UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Upwell Internal Drainage Board
hosted at the Lamb & Flag, Welney on Friday 31st May 2024

PRESENT

K Goodger Esq (Chairman)	C Crofts Esq
P Clabon Esq (Vice Chairman)	G W Gowler Esq
H G Bliss Esq	J Quail Esq
S Calton Esq	C N T Rose Esq

Miss Sam Ablett (representing the Clerk to the Board), Mr Carl Nunn (District Foreman) and Mrs Ruth Martin (Lead Clerk) were in attendance.

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

Miss Ablett asked all Board members to sign the attendance sheet and referred to the schedule attached, which recorded the ADA training videos that had been viewed by members. She reported that not all members who had viewed the videos had advised the Middle Level Offices and this was important as details had to be included in the IDB1 return and submitted to DEFRA. She asked all members to mark on the schedule the videos they had watched so a record could be kept.

Inspection of the District

New Tractor and Flail Mower

Members present inspected the new tractor and flail mower and a potential issue with the flail was identified, but it was hoped this could be easily rectified. The tractor and flail retuned with the fitter to Thurlow Nunn Standen.

Upwell Fen Pumping Station

Members present inspected the discharge pipe thrust block and noted the damage and the pump was started in order for Members to view the leak from the pipe. The land around the pumping station was also discussed and it was agreed that this would be discussed further at the Board meeting, following the inspection.

Cock Fen Pumping Station

The gearbox was viewed and the crack to the engine mount was also seen. A discussion was held on how to remove the gearbox from the engine and a plan formulated to remove the gearbox from the building to an area where it could be collected for repair.

Welcome and Apologies for absence

The Chairman introduced Mrs Ruth Martin, the new lead Clerk of the Middle Level Commissioners, to the Board.

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs J French, R D Gladwin Esq, W Gladwin Esq, R Gott Esq, P Hartley Esq, S Hartley Esq, A Kew Esq, J Kirk Esq, C Marks Esq, R Means Esq and A Quail Esq.

B.2132 Declarations of Interest

The Chairman 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 Vice Chairman declared an interest in planning application MLC Ref. No. 569, and minute nos. B.2142 and B.2143.

The Chairman declared an interest in minute nos B2142 and B.2143.

B.2133 Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

a) Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED

> That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 9th May 2023 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

b) Matters Arising

Rates outstanding for more than 1 year

The Chairman expressed his concern over the rates shown as outstanding at the year end. Miss Ablett reported that a court summons is sent to landowners/occupiers who have not paid and she advised that Mrs Martin was in the process of sourcing new bailiffs, who it was hoped would be able to collect any amounts owing.

The Chairman advised that it would be useful to know the number of outstanding debtors and if any are repetitive debtors and for this information to be made available at future Board meetings. Miss Ablett advised that this information could be provided but it would have to be dealt with as a confidential matter for report at the next Board meeting.

RESOLVED

> That a list of the number of land owners/occupiers with land drainage rates owing to the Board as at 31st May 2024, together with details of any repeat offenders, be sent to the Chairman and Vice Chairman and that a similar list be provided for report at future Board meetings.

Clearance of trees at Mumby's Drove

The Chairman reported that a meeting had been held on site with all parties and an agreement had been reached with the landowners for the Board to erect a post and wire fence from the existing hedge past the gate and up to the telegraph pole, for another post and wire fence to be erected from the middle of the telegraph pole down to the water's edge, a hawthorn and a quickthorn hedge was to be plant in two rows behind each of the post and wire fences on the land of the Dickson's/Kington's and the old gate will remain in situ, but a new galvanised gate would be erected centred between the end of the existing hedge and the telegraph pole.

He advised that Mrs Martin would be writing to all parties involved to confirm this agreement in writing.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to Miss Ablett for her work in resolving this matter.

RESOLVED

That the chairman and Vice Chairman's actions be approved.

Gate at Hen Meadow/Cock Fen pumping station

The Chairman reported that ownership of the land was still unclear and at the inspection Mrs Martin was asked to check the Land Registry for the registered owner of the land. He enquired whether Members were satisfied with this course of action and would authorise the Chairman and Vice Chairman to take any necessary action should the landowner be identified.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk checks the Land Registry to ascertain the land owner and advises the Chairman and Vice Chairman once this is known. That the Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to take any necessary action.

Gate at Nordelph pumping station

The Chairman reported that Mr Partridge will be given a key and code for access through the gate and advised that no heavy vehicles were to enter, once the gate has been installed.

B.2134 Constitution & Membership

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**4**
Meeting:	**UPWELL IDB**	**Subject:**	**CONSTITUTION & MEMBERSHIP**
Date:	**Friday 31st May 2024**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Polly Tombleson**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Note the current status of its membership and the role they each play as members serving the interests of the Board.
B. Review attendance records and identify any resolutions as necessary.
C. There are currently no vacancies
D. To consider previous discussions of amalgamation – SM, MWe & Up.
E. Reinforce the need for members to view all five 'Good Governance' videos.
F. Identify any topic areas for additional training, as well as any inspection/site visit requirements.

