instead, the government made amendments to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) to stipulate those decisions on planning applications relating to major developments (over 10 dwellings, or equivalent non-residential developments) should ensure that SuDS are put in place, unless demonstrated to be inappropriate. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) in consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) currently need to approve drainage schemes and ensure they are appropriately maintained.

Currently the maintenance of a development typically falls under the responsibility of a Private Maintenance Company (PMC) which is usually paid for using service charge agreements with the owners of the new properties and often selling residential properties as leasehold rather than freehold.

2. Review

   In early December industry experts sent an open letter to the Prime Minister which “strongly urged” the implementation of Schedule 3.
   Following a review, DEFRA announced in January 2023, the government’s decision to implement Schedule 3 which will provide a framework for the approval and adoption of high quality SuDS and is expected to occur at a yet to be determined date in 2024. As a result, the Government is giving consideration to how this will be implemented subject to final decisions on scope, threshold and process whilst being mindful of the cumulative impact of new regulatory burdens on the development sector and water industry. Defra recently undertook a consultation survey with LPAs and LLFAs but not with IDBs and other relevant parties. However, there are several issues and challenges that require resolution before progressing further.

3. Changes to existing laws

   The implementation of Schedule 3 will introduce some small changes to three existing laws.

   a) Building Act 1984

      Section 59 which gives local authorities the power to request that sustainable drainage systems in an unsatisfactory condition be renewed, repaired or cleansed is to be amended.

      Section 84 which stipulates that local authorities withhold the right to request that impermeable surfaces around a building which do not allow for the satisfactory drainage of its surface or subsoil be remedied requires amendment to specify that surfaces need to remove water in a satisfactory manner.

   b) New Roads and Street Works Act 1991

      Section 63 will include a small change should Schedule 3 be enacted.

   c) Water Industry Act 1991

Section 106 to remove the right to connect. Following Schedule 3's commencement, a person may only exercise this right if their drainage system was approved by an SAB before construction and if a proposal for their drainage system to communicate with a sewer was included in their application for approval.

The NPPF and the associated PPG will require amending to reflect any changes.

4. Implementation

Whilst there will be some changes to current procedures it is considered that there are several potential benefits including better working practices, better integration with other RMA, the removal of the automatic right to connect, potential revenue streams etc but there are several potential problems that need to be resolved including funding mechanisms; potential increased costs on the rate payer; lack of resources, skills and capabilities; the need for more timely responses possibly taking staff members from other work.

The proposal is the subject of on-going discussions and a meeting with the LLFAs and other partners has been requested to discuss the issues in order to maximise any opportunities and minimise any adverse impacts on both the Middle Level Commissioners and the Boards to whom it provides a planning consultancy service.

These discussions will include, as a minimum:

a) The suggested change in surface water design practice, as discussed elsewhere in this report.

b) Ensuring that adequate arrangements are made for long term ownership funding, management and maintenance arrangements for the upkeep of any water level and flood risk management system, whether on or off site, in perpetuity including details of the works to be carried out by the occupier/land owner, adopting authority, the Management Company or other responsible person/authority, together with the costs attached, are included in the "Homeowners Pack" and the Deed of Sale.

c) The right to connect needs to be on an approval basis to ensure that it can be controlled and any adverse impacts managed.

d) That any incurred costs on the rate payer are kept to a minimum.

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

A query was received from Norfolk County Council in January concerning the previous flooding at Lake Avenue, Lakes End to which the Board's Chair confirmed that nothing further had been heard from the parties involved.

Norfolk Water Strategy Programme (NWSP)

The current position is being ascertained.

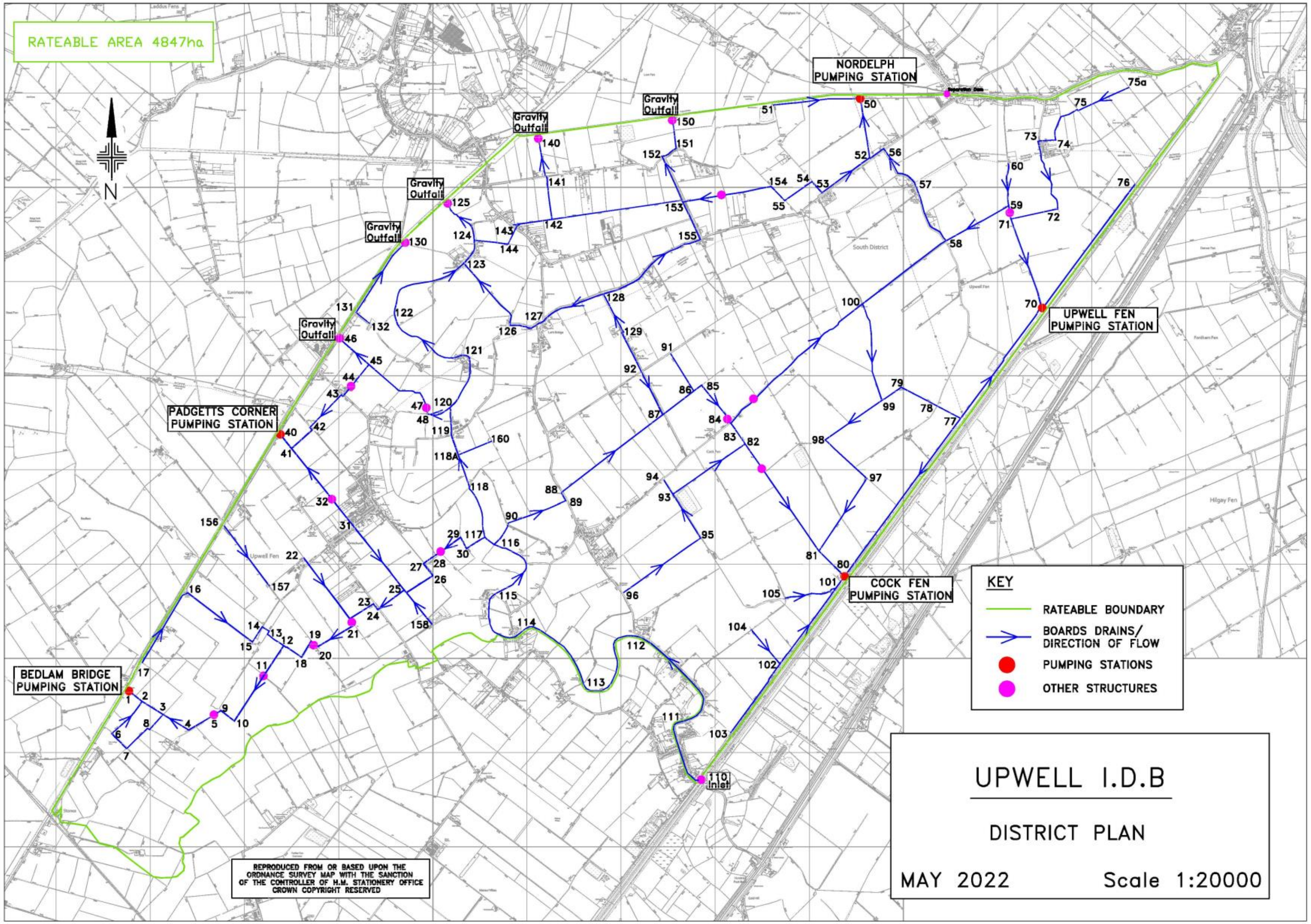
General Advice

Assistance has been given, on the Board's behalf, in respect of the following:

(a) Mr D Partridge – An application for byelaw consent for the installation of 15 field underdrain outfalls into the Board's watercourse between Points 50 and 51 near to Nordelph Pump Station was recommended for approval.

Consulting Engineer

9 May 2023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UPWELL FEN PUMPING STATION
COCK FEN PUMPING STATION
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Inlet
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RATEABLE BOUNDARY
BOARDS DRAINS/ DIRECTION OF FLOW
PUMPING STATIONS
OTHER STRUCTURES
UPWELL I.D.B
DISTRICT PLAN
MAY 2022
Scale 1:20000
REPRODUCED FROM OR BASED UPON THE ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE SANCTION OF THE CONTROLLER OF H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED

PROJECT DOCUMENTATION

EXCEPTION REPORT

Project name	Cock Fen Pumping Station
Project no.	-
Author	Nicola Oldfield, Chief Engineer
Date	April 2023
Doc Ref	CockFenException1.docx
Version	1

Contents

Report History

Document Location (for MLC use only)

The source of the document will be found at this location here

Revision History

Revision date	Summary of Changes	Version
-	-	-

Approvals

Name	Title	Signature	Date	Version
Paul Burrows	Chief Executive		20/4/2023	1
Ken Goodger	Chairman, Upwell IDB		21/4/2023	1

Distribution

Name	Title	Date	Version
-	Upwell IDB Board	May 2023	1

1. Exception title

Delay to the delivery of electrification of the pumping station (Option 2 dated 24 March 2020).

2. Background

Reference the minutes of the 18 January 2021 Board meeting, considerations and resolutions summarised as follows.

The Finance Committee had met to discuss further the electrification of Cock Fen pumping station. A quotation had been received from UK Power Networks in the region of £85,000.00 for the installation of a 3-phase electricity supply and added this also included legal costs for obtaining permission for the installation from the Environment Agency.

UK Power Networks had advised they were unable to commence works until March 2022.

At the last meeting the Board had resolved to approve Option 3, estimated at £233,000.00. However, having spoken with the Consulting Engineer, and after due consideration, the Chairman and Vice Chairman had opted to proceed with Option 2 instead.

Following receipt of a formal tender from Rands in the sum of £121,184.00 and a quotation from UK Power Networks in the sum of £85,000.00, the total project costs would be in the region of £252,000.00.

Approval to borrow £300,000.00 over 30 years from the Public Works Loan Board had been approved by the Environment Agency and Defra. This was subsequently drawn-down in full.

Invoices in the region of £75,500.00 would be payable between February and July 2021.

It was confirmed at a meeting between MLC and The Chair and Vice Chair of the Board on 12 April 2023 that drivers for the project were accessibility issues to the PS (it is remote), demand on resources to operate the pumps and desired automation of the site leading to less labour costs in the future and better pumping reliability.

3. Cause of the exception

The exception was raised by the incoming Chief Engineer on 28 February 2023 and the situation investigated with the MLC Solicitor and M&E Engineer.

The main issue impacting delivery timescales at the moment is the completion of the wayleave agreement with third-party landowner South Yorkshire Pension Company. A previous request from Yorkshire Pensions for payment of £12.5k for an easement was refused by the Board.

UKPN have stated that once an agreement has been made, it could take 12 weeks for the legals to complete and a further 12 weeks to plan and execute the works. The concern was that if these matters were not resolved by 14 March, delivery of the works would be delayed by a further 12 months.

UKPN stated in an email dated 8 March 2023:

> "The Section 37 Overhead Line Consent must stipulate a Start Date and as Consents are not currently in place for the Substation Access we have agreed a Start Date of Sept 2024. If this is missed this will void the Consent, so it is imperative that the Substation Access Consent is completed prior to this date."

UKPN further stated the need for a consent from Natural England for new overhead cables proposed from the substation at Welney, along Bedford Bank to Cock Fen Pumping Station. This includes a requirement to upgrade the existing 11kv line with BLX Conductor and stout poles to reduce the impact of bird strikes.

A concrete base is needed for the substation. Although this can be constructed by a separate contractor, it is considered to be a high-risk approach. Following discussions with the Board Chair and Vice Chair, and subsequent internal discussions on 8 February 2023, the M&E Engineer has requested a quote for this work from UKPN. This will mitigate risk associated with:

1. The design/construction not being suitable for the substation.
2. Delivery timescales can be controlled by UKPN and programmed to suit the overall delivery.

The quote has now been received and is detailed later in this report.

4. Consequences of deviation

1. There is a further delay to delivery while the legal agreement with Yorkshire Pensions is being completed.
2. UKPN have submitted a revised quote for the work and confirmed a start date under Section 37. If this date is missed, the Section 37 process has to be started again.

With significant price rises (inflation) since the project started, it is expected that the total out-turn cost of the project will be around £300k compared to the estimate of £252k presented to the Board on 18 January 2021.

Cost summary

Item	Original estimate (£)	Variation (£)	Total cost (£)
Rands (Motors & control panel)	121,184	0	121,184
UKPN (Electricity supply)	85,000	42,000	147,000
UKPN (Bunded substation base)	10,000	10,000	
Other – civils/fees	35,816	0	35,816
Legal costs	TBC*	TBC*	TBC*
Grand total	**252,000**	**52,000**	**304,000**

**Initial request for the easement agreement was £12,500.*

Expenditure to date: £155,830

Total available budget: £300,000 (Public Works Loan)

Total anticipated expenditure: £304,000

5. Options for mitigation

Given the delay and cost increases a number of options are proposed for the Board to consider as follows. Consideration was given to the condition of the existing pumps and engines and anticipated future work.

The Board are asked to clarify what the original objective/driver was for the electrification and help determine whether it is still valid.

Option 1 – Continue with electrification

The delivery of the project depends on a number of third parties whose input (timing) is difficult to control, especially where legal agreements are concerned.

Legal agreements are now almost completed and a start date has been set by UKNP of September 2024 under the Section 37.

However, there is some risk associated with staring this late in the season (wet weather) and working adjacent to the environmentally designated site of the Ouse Washes.

The panels and motors won't be installed until Spring 2025 (to ensure the pumps are running over the winter) and a small backup generator will be employed to charge the diesel engines. Alternatively, panels and motors could be installed first with a more costly backup generator to provide resilience during the winter to mitigate the risk of the 3-phase connection not being completed.

Pros: Money has already been spent (motors and panels); legal agreements are almost completed as per the project objectives.

Cons: Electricity supply costs have increased to similar to diesel; UKPN have a set start date of Sept 2024 under the Section 37; generator costs should be considered when considering the timing of panel/motor installation; existing pumps will need overhaul or replacement in 5-10 years resulting in additional capital cost; no backup power.

The original proposal also identified the need to for a backup generator which does not appear to have been factored into the costs.

Option 2 – Pause electrification and install a backup generator

Pause 3-phase electrification, install control panels and motors and provide backup generator.

Pros: A full appraisal of options for the pumping station can be done; this could result in a grant-aided refurbishment scheme; The £85k already paid to UKPN would be refunded less any legal/consenting costs already incurred.