1. Current status

1.1 The table below outline the current composition of the Board and the quorum as detailed in the standing orders.

	Elected Members	Appointed Members	Total Members	Quorum
Composition	14	N/A		7
Actual	14	2 FDC, 3 KLWN	19	
Vacancies	0		0	

1.2 The table below details the current elected members of the Board

No	Name	Status (one of four categories)	Commentary
1	H Bliss	Ratepayer	
2	S Calton	Nominee of ratepayer (Fred Hartley Estates Ltd)	
3	P Clabon	Ratepayer	Vice-Chair & District officer
4	R Gladwin	Ratepayer	
5	W Gladwin	Nominee of Ratepayer (?)	
6	K Goodger	Ratepayer	Chair & District Officer
7	R Gott	Ratepayer	
8	G Gowler	Ratepayer	
9	P Hartley	Nominee of Ratepayer – (Frank Hartley & Sons)	
10	S Hartley	Nominee of Ratepayer – (Frank Hartley & Sons)	
11	A Kew	Nominee of Ratepayer - (Waldersey Farms Ltd)	
12	R Means	Nominee of Ratepayer – (Fred Hartley Estates Ltd)	
13	A Quail	Ratepayer	
14	J Quail	Nominee of Ratepayer – (Scott Oldroyd & Co)	

1.3 The table below details the current appointed members of the Board.

1.4 Special levy paying District Councils appoint members to Boards and their role is to be part of the Board representing all the non-agricultural interests within the Board's district. The Council must consider appointing members who have relevant knowledge or experience that is relevant to the Board and its district.

1.5 Appointed members do not need to be councillors or employees of the Council, therefore can represent wider relevant interests within the district, eg major infrastructure, commerce, community groups, environmental interests.

No	Name	Appointing Council	Commentary (one of three categories)
1	C Crofts	BCKLWN	Councillor
2	J French	FDC	Councillor
3	J Kirk	BCKLWN	Councillor
4	C Marks	FDC	Councillor
5	C Rose	BCKLWN	Councillor

1.6 All Members are reminded that have equal status to each-other around the Board table and are here to serve the interests of the Board.

2. Attendance

2.1 The table below outlines the attendance record for the last four meetings of the Board.

Elected Members

No	Name	18/1/2024	17/5/2023	23/1/2023	18/5/2022
1	H Bliss	Present	Attended	Attended	Attended
2	S Calton	Present	Apologies	Attended	Attended
3	P Clabon	Present	Attended	Attended	Attended
4	R Gladwin	Present	Attended	Attended	Attended
5	W Gladwin	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
6	K Goodger	Present	Attended	Attended	Attended
7	R Gott	Present	Apologies	Attended	Attended
8	G Gowler	Present	Attended	Attended	Attended
9	P Hartley	Present	Attended	Attended	Attended
10	S Hartley	Present	Attended	Apologies	Attended
11	A Kew	Apologies	N/A	N/A	N/A
12	R Means	Apologies	Attended	Attended	Attended

13	A Quail	Present	Attended	Attended	Attended
14	J Quail	Present	Attended	Attended	Attended

Attendance at Chairs Meetings

No	Name	6/10/2023	13/12/2022	12/4/2022	2/11/2021
1	K Goodger	Apologies		Attended	Apologies

Appointed Members (current and previous)

No	Name (Council)	18/01/2024	17/5/2023	23/1/2023	18/5/2022
1	C Crofts (BCKLWN)	Apologies	Attended	Apologies	Attended
2	J French (FDC)		N/A	N/A	N/A
3	J Kirk (BCKLWN)	Present	Apologies	Attended	Attended
4	C Marks (FDC)	Present	N/A	N/A	N/A
5	C Rose (BCKLWN)	Present	Attended	Attended	apologies

3. Elections, vacancies & appointments

3.1 There are no vacancies on the board.

4. Composition and amalgamations

4.1 The Board is encouraged to continually monitor and review its membership, financial and climate resilience, along with assessing its influence locally, regionally and nationally. These are all factors that may lead the Board to consider changing its composition and/or amalgamation with (an)other Board(s).

4.2 Amalgamations and composition changes are not swift processes and can take a number of years. They require planning and additional/specialist resourcing by the MLC as your clerk, Environment Agency and Defra. Therefore, the Board is encouraged to think ahead five to ten years in its decision making, thinking about the next generation.

4.3 The Clerk to report on previous discussions regarding a possible amalgamation between – SM, MWe & Up.

5. Training

5.1 All Members are asked to digest the Good Governance Guide for Internal Drainage Boards published by the Association of Drainage Authorities and view the five accompanying videos intended to bring the guide to life. They are available via https://middlelevel.gov.uk/about/idb-governance/

5.2 To date 2 of 18 Board Members have reported viewing all five videos.
To date 8 of 18 Board Members have reported viewing 2 of the 5 videos

5.3 Members are asked to identify any topics areas they would value further training on as well as any site inspections that would help them undertake their role on the Board more effectively.

5.4 Member training is reported to Defra as part of the annual IDB1 return.

Author Name: Polly Tombleson
Role: Senior Business Support Officer

Miss Ablett referred to the number of elected and appointed members and their attendance record at meetings. The Chairman felt that the attendance register, shown in the report, was a good update. Miss Ablett advised the Board that the Land Drainage Act 1991 allows for members that do not attend Board meetings for 6 months to be asked to stand down and the attendance record was to assist Boards in making any such decisions.

Amalgamations

Miss Ablett advised there was nothing further to report on the potential amalgamation with Sutton & Mepal IDB and Manea & Welney DDC and enquired whether the Chairman had anything to report. The Chairman confirmed that no further discussions had taken place with either Board.

B.2135 Clerks Report

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**5**
Meeting:	**UPWELL IDB**	**Subject:**	**CLERK'S REPORT**
Date:	**Friday 31st May 2024**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Paul Burrows**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Note the content of the report and feedback on items as appropriate.
B. Boards are asked to note the banking overview and that unless there is collective approval, they will not be maximising their interest on available balances.
C. Boards are asked to note the MLC staffing update
D. In determining their valuations for insurance purposes, recognise the limitations associated with their current valuations and the risks they hold of being underinsured.