Cons: Backup generator is expensive – a ballpark estimate has been requested but not yet received; Money has already been spent (motors and panels); There is a small risk that the generator also fails. 20/4/23 Update. Ballpark estimate for generator £50k plus £5k panel modification to allow generator to be started on demand of pump run.

Option 3 – Replace the existing diesel engines

Replace the engines with new, more efficient and reliable diesel engines.

Pros: Improved reliability and potential reduced running costs in the current economic climate; proactive approach to replacing end-of life assets can be combined with pump replacement; Could result in a grant-aided refurbishment scheme; The £85k already paid to UKPN would be refunded less any legal/consenting costs already incurred.

Cons: Money has already been spent (motors and panels); Board has already taken out a Public Works loan.

Risks

The following general risks have been identified:

RISK: Any programme overrun by UKPN or Rands will push into the pumping season, possibly resulting in no supply through winter. MITIGATION: Provide small backup generator; Remove the single phase supply at the start of the working window and install control panel once new supply is in. Back up generation is then only needed for a small supply rather than full pumping capacity.

RISK: The motors and control panel are currently vested at Rands, free of charge. Rands might charge a fee for ongoing storage/insurance. MITIGATION: Allow additional budget.

RISK: In the current economic climate it is possible that electricity supply costs will continue to increase. It is anticipated that diesel will be comparatively cheaper in 2024. MITIGATION: Assess impact on running costs.

RISK: The motors and control panel could be redundant if the electrification doesn't progress. MITIGATION: The control panel is bespoke but could be resold along with the motors with, possibly, up to 50% return.

6. Fuel costs

With electricity costs increasing significantly at the current time, the M&E Engineer has undertaken a cost comparison assessment as follows.

The pump hours and diesel stock and delivery information back to 2019 showed an average diesel use per hour of pumping of 20 litres per hour. This was used to estimate usage for annual pumping hours ranging from 0 to 1000 hours. The 2022 pumping hours was 111 and the highest recorded in the last 10 years was 903 hours, so 0 to 1000 gives a decent range. Previous electricity usage predicts how much is used by the single-phase supply for the weedscreen and control system.

To estimate electricity usage on 3 phase supply and electric motors used for pumping data from other stations was interrogated and adapted to suit Cock Fen to produce some ball park estimates.

For the electricity costs the average of base kwh rates, £0.30/kwh for 2022 and £0.5/kwh for 2023 with no allowance for day / night rates for pumping, was used. This excludes any 2022 allowance for the Anglia Farmers' surcharges or the government discount which would require a much more in-depth analysis of electricity invoices.

The table overleaf gives estimates for annual pumping hours from 0 to 1000 hours, with diesel prices of £0.50, £0.80 and £1.10 per litre and electricity costs at 2022 and 2023 rates. It includes a row for 111 hours to show actual 2022/23 usage. No diesel was purchased during this time, some of the diesel in stock had been purchased at £0.49/l and the majority at £0.67/l. The electricity rates used are £0.30/kwh for 2022 and £0.5/kwh for 2023 plus the standing charges which have increased dramatically from April 2023.

Pumping hours and costs

TOTAL ANNUAL COST ESTIMATE								
Annual Pumping Hours	**Pumping on diesel**			**Pumping on Elec**	**Pumping on diesel**			**Pumping on Elec**
	£0.5/L, 2022 elec	£0.8/L, 2022 elec	£1.1/l ,2022 elec	Elec cost, 2022 rates	£0.5/L, 2023 elec	£0.8/L, 2023 elec	£1.1/l, 2023 elec	elec 2023 rates
0	540.00	540.00	540.00	6000.00	840.00	840.00	840.00	13000.00
100	1540.00	2140.00	2740.00	8250.00	1840.00	2440.00	3040.00	16750.00
111	1650.00	2316.00	2982.00	8497.50	1950.00	2616.00	3282.00	17162.50
200	2594.00	3794.00	4994.00	10500.00	2924.00	4124.00	5324.00	20500.00
300	3653.40	5453.40	7253.40	12750.00	4016.40	5816.40	7616.40	24250.00
400	4718.74	7118.74	9518.74	15000.00	5118.04	7518.04	9918.04	28000.00
500	5790.61	8790.61	11790.61	17250.00	6229.84	9229.84	12229.84	31750.00
600	6869.68	10469.68	14069.68	19500.00	7352.83	10952.83	14552.83	35500.00
700	7956.64	12156.64	16356.64	21750.00	8488.11	12688.11	16888.11	39250.00
800	9052.31	13852.31	18652.31	24000.00	9636.92	14436.92	19236.92	43000.00
900	10157.54	15557.54	20957.54	26250.00	10800.61	16200.61	21600.61	46750.00
1,000	11273.29	17273.29	23273.29	28500.00	11980.68	17980.68	23980.68	50500.00

The tabulated estimates below show it is considerably cheaper to run on diesel than electric, which is mainly influenced by the high standing charges of the electricity supply. To try to form a simple energy only (no standing charges, no engine maintenance) comparison an estimated equivalent cost per Kw/h when running on diesel i.e. what has is cost to produce the power on diesel has been calculated. For example, at current diesel cost of around £0.78 the equivalent electricity cost is around £0.25. The current electricity tariff is around £0.50 (£0.45 night,£0.55 day) so diesel is producing the power much cheaper than grid supply.

Cost to produce the power on diesel

Diesel cost £/l	**£/ kwh**
0.45	0.14
0.5	0.16
0.55	0.18
0.6	0.19
0.65	0.21
0.7	0.22
0.75	0.24
0.8	0.26
0.85	0.27
0.9	0.29
0.95	0.30
1	0.32
1.05	0.33
1.1	0.35
1.15	0.37
1.2	0.38

All these figures are estimates based on experience and information available from similar sites, they are estimates, not actuals.

7. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board reviews its objectives for the pumping station, including confirming the budgetary tolerances the consulting engineers are to manage within.

If these are still valid, it is recommended that:

1. The Board accepts the revised quote received from UKPN for the cable installation and construction of substation base,
2. The Vice Chairman contacts Bidwells to hasten the completion of the easement agreement,
3. MLC Solicitor to confirmation that MLC can sign the easement and UKPN be provided with proof of easement,
4. The MLC Solicitor begins a possessory title process in parallel with easement negotiations,
5. The Board accepts that revised programme proposed by UKPN with a start date of September 2024.

However, if the objectives are no longer valid, it is recommended that:

6. The easement agreement be completed,
7. The Board agrees to pause electrification, and agrees a new set of objectives,
8. The Board instructs the MLC Engineer to review the options to deliver those objectives,
9. The Board considers installing the panels, motors and a backup generator.

8. Lessons

The objectives of new projects should be clearly defined by the Board, documented by the MLC Engineer and agreed by both parties. This should include acceptable tolerances for variation in costs and timescales and other pertinent information that will provide a framework for delivery. A Project Initiation Form or similar can provide a template for capturing this information.

Upwell IDB

Consulting Engineers' Supplementary Report - April 2023

Improving Capital Delivery

Introduction

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

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

Resources

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

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

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

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

IDB Projects

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

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

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

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

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

MLC Bank Raising Scheme

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Consulting Engineer

5 April 2023

The Chairman reported that both he and the Vice Chairman had met with Nicola Oldfield, the Chief Engineer and Dave Bantoft, the Mechanical & Electrical consulting engineer, recently when trying to resolve issues the Board were still experiencing relating to the electrification of Cock Fen pumping station and had asked the Chief Engineer to attend the meeting and report to the Board.

The Chief Engineer advised that since she had been in her role, she had undertaken a review of all IDB projects on the books with a view to trying to move forward some of those that had been sitting around for some time and the electrification of Cock Fen pumping station was one of those.

She acknowledged that a problem area had been trying to arrange access across third party land to enable access for UKPN to install the new electricity supply. She reported that she, together with the Mechanical & Electrical consulting engineer had prepared an exception report to try and capture and understand exactly what had happened to date and what was required to move the project forward.

The Chief Engineer referred Members to the options for mitigation shown in the exception report at appendix 1 and explained these further.

She updated the Board and confirmed the Easement agreement had been completed so there would be a wayleave agreement between UKPN and the landowner. She advised that originally the landowners requested a payment of £12,500 for the easement, but this had now been waived, however they had requested an agreement be drawn up regarding the maintenance of the road, if and when required. The Chief Engineer advised that regardless of which option the Board approved to proceed with the Chairman and Vice Chairman had agreed that this matter should be concluded as it would secure an easement for the future if and when the electrification commenced.

The Chief Engineer further advised that UKPN had provided a programme of works regarding the electrification to proceed in 2024, being another year away due to the uncertainty of getting the legal processes in place and the other consideration they have is they have to install new poles and wires along the edge of the Ouse Washes and they have some environmental permits they also have to get in place.

Mr P Hartley asked when UKPN would commence work in 2024. In response the Chief Engineer confirmed it would be in the summer, as the pumps cannot be out of service in the winter and it must be after bird nesting season so likely between June and October 2024

The Chairman asked the Chief Engineer to confirm whether UKPN had increased the price and in response she advised the cost had increased by £52,000 to £304,000, due to them having to change the cabling.

The Chairman advised that as the Board had already paid for the control panels and the electric motors and having drawn down the Public Works loan, option 1 to continue with the electrification or option 2 to pause the electrification and install a backup generator were the options Members had to consider.

The Vice Chairman advised that he had received a quote for a generator plus installation of in the region of £35,000 and added that increased electricity standing charges at Cock Fen pumping station were likely to be in the region of £4,000 per annum, together with the increased electricity costs compared to the lower cost of diesel.

He further advised that both he and the Chairman considered that the installation of a generator was the best way forward at this time. The Chairman advised that if the Board wished to electrify the station at a later date, this could be undertaken at a later date and the generator retained as a back-up.

The Chairman explained the Chief Engineer and the Mechanical & Electrical Consulting Engineer considered this the best option at this time and both he and the Vice Chairman recommended this option to the Board in order to save money. He added that the diesel tank would have to be made more secure to prevent a break in and the diesel being stolen and would probably need to be double bunded, in view of the increase in the insurance excess.

Mr Bliss enquired whether work could start immediately and in response the Vice Chairman advised the lead time for a generator was 4 to 6 weeks. The Chairman reported that both he and the Vice Chairman were satisfied that the Chief Engineer and the Mechanical & Electrical Consulting Engineer were more than capable of moving matters forward and they were both impressed with the service now being provided to the Board.

The Chairman advised he hoped to have an update for Members at the summer meeting.

Miss Ablett enquired whether the Board were happy to authorise the Chairman and Vice Chairman to be the nominated points of contact for the project.

The Chairman thanked the Vice Chairman for all his work regarding the electrification of Cock Fen pumping station and correspondence with both Waldersey Farms and the South Yorkshire Pension Fund, together with Bidwells, which had assisted with finalising the easement.

The Chairman also thanked the Chief Engineer and the Mechanical & Electrical Engineer for raising the idea regarding the generator.

The Chief Engineer referred Members to her supplementary report in the consulting engineers' report, which explained the process she'd like to go through to deliver capital schemes for the Boards.

She advised that she had identified which projects were on the programme this year for Grant in Aid application funding and proposed that a system study of the Board's 5 pumping stations within the District be undertaken to then prioritise and understand what assets required work and when that work would be carried out. She added the study would enable her to draw up a programme of refurbishment in future years and she confirmed the study would be grant aided.

The Chief Engineer confirmed that the Cock Fen pumping station project had already been identified in the programme together with the asset refurbishment project, both of which were separate to the study.

The Clerk added that both he and the Chief Engineer were also considering how the Middle Level Commissioners scale its capacity to be able to deliver projects so it was easier to get them in the programme and get commitment from the Environment Agency for money. He added that he was looking at what staffing structure the Middle Level Commissioners had to actively move the project forward, when considering the needs of 29 internal drainage boards. He explained that the Commissioners had limited staff capacity in the office at the moment, which was why some of the IDB projects had stalled over the years.

RESOLVED

i) That the Report and actions therein be approved

ii) That the electrification of Cock fen Pumping Station be paused

iii) That the control panels, motors and back-up generator be installed

iv) That the easement be completed

v) That an update on the project be provided at the summer inspection on 15th June

vi) That decision making on project decision making be delegated to the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

vii) That pumping hours received from the Board's employee be included in the Consulting Engineers' Report going forward.

(N.B) The Chairman declared an interest in the culvert at Duck Puddle Drove (Point 113).

B.2092 Finance Committee Report

The Chairman reported that no Finance Committee had been held since the last meeting of the Board.

B.2093 Capital Improvement Programme

The Board reviewed and considered the recommendations of the Finance Committee, viz;

Upwell 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
Bedlam Bridge 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	4.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	90.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	94.4
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment	0.0	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 Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0
	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
Cock 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	59.1	145.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	150.0	0.0	0.0	354.1
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment	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 Control building refurbishment/replacement	0.0	0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
	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
Nordelph p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1100.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.4	0.0	0.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	19.4
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment	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	0.0	10.0	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

Upwell Internal Drainage Board

Capital Improvement Programme (2023/2024)

Padgetts 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	300.0	300.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.4
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment	0	0	0.0	6.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0
	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
Upwell 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	1,000.0	1000.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	29.4
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment	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 Control building refurbishment/replacement	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	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	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
Plant	Ford Ranger - MK15 YAY	13.5	0	0.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	28.5
	New Holland Tractor AE67 BXX (March '18 - £75,000)	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	100.0
	Shelbourne Reynolds Flail mower (Sept '16 - £26,000)	0.0	0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	40.0
Drainage Channels														
	Piling works - (Old Croft River)	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
	Asset refurbishements	0.2	150.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	250.2
		90.4	**295.0**	**165**	**46**	**60**	**1,110**	**15**	**115**	**0**	**150**	**20**	**1,350**	**3,416**

Updated to engineers asset appraisal - May 2020
Identified on PAFS 2020 submission

2023/2024
Cock fen pumping station electrification - £145,000

RESOLVED

That the recommendations are approved in principle.