1. The IDB governance future within the Middle Level of the Fens

1.1 At the MLC and IDB Chairs session on 6th October 2023, Paul Burrows shared the observations from his first suite of IDB meetings and outlined the viability concerns of Conington & Holme IDB that have been escalated to Defra. Observations include that some Boards:

1. struggle for membership and attendance.
2. want to amalgamate but with no one willing to amalgamate with
3. have with no clear succession for critical roles
4. are underwritten by the hands-on inputs of a few (with costs not always passed on within rates)
5. where there's limited involvement from all members around the table
6. with limited financial reserves
7. with aging assets and limited capital reserves
8. will potentially struggle to afford to deliver their ever-increasing statutory duties, powers & governance standards

1.2 The Chairs explored the following question;

Beneath the surface, how healthy is your Board today, for tomorrow and for the next generation?

- What worries you?
- Do we have a good picture of the relative strengths and weaknesses of our Boards?
- How do we ensure risks and issues are tackled proactively?
- How can we better share success, learning and support across Boards?

1.3 The intent is to develop a suite of 'Key Health Indicators' (KHIs) and comparison metrics for the Middle Level Commissioners and administered IDBs. These will help Boards better understand and proactively address their key risks and understand their relative health. KHIs will also help the Middle Level Commissioners assure and focus their service provision for IDBs.

1.4 The picture created will provide an evidence base to inform a business case for change in terms of the IDB landscape within the Middle Level, as the Chairs reflected back to work undertaken by Geoff Beal a number of years ago. Chairs were supportive of the need to develop future options, assess costs:benefits and identify a preferred option proactively locally, rather than risk a national instruction to change. Any business case for change will need to be properly planned and resourced, with considerable engagement included within any scope. This will need to be scoped in due course.

1.5 On 15th February 2024 the Chairs, Vice Chairs and Board Members who sit on more than one IDB within the Middle Level (and those outside the catchment that we administer) had been invited to an informal session in Ramsey to share thoughts about the future IDB governance landscape within the Middle Level and whether action was needed to ensure this was resilient for the future.

1.6 The was consensus from those who attended that we needed to act and a small group has been identified to draft an initial case for change. This will be shared when ready for wider inputs and views.

2. Banking

2.1 As has previously been reported, due to regulatory changes from our bankers, the type of accounts held by all authorities had changed. The current arrangements within our delegations from all the Boards we administer are that we have free banking in return for a non-interest-bearing current account and an interest-bearing Business Premium account within which higher interest could be gained on 'surplus' balances by putting them on deposit for fixed periods. The minimum balance for the Business Premium account is £100,000 and higher rates of interest are available for higher deposit amounts and longer periods of investments.

2.2 For the larger Boards with >£100,000 available, the Treasurer actively transfers funding between accounts and monitors the situation monthly, balancing the need to have funds available for outgoings versus the ability to maximise income. This is relatively resource intensive.

2.3 Following discussion on maximising banking interest at some IDB meetings last year, consideration had been given to Boards 'pooling' deposit funds into a single Business Premium account to enable all Boards to access better rates of interest on balances. To allow this, Boards balances would have to be transferred into a single named account from which the deposit investments would be made.

2.4 In order to gauge views on this outline proposal, it has been raised at IDB meetings over the winter period, at which reservations were raised by all Boards. There were reservations about 'investing' Board balances through a third-party name (another IDB) and the possible security of balances under these circumstances.

2.5 Given that none of the Boards approached approved to proceed along these lines and under these circumstances we will not be actively developing or promoting this option further unless being directly requested to by all Boards.

2.6 With regards to balance security above the FCA Compensation limit, consideration could be given to opening an account with National Savings and Investments where balances are fully backed by the Government. However, to operate these accounts would need to be an online account with mandated authority given to a single person as 'administrator.' As this delegation was an area of concern raised with regards to deposit balance investments, this has not been pursued and is left for the future consideration and instruction.

2.7 Boards are asked to note that they will therefore not be maximising their potential interest individually and collectively.

3. MLC Staffing

3.1 Lorna McShane, Assistant Clerk/Solicitor, left the organisation in March 2024 and we have successfully recruited Ruth Martin to a new role of Lead Clerk. Ruth starts in April 2024. Ruth brings survey, assets, drainage and engineering experience from her time with Breheny contractors, Anglian Water and Haskoning. Since 2008, she has had leadership roles focussed on property, estates and facilities management and joins us from a charity where she leads the facilities management for 48 leased properties across East Anglia.

3.2 This role marks an adjustment for us all, for the Commissioners and for our services to IDBs in that we no longer have in-house legal qualified expertise. Ruth will have a key role in pooling and using the knowledge and experience we have within the office and within our networks, whilst learning and developing her own knowledge. The intent is to develop and drive a clearer suite of Legal and Estates work packages, using external suppliers where appropriate in a more considered and structured manner.

3.3 Sofi Lloyd our Environment Officer has been promoted into a new role of Ecology & Environmental Services Manager. The Environment Act 2021 was a game-changer for IDBs and our journey towards enhancing the environment as part of our delivering our wide range of services now comes with greater expectations, greater responsibilities, greater scrutiny, greater risk and a necessity to work in partnership and collaboration with an increasing variety of groups and organisations. There is also now the opportunity we need to unlock to use our land, assets, operations and waterways to enable the biodiversity net gain responsibilities of others and bring in some income. The MLC Executive Committee recognised this and the need to scale up our ecological capacity and capability. We will be looking to recruit to an Ecologist/Environment Officer role reporting to Sofi in due course as part of the suite of new roles needed to enable the delivery of the increased MLC and IDB capital programme.

3.4 One of the other new roles needed to enable increased capital delivery is within our M&E team and we welcomed Richard Wilmer to the organisation in February 2024.