B.2094 Maintenance Work in the District

a) District Work Report – January – May 2023

The Board considered the Report of the Board's Foreman, viz;

Upwell IDB work report January 2023 to May 2023

The 2023 drainworks programme will be as stated in the January report concentrating on the Cock Fen and Nordelph side of the district while managing any other issues that may arise or that have been previously planned. I will be mapping crops soon ready to draw up the plans for dredging whilst attempting to minimise excavator travelling and maximise dredging then issue notices to landowners for proposed works.

We have started to make a structure to go in the Old Croft River outside Delph House which will be installed shortly enabling us to hold a higher level in Welney village, this is replacing the old structure that was removed when dredging the Old Croft last summer.

The plans for culverts to be replaced under a grant scheme are still in progress with 2 culverts on Flinthouse Road being the first in this process.

Pumping Stations

Cock Fen Pump - Engine 2 had a service in March, temperature sensor replaced and an oil pipe which started leaking but replaced from the spare engine stored in Bedlam Pumphouse other than that both engines are running fine. There was an attempted break in to the fuel tank which saw a security camera ripped off the wall and door cut off the tank but no fuel taken, I welded the door back on the same day in case they returned which they have not to date, new locks were also fitted as one had been cut off the security gate.

Pump 2 at Bedlam Bridge is next to be overhauled at a date yet to be decided.

All other pumping stations are working fine, all debris from weedscreen dumps will be either burned or disposed of shortly ready for when the pumping season starts later in the year.

As of 2/5/23 all pumps are set to summer levels.

Ford Ranger Truck

The truck has been going well and since the purchase in September 2022 it has only been into a garage for new rear springs as one snapped.

Shelbourne Flailmower

The Flailmower has done 7 seasons cutting since it was purchased in 2016, it performed well again but will need a good going over if it is being kept for this cutting season.

New Holland Tractor

It has been going well apart from the Adblue issues which I expect more of in the future, its next service is at 3600 hours.

Summary

Since the January meeting it had been very dry until March when the majority of the years pumping was done in that month. Hours are going to be up next year as Cock Fen has done 75 hours in April alone compared to 111 hours from 1st April 2022 to 1st April 2023. We will be looking to try a keep good water level in case of another dry summer like last year.

If anyone has any questions or queries, please don't hesitate to contact me or I will be happy to answer questions at the meeting.

Carl Nunn

b) Drainworks Programme 2023/2024

With reference to minute B.2025 (b), the Board gave consideration to the proposed drainworks programme for 2023/2024.

RESOLVED

i) That the Board approved the Report from the Board's Foreman.

ii) That the proposed drainworks programme be approved for 2023/2024.

B.2095 District Labour Board's Employee's Wages

a) Miss Ablett reported that Mr C Nunn was paid £3033.01 for 152 hours of overtime worked during the financial year 2022/2023.

b) Further to minute B.1846, Miss Ablett reported that the District Foreman's wages for 2023/2024 will be increased in accordance with the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award.

RESOLVED

That the District Foreman's wages for 2023/2024 will be increased by 7.14% in accordance with the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award.

B.2096 District Officers' Fees

a) The Board gave consideration to the District Officer's fees for 2023/2024.

b) The Board gave consideration to the expenses payable to Mr Goodger.

RESOLVED

a) The Board agree that the sum of £3,852.00 be allowed for the services of the District Officers for 2023/2024 and to be split equally between the District Officers.

c) That the Board agree that a sum of up to £990.00 for expenses be allowed and split between the District Officers as necessary.

B.2097 Environment Officer's Report

Members considered and approved the most recent report, viz;

MIDDLE LEVEL
COMMISSIONERS

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Sofi Lloyd
Environment Officer

Upwell Internal Drainage Board

Environmental Update – May 2023

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. Work Package Ecological Screening Document

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

Only the first page needs completing by the IDB (not a lot of info needed) and the rest by me. I undertake the assessment as far as possible, and then return the second part of the document to the IDB, setting out what surveys etc. will be needed, if any. I may be able to undertake some of the practical surveys but in some cases, an ecological consultant with a specialist licence may be needed. In some cases, there may not be a need for any surveys and the recommendations will be that the work can proceed with some adaptions to the proposed approach, such as altered timings or establishment of "no-work" buffers around sensitive areas.

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

4. Protected Species

a) Water Vole

A watervole survey was undertaken earlier this year at Salters Lode and along old Pophams Eau. No water vole have been found on the southern bank at Salters Lode, most probably due, in the main, to the bank erosion. The stretch has now been reseeded and pre-planted coir roll been installed which should improve conditions for a wide range of species, including water vole. Water vole were found to be present in good numbers further along Pophams Eau so current maintenance regimes are evidently supportive of them.

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

b) Badgers

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

c) Reptiles

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

d) Birds

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

i. Barn owls

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

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

- Establish and maintain un-cropped field margins for foraging

i. 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.

5. 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) 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

6. 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.

B.2098 State-aided Schemes

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

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time other than that already identified in PAFs.

B.2099 Charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work

Consideration was given to whether any revisions were necessary in the Board's charges for hiring plant for private work (last reviewed – May 2022):-

Flail mower

Present charge - £45 per hour (inclusive of operator's wages etc)

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

RESOLVED

That the hire charge remains the same as current charges.

B.2100 Environment Agency – Precepts

Miss Ablett reported 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 £57,046.

B.2101 Review of Internal Controls

The Board considered and approved the system of Internal Controls.

B.2102 Risk Management Assessment

a) The Board gave consideration to the Board's Risk Management Policy.

b) The Board reviewed the insured value of the Board's buildings, viz;

UPWELL IDB
INSURED VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS

PUMPING STATIONS & BUNGALOW

	As At 1st April 2023
Cock Fen Pumping Station	1,278,800.00
Padgetts Corner Pumping Station	294,400.00
Bedlam Bridge Pumping Station	1,048,800.00
Upwell Fen Pumping Station	675,625.00
Nordelph Pumping Station	784,875.00
	4,082,500.00
Nordelph Bungalow	130,000.00
	130,000.00

RESOLVED

i) That the Board approved the Board's Risk Management Policy.

ii) To provide a breakdown of increased premiums between pumping stations. To review index linking at January meeting.

B.2103 Exercise of Public Rights

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

B.2104 Annual Governance Statement – 2022/2023

The Board considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended on the 31st March 2023, viz;

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

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

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

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

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chairman SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk SIGNATURE REQUIRED

WWW.MIDDLELEVEL.GOV.UK

RESOLVED

> That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2023.

B.2105 Payments 2022/2023

Miss Ablett reported on payments made during the financial year 2022/2023, viz;

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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

GENERAL ACCOUNT

Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd - Bearings, wear bushes and 200 litre of Adblue	360.55
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery and Health and Safety contract	12,973.06
Middle Level Commissioners - Mobile charges - Cock Fen p/s security (Account from Anglia Farmers)	41.39
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for AU14 UTS (Account from Allstar)	160.56
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for AU14 UTS (Account from Allstar)	80.28
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for AU14 UTS (Account from Allstar)	333.14
Middle Level Commissioners - Land Registry search fees (Account from Land Registry)	6.00
Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal	40.00
EE - Mobile telephone charges	15.73
EE - Mobile telephone charges	15.73
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	8,449.00
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - Nitrile gloves, brake cleaner, 12 boxes of Complex cartridges, rain gauge, brake and air line sealant	84.90
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Discharge consent application)	150.51
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for AU14 UTS (Account from Allstar)	87.28
Middle Level Commissioners - Court fees	1.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, meeting to discuss business cases and Grant in Aid claims, work in connection with bank slip at Point 53, planning and development applications)	1,037.34
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, site visit to investigate report of pollution, planning and development applications)	1,071.25
Russell Fowler - Drainworks	2,419.20
LW Vehicle Services Limited - Supply and fit new propshaft universal joint to AU14 UTS	144.24
Environment Agency - Precept	28,523.23
P Clabon - District Officer's Fee for the years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022	4,210.00
D P Laws - Fix and re-attach downpipe, fix fascia boards plus guttering at Bedlam Bridge pumping station	166.50
Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd - Rear and front wiper blades and 7 pin socket	47.16
All Clear Drainage Consultants - CCTV drains and report	360.00
EE - Mobile telephone charges	17.64
Shelbourne Reynolds Eng Ltd. - Repairs to flail mower	2,121.32
D P Laws - Painting exterior of Bedlam Bridge pumping station	1,675.00
EE - Mobile telephone charges	17.10
The Lamb & Flag - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	189.15
Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd - T flails, bearing, adaptor sleeve, shaft seal amd 600ml brake part cleaner	388.75
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for AU14 UTS (Account from Allstar)	298.87
Middle Level Commissioners - Road tax for AU14 UTS	290.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Expenses in connection with Board meeting (Account from The Lamb & Flag)	440.00
K Goodger - District Officer's Fee for the years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 plus expenses	5,652.00
Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd - Bearings	86.26
EE - Mobile telephone charges	37.52
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	6,709.78
Fenland Fire Appliance LLP - Servicing of fire extinguishers	139.74
Watson Fuels - Supply of gas oil	5,290.74
Duckworth Select - Purchase of Ford Ranger Pick Up Truck Reg. No. MK15 YAY	16,200.00

EE - Mobile telephone charges	17.10
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	3,629.41
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	4,819.59
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages and telephone charges	11,366.94
Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2021-2022 accounts)	1,506.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution - Conservation officer	655.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,262.38
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	1,263.12
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	3,060.41
Wilco - New number plate for trailer	12.99
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit fee (2021-2022 accounts)	720.00
Ernest Doe & Son Ltd - Fuel filter	8.27
Ernest Doe & Son Ltd - Fuel filter, air filter, oil filter, 200 litres Adblue, 20 litres Ambra Multi oil, 1 litre LHM brake fluid, 20 litres of Mastergold HSP oil and a breakaway cable	800.28
Environment Agency - Precept	28,523.23
EE - Mobile telephone charges	17.10
G & J Peck Ltd - Repairs to tractor - Reg. no. AE67 BXX	1,645.54
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance and flail mwing	7,898.40
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance and flail mwing	11,134.80
Frank Hartley and Sons - Tree clearing in front of Ralingham Hall barn conversion	7,398.00
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - Brake cleaner and gloves	45.91
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Discharge consent application)	145.56
Middle Level Commissioners - Electrical condition report - Nordelph pumping station (Account from CMS Electrical)	168.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Electrical condition report - Padgetts Corner pumping station (Account from CMS Electrical)	168.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Electrical condition report - Cock Fen pumping station (Account from CMS Electrical)	168.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Electrical condition report - Upwell Fen pumping station (Account from CMS Electrical)	168.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Electrical condition report - Bedlam Bridge pumping station (Account from CMS Electrical)	168.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Road tax for MK15 YAY	290.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Tyre disposal (Account from Envirotyre)	139.68
Middle Level Commissioners - Remedial works at Nordelph bungalow (Account from CMS Electrical)	1,068.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Land Registry search fees (Account from Land Registry)	39.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for AU14 UTS (Account from Allstar)	195.32
Middle Level Commissioners - Electrical condition report - Nordelph bungalow (Account from CMS Electrical)	144.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for AU14 UTS (Account from Allstar)	316.65
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance and flail mwing	2,188.80
EE - Mobile telephone charges	17.10
All Clear Drainage Consultants - Jetting of 2 culverts at The Old Croft (50% re-chargeable to Manea & Welney DDC)	360.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,508.19
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	489.60
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Surveys undertaken regarding the location of trees within byelaw strip, discussions and site inspections ahead of surveys, scheme progression and FDGia appraisal, planning and development applications)	1,520.60
Russell Fowler - Drainworks	1,764.00
Fen Group - Supply of 2 x 900 mm twin walled drainage pipes	1,448.40
Ernest Doe & Son Ltd - Bearing, shaft seal, 600ml brake part cleaner and an adaptor sleeve	146.11
EE - Mobile telephone charges	17.10
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	6,709.78
Association of Drainage Authorities (River Great Ouse branch) - Subscription 2022-2023	36.00
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2023	1,098.00

Messrs Seaton/Neagus - Rates refund	80.04
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for MK15 YAY	244.57
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for MK15 YAY	381.58
Middle Level Commissioners - Vehicle insurance for MK15 YAY	280.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of control panel and witness testing for Cock Fen pumping station electrification (Account from Rand)	61,637.76
Carl Nunn - Re-imbursement for purchase of Apple iPhone 11 Pro	339.99
Welney Playing Field Charity - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	60.00
Ernest Doe & Son Ltd - Chain loop	3.43
Ernest Doe & Son Ltd - Chain loop	28.67
Mr C J Collingwood - Refund due to duplicate payment of drainage rates	55.43
EE - Mobile telephone charges	17.10
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - Gloves, combination padlocks and oil filters	130.54
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,099.18
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, visits to Rands for factory acceptance test of Cock Fen pumping station control panels, planning and development applications)	1,167.74
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for MK15 YAY	131.29
Middle Level Commissioners - Land Registry searches for adjacent land and roadway at Nordelph pumping station (Account from Land Registry)	33.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Attend site to change pump bolts at Bedlam Bridge pumping station	571.05
EE - Mobile telephone charges	17.10
K Goodger - District Officer's Fee for 2022-2023	2,260.00
King's Lynn Drainage Board - Supply of 2 x 900mm x 3 m twin wall polypipe including seals and haulage charge	1,787.74
Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal	40.00
P Clabon - District Officer's Fee for 2022-2023	2,260.00
EE - Mobile telephone charges	17.10
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Electricity supply (Bedlam Bridge pumping station)	3,496.11
Anglian Farmers Ltd - Electricity supply (Cock Fen pumping station)	590.68
Anglian Farmers Ltd - Electricity supply (Nordelph pumping station)	368.06
Anglian Farmers Ltd - Electricity supply (Padgetts Corner pumping station)	289.12
Anglian Farmers Ltd - Electricity supply (Upwell Fen pumping station)	14,228.35
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Data collector (Bedlam Bridge pumping station)	131.99
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Meter Operator Charges (Cock Fen pumping station)	133.50
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Meter Operator Charges (Nordelph pumping station)	133.49
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Meter Operator Charges (Padgetts Corner pumping station)	133.49
Anglian Farmers Ltd - Gas oil	0.00
District Labour	35,656.93
	334,403.31

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

RESOLVED

That the Board approved the payments made.