4. Insurance Valuations

4.1 Appendix 1 explains the rationale with the recommendation that Boards, in determining their valuations for insurance purposes, recognise the limitations associated with their current valuations and the risks they hold of being underinsured.

Author Name: Paul Burrows
Role: Clerk

Appendix 1 Pumping Station Insurance Valuation

middle level commissioners

MLC Services for IDBs

Pumping Station Insurance Valuations

Many of our administered Internal Drainage Boards have asked for a re-assessment of the replacement costs of their pumping stations to ensure they have adequate insurance cover.

Within insurance cover this is called the 'Declared Value' and includes for:

- Reinstatement of building (eg station house)
- Replacement of contents (eg pumps and associated M&E)
- Professional fees (eg consultant and contractor costs)
- Debris removal (eg demolition of damaged station)
- Costs to comply with new 'public authority requirements' (eg eel regulations)

There are many factors that influence the costs of replacement pumping stations with many not well understood until business cases are in development. The last three replacement pumping stations locally all virtually doubled in 'value' from their initial flag within the Environment Agency's capital programme to business case stage. They are difficult to estimate, requiring a range of engineering capability and experience.

The existing insurance valuations across the pumping stations within our IDBs' portfolio are based on an assessment a previous MLC M&E Engineer undertook in 2015. He used his 40-years of experience in the industry, including overseeing a suite of replacement pumping stations, to make a judgement. He used asset appraisals undertaken by a consultant to inform this. This would likely have been sufficiently robust at that time.

Since then, there have been occasional percentage uplifts from this baseline and more recently each Board has taken a view on whether or not to index link their valuations.

The delivery and economic landscape have changed immeasurably since 2015 and since the suite of replacements that informed the baselines used to inform current valuations. There are also a range of new requirements and technology not catered for within the baselines.

As such Boards need to be aware that the MLC cannot provide reassurance that their 'Declared Values' are appropriate and they need to recognise the risk that they are more likely than not to be under-insured. We accept no liability for the consequences of this in the event of a Board needing to make a claim.

We do not currently have the capacity, capability and breadth of recent delivery experience to re-undertake assessments similar to those undertaken in 2015.

It is unlikely that there is a supplier who would undertake a bespoke assessment to determine a valuation without this being a costly exercise for the IDB, alongside invoiced costs from the MLC to explore this possibility.

We could work with a supplier to create a framework for valuations based on complexity and then assign each of our local pumping stations to a scoring within any framework. This would need all our IDBs to support and there would be a shared cost to setting up this framework and approach.

Over the next 3-10 years there will be a suite of pumping station refurbishments and replacements locally led by the MLC, so we will be better placed to undertake assessments in a similar manner to those undertaken in 2015. These assessments would be billed to Boards at the hourly rate for the technical staff involved.

Our recommendation is that Boards in determining their valuations for insurance purposes recognise the limitations associated with their current valuations and the risks they hold of being underinsured.

Unless they wish to invest to explore the 'bespoke assessment' or 'framework' approach, then they need to accept the risks in the medium term until we have sufficient information, evidence and experience to undertake suitable assessments.

Paul Burrows, Chief Executive

Nicola Oldfield, Chief Engineer

October 2023

Miss Ablett referred to the Clerk's report and asked the Board to take note of Appendix 1 of the report, regarding Pumping Station Valuations, and to bear the Clerk's comments in mind when this was discussed later in the agenda.

She drew the Board's attention to other matters in the Clerk's report and there were no questions raised by Members.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted

B.2136 Environment Officers Report

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**6**
Meeting:	**UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**ENVIRONMENT OFFICER'S REPORT**
Date:	**Weds 15th May 2024**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Sofi Lloyd**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Identify who is best placed to be the Environmental Representative for the Board to help us to define and agree the ongoing service provision.
B. Review their current BAP ahead of Env Officers' visit
C. Ensure an Ecological Screening Report (ESR) is completed and submitted to Sofi well in advance of any non-routine work
D. Note and comply with the provided flail mowing, badger, water vole and weed screen guidance

1. Services provision to the Board.

Protecting and improving biodiversity and the environment are higher than ever on the political agenda, and the Government is looking for strong environmental delivery from Public Bodies to contribute towards their own challenging statutory environmental targets. The Fens are an area of particular importance due to national peat protection and water resource management strategies. Our local communities are more focussed than ever on our work as a result of the bank raising project but also, because the general public is nowadays much better informed and aware of the state of nature. For these reasons, it is more important than ever for us to be able to evidence how we have considered the environment when determining our approaches to our flood risk and water level management. Inevitably, this has meant that IDBs now require greater support to meet their statutory environmental duties.

Historically, IDBs have made a contribution towards the MLC Environment Officers' salary in order to access ecological and environmental advice and guidance if required. There has been little definition around what services have been included. This is now being reviewed to ensure that we are able to efficiently plan and secure resources to support IDBs to achieve environmental compliance. It is anticipated that fees will need to be increased to reflect this but we expect the fees will remain very competitive against those of qualified external environmental consultants. While we define the level of service required by the IDB over the longer term, but in recognition of the already significantly increased service requirements, the 2024-2025 fees will include a transitional uplift. It is expected

that from 2025, the fees charged will be reflective of the defined and agreed environmental and ecological services provided to the IDB.
We have begun to define what a standard IDB support package will need to include to support minimum compliance and the following services have been identified:

- One review visit by Env Officer per year & subsequent reporting
- 1 environmental training day per year
- Budget setting and expenditure recording
- Review & assessment of annual programme of works
- ESR review and sign-off for all non-routine works
- BAP report & review for Board
- Consent applications advice & guidance
- Communication of relevant updates in policy, legislation, regulation and best practice

Please identify who is best placed to be the Environmental Representative for the Board to help us to define and agree the ongoing service provision.

2. BAP Refresh Visit

Sofi will contact the Chairman to organise a district visit in order to discuss and refresh the BAP in the next month. Please advise who is best placed to lead that visit and discussions. Please in the meantime review the most current BAP, which is available on the MLC website: Appendix 1 (middlelevel.wpenginepowered.com)

3. Work Package Ecological Screening Report (ESR)

Please be reminded that any non-routine maintenance works may require environmental screening in order to identify any ecological or environmental risks and their mitigations. This will ensure that the work is completed compliantly. Please contact Sofi for the ESR template for any such works. This will include bank reprofiling, culverts, piling and significant extents of woody vegetation removal. If there is any uncertainty, please contact Sofi.

4. Flail mowing and compliance

Please ensure that the Boards' flail mowing contractors are aware and comply with the following:

- Undertake grass bank mowing outside the bird nesting season (March to end August). If mowing within the bird nesting season, and vegetation is over 25cm tall, a walkover survey is likely to be required to ensure that any nesting birds are identified and a stand-off area is applied around nesting birds. This will minimise the risk of disturbing them, which would be an offence under wildlife law.
- Flail cutter heights are set to 10cm or higher to reduce the risk of impacting reptiles between March to the end of Sept.
- Any planned flail mowing over a known badger sett must be reported to Sofi at least two weeks ahead of works being undertaken. Please see next bullet point below for more info regarding badgers.
- The locations of all newly discovered badger setts must be reported to Sofi using W3W.
- Flail mowing must not be undertaken within 1m of the waters' edge to avoid the risk of damaging any water vole habitats present. If mowing must take place within 1m of the waters' edge either:
    a. Vegetation height of no less than 30cm must be maintained on both banks or

b. Only one bank should be mown to the waters' edge, leaving at least a 1m width of bankside vegetation uncut on the other bank to ensure refuge and habitat is maintained

5. Badgers and licences

There is a badger licence available specifically to all IDBs nationally, which allows them to undertake a number of routine operations (flailing, bank reprofiling, desilting etc.) near badger setts which would otherwise be classed as an offence under the Badger Act. MLC now operates under these licences. It is the intention to offer badger licence training and administration services to all MLC-serviced IDBs as soon as possible to enable them to improve their operational compliance. However, in the last month, some interpretation discrepancies regarding the conditions of the licence have arisen nationally, which has put this offer on hold temporarily until a clearer understanding is reached and confirmed by Natural England. Until then, it is advised that a stand-off area of 30m around all badger setts is maintained, where no flailing or bank reprofiling or any other maintenance activity should take place, and de-silting arisings should not be placed. Please see the link below to view the full list of activities that are usually licensable that should be avoided around badger setts. It is hoped that a resolution will be reached by late autumn this year to allow routine maintenance to recommence compliantly and the service will then be offered by MLC. If any necessary or urgent works are needed around badger setts in the meantime, please contact me to agree the approach.

Licence to interfere with badger setts for watercourse and drainage purposes (CL27) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Please be reminded that it is an offence to disturb or interfere with a badger sett in any way without a licence. If any interference or disturbance is required, please contact Sofi ASAP.

6. Water Voles

As always, for any work that plans to "break ground" on the any of banks, (bank reformation, bank slip repair, vegetation removal or cutting vegetation lower than 30cm within 1m of the waters' edge, mooring construction, culverting, head walls, piling etc, please complete the ESR document mentioned earlier in this report and send to Sofi. The ESR will be needed some months ahead of planned works to ensure that all necessary surveys and mitigations can be planned and conducted in plenty of time so that the work is not delayed. Water vole surveys and mitigations can only take place between Feb and Oct. **NOTE**: This process would also need to be followed if a drain needs to be dewatered in order to carry out routine desilting. Dewatering a drain where water voles are present would be considered an offence without a licence.

Please also be reminded that routine ditch cleansing using excavators must ensure that the bank faces are not touched, in order to avoid damaging water vole burrows and habitat, which would be an offence. Buckets should enter and be lifted from the ditch before reaching the bank toe so the bank toe and bank face are not scraped.

For more information on complaint maintenance approaches, please see IDB Biodiversity Manual – Middle Level

7. Mink Control

We are very much in need of further volunteers to respond to mink raft activation alerts in the area. Any activation would need to be attended promptly within a few hours but the need to respond is likely to be very occasional. Please let me know of any interest. Please also report any suspected mink sightings to Sofi.

A link to the most up to date mink project newsletter can be found here:

[Waterlife-Recovery-Trust-Newsletter-6-Final.pdf (waterliferecoverytrust.org.uk)](waterliferecoverytrust.org.uk)

8. Weed screen spoil heaps

These can provide important refuge for a range of species. If they have been in situ for some time, and they now need to be removed it is advised that they are taken apart carefully using hand tools to ensure that any wildlife can flee without being injured. An excavator bucket can be used carefully and slowly if a banksman is observing directly at the edge of the pile to ensure that any wildlife is spotted and allowed to flee if necessary. If any reptiles or reptile nests or eggs are discovered, they should be re-covered carefully and left in order to remain compliant.

9. Invasive species

When any non-native species (particularly the following) are spotted, please record the location using what3words if possible (if not postcode or grid ref) and inform us ASAP. Useful identification guides and information can be found online at www.nonnativespecies.org

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

Author Name: Sofi Lloyd
Role: Environment Officer

Miss Ablett drew the Boards attention to the Environment Officers report and advised this would help to maintain minimum legal compliance and should be integrated into the Boards standard practices.