B.2106 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, viz;

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2022
GENERAL FUND

2022			
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year		
	Precept		40,788.90
	Insurances, telephones etc	3,671.68	
	Repairs & Renewals (Mechanical)	12,345.78	
	Fuel	26,407.50	
	Drainworks	33,518.08	
	Contractors charges	4,520.00	
	District Labour	34,256.10	
	Administration charge, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising etc	24,269.61	138,988.75
	Asset Replacement Fund		
	- Raised in year		9,400.00
	Loan Repayments:		
	Principal	17,213.72	
	Interest	13,103.84	30,317.56
	Scheme costs		
	Cock Fen pumping station - Electrification	0.00	
		0.00	0.00
	Depreciation charge		
	Heavy Plant	17,385.83	
	Light Plant	160.00	
	Small Tool & Equipment	0.00	17,545.83
	Balance carried forward		160,259.60
			397,300.64

2021		
Mar-31	Balance brought forward	164,039.61
2022		
Mar-31	Rate income & Special levies	206,875.68
	Interest on Deposit Accounts	7.52
	Private works	370.00
	Development Charges Account	1,700.00
	Consents	250.00
	Recoverable expenditure	100.00
	Old Croft River Joint Maintenace Account	6,412.00
	Asset Replacement Fund	
	Depreciation (Plant)	17,545.83
		397,300.64

BALANCE SHEET
Capital Section

Liabilities		
Capital Provisions		2,912,304.93
Public Works Loan (Outstanding)		501,695.07
		3,414,000.00

Assets		
Pumping Stations	3,304,000.00	
Nordelph Pumping Station-Bungalow	110,000.00	
Heavy Plant	26,669.77	
Light Plant	152.67	
Small Tool & Equipment	2.00	
Oils & Greases	6,612.70	
		3,447,437.14

Revenue Section

General Fund		
- Revenue balance	160,259.60	
- Asset Fund (plant)	40,149.41	
- Asset Fund (capital)	196,141.03	396,550.04
Sundry Creditors		52,785.08
Development Charges Account		34,969.91
		3,898,305.03

Ratepayers Account - Arrears		8,860.76
Value added Tax - Refunds due		4,928.35
Sundry Debtors		918.75
Private Works Account		0.00
Debtors - Old Croft River Account		8,337.69
Balance in hand -		
Barclays -Treasurer's Account	421,996.14	
National Savings - Treasurer's Account	5,826.20	
Labour Account	0.00	427,822.34
		3,898,305.03

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2023
GENERAL FUND

2023				2022			
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year			Mar-31	Balance brought forward		160,259.60
	Precept		41,604.46	2023			
	Insurances, telephones etc	3,735.77		Mar-31	Rate income & Special levies		216,547.10
	Repairs & Renewals (Mechanical)	16,162.44			Interest on Deposit Accounts		2.01
	Fuel	10,695.10			Private works		1,235.00
	Drainworks	33,282.24			Development Charges Account		1,775.00
	Contractors charges	4,520.00			Consents		150.00
	District Labour	35,777.73			Grant-in-aid - Telemetry installation		10,970.88
	Administration charge, Audit fee,						
	printing, stationery, advertising etc	24,393.95	128,567.23		Asset Replacement Fund		
	Asset Replacement Fund				Depreciation (Plant)	17,062.75	
	- Raised in year		9,400.00		Telemetry installation	10,970.87	
	Loan Repayments:				Cock Fen p/s electrification	54,742.07	82,775.69
	Principal	17,726.58					
	Interest	12,590.98	30,317.56				
					Old Croft River Joint Maintenace Account		3,232.50
	Scheme costs						
	Cock Fen pumping station - Electrification	54,742.07			Re-chargeable works:		
	Asset survey (consultancy fees)	168.00			Anglian Water - bank slip at Silt Road, Nordelph		2,016.00
	Telemetry installation	21,941.75	76,851.82				
	Depreciation charge						
	Heavy Plant	16,917.08					
	Light Plant	145.67	17,062.75				
	Balance carried forward		175,159.96				
			478,963.78				478,963.78

BALANCE SHEET
Capital Section

Liabilities			Assets		
Capital Provisions		2,930,031.51	Pumping Stations	3,304,000.00	
			Nordelph Pumping Station-Bungalow	110,000.00	
Public Works Loan (Outstanding)		483,968.49	Heavy Plant	23,251.69	
			Light Plant	7.00	
			Small Tool & Equipment	2.00	
			Oils & Greases	4,760.75	
		3,414,000.00			3,442,021.44

Revenue Section

General Fund			Ratepayers Account - Arrears		6,660.30
- Revenue balance	175,159.96		Value added Tax - Refunds due		19,385.91
- Asset Fund (plant)	42,368.63		Sundry Debtors		911.25
- Asset Fund (capital)	130,428.09	347,956.68	Private Works Account		1,320.00
Sundry Creditors		48,852.81	Debtors - Old Croft River Account		11,570.19
Development Charges Account		34,202.52	Balance in hand -		
			Barclays -Treasurer's Account	357,311.30	
			National Savings - Treasurer's Account	5,831.62	
			Labour Account	0.00	363,142.92
		3,845,012.01			3,845,012.01

Upwell Internal Drainage Board

Summary of Bank Reconciliations as at 31st March 2023

Barclays - Treasurers Account 2022/2023

1st April 2022			31st March 2023		
Balance brought forward		421,996.14	Payments made during the year	334,403.31	
			Transfers	0.00	
31st March 2023					334,403.31
Receipts during the year					
Clerk's collection account	269,718.47				
Interest on deposit accounts	0.00	269,718.47	Balance carried forward		357,311.30
		691,714.61			**691,714.61**

National Savings - Treasurers Account 2022/2023

1st April 2022		31st March 2023	
Balance brought forward	5,826.20	Payments made during the year	0.00
31st March 2023			
Interest on deposit accounts	5.42	Balance carried forward	5,831.62
	5,831.62		**5,831.62**

Barclays Bank PLc

Clients Premium Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2023	357,311.30
Less unpresented cheques	0.00
Add outstanding lodgements	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	**357,311.30**

Cash balances as at 31st March 2023

Barclays Bank PLc

Clients Premium Account	**357,311.30**

National Savings

Investment Account per passbook	**5,831.62**
Total reconciled cash balances per accounts	**363,142.92**

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward	397,727	404,696	*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	206,876	216,547	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	10,789	28,744	*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	34,256	35,778	*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	30,318	30,318	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	146,122	224,992	*Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).*
7. (=) Balances carried forward	404,696	358,899	*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	427,822	363,143	*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	3,539,847	3,540,347	*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	501,695	483,968	*The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).*

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

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2023 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date 5th May 2023

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

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Upwell IDB

Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return

Financial year ended 31st March 2023

				Annual Return
Line 1	**Balances brought forward**			
	General Fund	217,084.49		
	Development charges account	34,969.91		
	Asset replacement fund	152,641.11		
			404,695.51	**404,696**
Line 2	**Rates and Special Levies**			
	Agricultural rates	163,655.10		
	Special Levies	52,717.00		
	Penalty	0.00		
	Costs	175.00		
	Write-off	0.00		
			216,547.10	**216,547**
Line 3	**Total other receipts**			
	Interest			
	General fund	2.01		
	Development charges account	0.44		
	Asset replacement fund	2.97		
	Private works	3,251.00		
	Consent applications	150.00		
	Recoverable Costs	0.00		
	Grant in Aid	10,970.88		
	Contribution to Old Croft	3,232.50		
	Discharge contributions	1,253.90		
	Write Back of Provision	0.00		
	Sale of Assets	9,880.00		
	Public Works Loan - Loan Advance	0.00		
			28,743.70	**28,744**
Line 4	**Staff costs**			
	Wages/salaries	30,944.10		
	National insurance contributions	3,717.18		
	Pension costs	1,116.45		
	Travelling expenses	0.00		
			35,777.73	**35,778**
Line 5	**Loan repayments**			
	PWLB - Principal	17,726.58		
	PWLB - Interest	12,590.98		
			30,317.56	**30,318**