She reported that Sofi, the environment officer, would be in touch with the Chairman shortly, to arrange a district visit and to discuss and refresh the Bio-diversity action plan.

Miss Ablett advised the Clerk was encouraging the Board to consider appointing an Environmental Representative, similar to the Board's Health & Safety representative, who would act as Sofi Lloyd's go to person.

The Board agreed that this should be the Chairman. The Chairman advised he was happy to be the representative, on behalf of the Board, but when meeting with the Environment Officer, he would also like to ask the Vice Chairman to attend, as he understood how important engaging with the Environment Officer would be.

<u>RESOLVED</u>

i) That the report be noted
ii) That the Chairman be appointed as the Board's Environmental Representative, supported by the Vice Chairman.

<u>B.2137 Consulting Engineers Reports</u>

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:		7
Meeting:	**UPWELL IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: CHIEF ENGINEER'S SUMMARY & CAPITAL PROGRAMME**	
Date:	**Friday 31st May 2024**	**Officer Responsible:**		**Nicola Oldfield**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. **Provide its views on item 2.1.1 *New developments and the use of SuDS*.**
B. **Review and approve its Capital Programme taking account of the advice in item 3.**
C. **Consider authorising a sub-committee to make decisions in relation to pumping plant repairs so that if any high-cost items are needed decisions can be made and parts ordered quickly without the need for a full Board meeting as reported in Appendix 3 item 1.**
D. **Review the pumping station key dates provided in Appendix 3, item 4.1 and advise if there are any discrepancies or if any further details can be added.**

1. Chief Engineer's Summary

1.1 M&E Resources

Our small M&E team is extremely stretched after the wet winter of 2023/24. It has taken some time to identify all the remedial works required to pumping stations across the Middle Level. These works are in addition to our regular inspection and maintenance programme. We have prioritised remedial works and will deliver those most critical to get through next winter. This work is becoming more and more complex due to ageing and deteriorating assets, changes in regulations and the standards needed to achieve compliance. We need to expand our M&E team in order to continue to provide a suitable standard of service to IDBs. Our focus this summer is therefore on ensuring that St Germans and Bevills Leam pumping stations are adequately maintained, and that critical works are delivered for IDB stations. Some routine works will be paused (e.g. routine inspections) until we have the capacity in the team to resume.

Regular checking of pumps and running for a short period of time by pump attendants/district officers is vitally important and any issues should be reported so they can be added to the remedials list.

2. Technical Services

2.1 Summary of Key Planning Issues

2.1.1 ***New developments and the use of SuDS***

As discussed in the last Meeting Report it is considered from the adverse weather conditions experienced within the last few years that there is sufficient evidence to prove that current surface water design practices are not changing quickly enough and/or do not allow for exceptional weather conditions, such as that experienced in recent years – long periods of wet weather resulting in a high ground water table such as that experienced prior to the December 2020 event; storms experienced featuring several intense back-to-back storms together with periods of wet weather between October 2023 – March 2024; Storm Babet (October 2023) and Henk (January 2024).

In addition, current design does not allow for the complex network of water level and flood risk management systems within the Fens particularly when they are “at capacity” during October to April and/or where flows can become “locked” due to high water levels taking many days to return to a “normal” level.

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%,
3. Consider the consequences and impacts of back-to-back storms,
4. Consider the timing of the discharge to minimise any adverse impacts on the receiving system,
5. Be able to “store” water on site for several days until the peak flows have passed,
6. Use complex controls to enable the most suitable means and time of the discharge.

Several other Boards have raised concerns about the installation and efficiency of SuDS facilities particularly in the longer term and the adverse impacts on their systems. Concerns include, the following:

1. The approval and supervision of the installation of SuDS with no post-construction review against their design and performance reviews through their lifecycle.

2. Long term appropriate maintenance and inspection is considered a deficiency and will, in time, result in higher run off rates being discharged into its system that may have a cumulative impact.

3. That despite the weather conditions being experienced recently many balancing ponds are either very full or empty. There have been several reports of ponds overtopping.

4. The cumulative impact of attenuating surface water from developments has been to elongate the duration that the system is under stress. This increases operational costs and could increase the risk of flooding.

5. The need to meet the greater expectations from residents, occupants, operators and promoters of development which requires more regular maintenance operations to alleviate flooding.

The introduction of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act may assist in resolving some of the points raised above, particularly if the MLC represent the Board on the SuDS Approval Board (SAB), but the implementation of this has now been set back further, until the end of the year at the earliest.

The above matter was briefly discussed at a C&P FloW Partnership meeting and other IDBs and Cambridge City Council raised similar concerns.

The Board’s views on this would be appreciated.

2.1.2 ***MLC001: Middle Level System Flood & Drainage Infrastructure Capacity***

This is directly relevant to the Boards that drain and/or pump into the MLC system and will be of interest to others.

As you will be aware, 2023/24 broke records for rainfall and the amount of water pumped at St Germans. Over 227,000 million litres of water were safely pumped into the Tidal Great Ouse that would have otherwise been flooding homes, land, businesses, roads and other critical infrastructure, significantly affecting other vital public services.

Our station worked in combination with over 70 smaller Internal Drainage Board stations, hundreds of kilometres of drains and raised embankments, to keep our Fens relatively dry and protect local communities and the economy from flooding. We are hoping for a drier 2024/25 but need to plan for this being the new normal. This winter really helped highlight the importance of, and also the weaknesses, in our infrastructure and operations.
Alongside this, and within the constraints of our limited staff capacity, we are improving how we engage as non-statutory consultees in the planning process. We want to provide planning authorities, developers and others with an earlier, much clearer stance from us, to inform plans strategically (e.g. within Local Plan development) and tactically (e.g. within individual planning applications).

With these factors in mind, we have published our first 'standing advice note' which is included in Appendix 4 and is available on our website https://middlelevel.gov.uk/standing-advice-2/. Standing Advice Note MLC001 effectively declares our flood and drainage infrastructure 'at capacity'. The intent is to develop and publish further notes over the coming months.

This note was issued to local Councils and the Environment Agency on Wednesday 8th May for them to consider within their decision making. Boards will need to appreciate and plan for the limitations within the MLC receiving system within their own pumping station improvement schemes.

Boards may choose to create, adopt and issue similar standing advice notes for their districts.

2.2 Cranbrook/Counter Drain (CCD) Flood Risk Management (FRM) Strategy
The Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer continues to represent the Board/Commissioners on the Stakeholder Group and associated engagement with the relevant interested parties.

Following a change of the EA's Project Manager the once regular Update Meetings have become less frequent, but work continues on this long-term Strategy.

The EA's consultant, Mott MacDonald, has been undertaking Optioneering Work concerning the provision and operation of the storage facilities within the Block Fen area of Sutton and Mepal IDB.

The EA has offered to give an update presentation to the Board and this is being discussed with the Board's Chair.

2.3 The MLC Planning Engineer is currently on indeterminate sick leave and there are no additional planning updates provided in this report.

3. Capital Programme

3.1 The Board's Capital Programme is shown as Appendix 1. The programme has been updated with future costs for replacing the pumping station based on recent similar projects. These costs will be further informed by the completion of the System Study.

In terms of FCRM Grant-in-Aid (FCRM GiA) from the Environment Agency, there is an allocation for culvert works and for undertaking a System Study to identify any improvements needed in the system. Works arising have also been included, starting in 2026, and will be updated following completion of the System Study.
Culvert works are programmed for completion in 2025/26 once the outline business case has been approved and grant funding released.

Start of the Upwell IDB System Study has been reprogrammed for 2024 and will include channel surveys, structural condition assessments of pumping stations and other assets, hydraulic modelling, economic and environmental assessments, and development of recommendations/solutions with the aim of securing further grant for the delivery of those solutions. The Study will also include consideration of the potential impacts of works arising from the EA's Cranbrook Counter Drain FRM Strategy.
I will contact the Chair to arrange a meeting to review and finalise the scope of work before appointing consultants to undertake the study.

Author Name: Nicola Oldfield
Role: Chief Engineer

Appendix 1:	**Capital Programme**
Appendix 2:	**List of applications since last report**
Appendix 3:	**M&E Report**
Appendix 4:	**MLC001: Middle Level System Flood & Drainage Infrastructure Capacity**

Appendix 1

Upwell Internal Drainage Board

Capital Improvement Programme (2024/2025)

		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	5,000.0	5000.0
	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	0.0	0.0	30.0	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	10,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10000.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	59.1	8.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	67.4
	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
	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	5,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5000.0
	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
Padgetts p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	300.0	2300.0
	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	5,000.0	5000.0
	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	51.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	151.0
	Shelbourne Reynolds Flail mower (Sept '16 - £26,000)	0.0	0	26.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	46.0
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	0.0	8.0	300.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	308.2
		90.4	**8.3**	**100**	**346**	**10,090**	**5,010**	**15**	**2,115**	**0**	**0**	**20**	**10,350**	**28,145**

Appendix 2

The following planning applications have been responded to since the last meeting:

MLC Ref.	Council Ref.	Applicant	Type of Development	Location
568	24/00180	Mr L Bishop	Storage (Vintage machinery and bygones)	Birchfield Road, Nordelph
569	24/00305/F	H.G Bliss Farms Ltd	Agricultural (lean-to building off existing grain store)	Penny Toll Road, Lott's bridge, Three Holes
570	24/00464/F	Mr Lee Bishop	Residence	Silt Road, Nordelph, Downham Market
571	F/YR24/0252/F	Mr & Mrs Almond	Residence (Extension)	Padgetts Road, Christchurch,
572	24/00610/RM	Fox Anglia Homes Ltd	Residence	Birchfield Road, Nordelph,

The following infiltration device applications have been acknowledged since the last meeting:

MLC Ref	Council Ref	Option 1 (Self-certification) or Option 2 (Checking Form)	Location	Date acknowledged
556	23/01150/F	Option 1	Coronation Avenue, Nordelph	9/10/2023

No applications for Byelaw Consent (to undertake works in and around watercourses or to discharge to a watercourse) have been granted since the last meeting.

Appendix 3

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	7
Meeting:	**UPWELL IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL**
Date:	**Friday 31st May 2024**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Dave Bantoft**

1. M&E key messages and advice

There are several outstanding pumping plant issues that need to be investigated and then obtain quotes for repair. Please consider authorising a sub-committee to make decisions in relation to pumping plant repairs so that if any high-cost items are needed decisions can be made and parts ordered quickly without the need for a full Board meeting.

1.1 <u>Padgetts Corner</u>
The pump contactors were replaced in December 2023 and operated well this season. The level sensor is mounted quite low in the sump and it needs to be investigated to see if this can be raised to prevent intermittent faults at high levels. This type of sensor fails when the level is within 300mm of the sensor face.

1.2 <u>Upwell Fen</u>
The discharge pipe thrust block leak has deteriorated. The thrust block is cracked and water is seeping out of cracks, it leaks out more with the pump running. The pipe work is metal up to the joint at the thrust block, then concrete through the bank into the Old Bedford River. The concrete pipe just outside the compound is now exposed as the land has shrunk. The concrete pipe is being run over by tractors to gain access to the field adjacent which is the most likely cause of the leak.