Upwell IDB
Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return

Financial year ended 31st March 2023

Line 6	**All other payments**			
	Precept	41,604.46		
	Rates, insurances, telephones	3,735.77		
	Repairs and renewals	16,162.44		
	Fuel	10,695.10		
	Drainworks	33,282.24		
	Administration	24,393.95		
	Development charges fees	246.73		
	Contractors charges	4,520.00		
	Improvements	76,851.82		
	Purchase of Asset	13,500.00		
			224,992.51	**224,992**
Line 7	**Balances carried forward**			
	General Fund	245,427.60		
	Development charges account	34,202.52		
	Asset replacement fund	79,268.39		
			358,898.51	**358,899**
	Reconciliation			
	Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6		358,898.51	
			0.00	
	Reconciliation to Accounts			
	Balances carried forward per Annual Return - As above		358,898.51	
	Add Back:-			
	Adjustments for Prior Years	26,824.44		
	Depreciation	-17,062.75		
	Assets acquired in year	13,500.00		
	Assets disposed of in year	-9,880.00		
	Profit on disposal	9,879.00		
			23,260.69	
	Balances carried forward per Accounts			
	General Fund	175,159.96		
	Development charges account	34,202.52		
	Asset replacement fund	172,796.72		
			382,159.20	

RESOLVED

> That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Return, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2023.

B.2107 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2023/2024

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2023/2024 and were informed by Miss Ablett that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by special levy on local billing authorities would be respectively 75.64% and 24.36%, viz;

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET 2023/2024

		Approved budget 2022/2023 £	Actual 2022/2023 £	Budget 2023/2024 £
1	District labour	38,000	35,778	41,000
2	Insurances and telephones	4,100	3,736	5,000
3	Repairs and renewals	8,000	16,162 [A]	10,000
4	General maintenance	26,000 [B]	33,282 [C]	28,500
5	Fuel (oil and electricity)	30,000	10,695 [D]	47,800 [E]
6	District Officers' fees etc	4,650	4,520	5,000
7	Administration charge, Health and, Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising etc	24,750	24,394	26,175
8	Future capital works	9,400 [F]	9,400 [F]	14,116 [F]
9	Public Works Loan	30,318 [G]	30,318 [G]	30,318 [G]
10	Environment Agency - Precept	41,605	41,604	42,853 [H]
11	Tractor / Flail mower replacement	15,500 [I]	17,063 [I]	15,100 [I]
12	Improvement works	177,500	76,852 [J]	145,000 [K]
		409,823	303,804	410,862
	LESS Deposit Accounts interest, Fishery Rent etc	194,787	102,157 [L]	156,771 [M]
		215,036	201,647	254,091
	Estimated General Fund:			
	Open balance at 01.04.2021	160,260	160,260	175,160
	Rates Raised - 23.00p	216,447	216,547	254,091
	Net Expenditure	215,036	201,647	254,091
	Balances	0	0	0
	(Estimated) Closing balance	161,671	175,160	175,160

Remarks

A	Service/repair tractor-mower	3,728
	Repairs/paint exterior - Bedlam p/s	1,842
	Repair floor plates - Cock Fen p/s	1,352
B -	Includes for contractor hire: slubbing	18,000
C -	Includes for contractor hire: slubbing	19,155
C -	Includes tree cutting/chipping	6,165
D -	Usage to end of year estimated from meter reads	
E -	Provision based on 5 year average and increased for new contract rates - see separate note	
F -	Funding for future plant replacement & capital projects -	
G -	Includes for loan for Cock Fen electrification	
H -	Environment Agency charge	58,758
	Middle Level contribution	-15,905
		42,853
I -	Depreciation on heavy plant	
J -	Cock Fen p/s electrification	54,742
	Telemetry installation	21,942
	Asset survey	168
		76,852
K -	Cock Fen p/s electrification	145,000
L -	Includes:	
	Asset replacement fund (Depreciation)	17,063
	Asset fund - installation of telemetry	10,971
	Loan funding - Cock fen p/s electrification	54,742
	Grant-in-aid - telemetry installation (50% x cost)	10,971
		93,747
M -	Includes:	
	Asset replacement fund (Depreciation)	15,100
	Loan funding - Cock Fen p/s electrification	130,000
	Asset fund - Cock Fen electrification	15,000

Upwell 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	29,625	
Indicative current day costs		71,206
Provision included for 2023/2024		45,800
Potential shortfall on budget		25,406

balances as at 31st March 2023

General Fund	175,160
Development account	34,503
Capital account	42,368
Other	0
	252,031

Potential shortfall as % of balances	10.08%

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

Rate and levy requirements

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

a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 75.64%

b) Proportion to be borne by Special levies issued to Councils:-

Borough of Kings Lynn & Norfolk –	14.64%	
Fenland District Council –	9.72%	
		24.36%

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £7,119.

In 2023/2024 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levies would raise £9,411

Revenue balance in hand on 31st March 2023 - £175,160

The estimated net expenditure of £254,091 in 2023/2024, which includes provision for funding for future capital/plant replacement funding is equivalent to:-

a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 27.00p

b) a Special levy on the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk of £37,184 and

c) a Special levy on Fenland District Council of £24,702

In 2022/2023 a rate of 23.00p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £21,042 on Fenland District Council and £31,675 on Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk.

Members should consider future capital investment and cash flow requirements when setting the rate.

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Board

May 2023

Miss Ablett referred Members to the note relating to the budget allocations for 2023-2024 for electricity and asked them to consider the impact on the Board's funds a significant rainfall event would have, event when considering the rate.

RESOLVED

i) That the estimates be approved.

ii) That a total sum of £ 254,091 be raised by drainage rates and special levy.

iii) That the amounts comprised in the sum referred to in ii) above to be raised by drainage rates and to be met by special levy are £ 192,205 and £ 61,886 respectively.

iv) That a rate of 27.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.

v) a) That a Special levy of £ 37,184 be made and issued to the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.

b) That a Special levy of £ 24,702 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.

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

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

B.2108 Dates of next Meetings

RESOLVED

That the next meetings of the Board shall be held as follows:-

i) Wednesday 24th January 2024 at 5.30pm

ii) Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 5.30pm

iii) Thursday 13th June 2024 at 5.00pm for an inspection

B.2109 Any Other Business

The Chairman reported there appeared to be some Members who were not attending meetings and enquired whether the Board were able to remove them from the Board. In response, Miss Ablett advised that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the Board had the powers to do this.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk investigates non-attendance of Members at Board meetings and advise when such Members could be removed from the Board.

……………………………
Chairman

………………..
Date