1.3 <u>Cock Fen</u>
Pump 1 drive is noisy and initial inspection indicates that it is a bearing starting to fail in the Rossi gearbox. This will be removed to allow drive to be investigated further and gearbox overhauled if required. The engine control panel and components are badly corroded.

2. Pumping summary

2.1 The main pumping report will be provided by the District Officer.

3. Inspections, maintenance and minor works

3.1 HSB Engineering annual inspections for insurance were carried out during September 2023.

3.2 The mandatory site Electrical Installation Condition Reports (due every 5 years) are in date.

	EICR	
Station	**EICR Date**	**EICR Due**
Bedlam Bridge	21-Jul-2022	21-Jul-2027
Cock Fen	21-Jul-2022	21-Jul-2027
Nordelph	20-Jul-2022	20-Jul-2027
Nordelph Bungalow	18-Aug-2022	18-Aug-2025
Padgetts Corner	21-Jul-2022	21-Jul-2027
Upwell Fen	20-Jul-2022	20-Jul-2027

4. Pumping Station Key Dates

4.1 **Please review the pumping station key dates below, if there are any discrepancies or you can add any details, please let me know. The key dates are an important reference and will feed into the upcoming Key Health Indicators and District Studies.**

	Station				
Station	**Built**	**Pump**	**Pump Overhaul**	**Motor O/H**	**Controls**
Bedlam Bridge	1948	1980(1) 2006 (2)	2015(1) 2006(2)	2015 (1) 2006 (2)	1980
Cock Fen	1975	1975	2013(1) 2012 (2)	2010 (1) 2010 (2)	1975
Nordelph	1932/1970	1970	2011	2011	1970/1991
Padgetts Corner	1980	2012	2012	2012	2015
Upwell Fen	1967	1976	2011	2011	2018

	Weedscreen			
Station	**Bars**	**WSC**	**WSC O/H**	**Controls**
Bedlam Bridge	1980	2006		2006
Cock Fen	2018	2018		2018
Nordelph	1991	N/A	N/A	N/A
Padgetts Corner	1980	N/A	N/A	N/A
Upwell Fen	2018	2018		2018

Author Name: Dave Bantoft
Role: M&E Engineer

Appendix 4

middle level
commissioners

Proudly managing water levels in the Fens since 1862

Standing Advice Note MLC001:

Middle Level Flood and Drainage Infrastructure Capacity

Issued: 01 May 2024 (Version 1)

Key messages

A. Our flood and drainage infrastructure should be considered as 'at capacity' during October to April.

B. Unless there is a compelling exception case, we will not consent surface water discharges greater than greenfield run-off rate and/or any new water entering our catchment across a watershed.

C. We consider that the cumulative impact of attenuating surface water from developments and timing of discharges has been to elongate the duration that our system is under stress. This increases our operational costs and could increase the risk of flooding.

D. We are concerned that there is seemingly no post-construction review of SuDS against their design and performance reviews through their lifecycle. Therefore, even well-designed SuDS may not be performing as expected/consented and there may be a cumulative impact of this across our catchment. Long term appropriate maintenance and inspection is considered a deficiency.

E. The opportunity to release stored water into our system during May to September should be actively explored within strategic flood risk assessments, development masterplans and local flood risk management strategies and in consultation with our engineers.

F. In considering and granting planning permission, Local Planning Authorities need to understand, consider and acknowledge the impact of new development upon their special levy and future funding requests under Defra's Partnership Funding policy. It should be noted that under this policy housing built or converted after January 2012 is not included within FCRM government grant-in-aid calculations.

G. Prior to granting outline planning permission, Local Planning Authorities must consider whether any proposed Biodiversity Net Gain provisions will be compatible with the flood risk management activities undertaken by MLC and other IDBs, for the full 30-year registration period. If this is not known, the LPA should seek advice from MLC prior to granting outline planning permission.

H. In considering and granting planning permission, Local Planning Authorities ought to secure funding from developers towards future capital investment in our water management infrastructure.

I. The Environment Agency needs to understand, consider and acknowledge the impact of new development and sub-optimal SuDS upon the Highland Water claims from the Middle Level Commissioners.

J. As statutory consultees and fellow Risk Management Authorities under the Flood & Water Management Act, Lead Local Flood Authorities and the Environment Agency need to

consider and reflect this advice within their responses to Local Planning Authorities so as not to increase flood risk within the Middle Level.

K. **Developers and Local Planning Authorities ought to consider the adoption of measures such as rainwater harvesting and re-use to avoid as much water as possible from entering the drainage network.**
L. **When considering abstraction licences for unrestricted winter fill applications from irrigators within the Middle Level catchment, the Environment Agency should take account of the potential benefit to the capacity of the system, operational costs, Highland Water costs and their responsibility to reduce flood risk within their determinations.**
M. **In addressing historic mis-connections to the foul sewer network and within changes to discharges of treated effluent water, Anglian Water and Local Authorities need to appreciate the potential impact on the surface water drainage network and receiving system.**
N. **Internal Drainage Boards within the Middle Level catchment may wish to consider adopting similar Standing Advice. They also need to appreciate and plan for the limitations in the capacity of the MLC system withing their own pumping station improvement schemes.**

Advice Primarily For:

- **Local Planning Authorities (LPAs): Fenland District Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council, Peterborough City Council**
- **Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs): Peterborough City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, Norfolk County Council**
- **Minerals & Waste Planning Authorities; Peterborough City Council, Norfolk County Council, Cambridgeshire County Council**
- **Highways Authorities: National Highways, Peterborough City Council, Norfolk County Council, Cambridgeshire County Council**
- **Environment Agency**
- **Developers**
- **Internal Drainage Boards within the Middle Level catchment area**
- **Anglian Water**

About us:

The Middle Level Commissioners are a public authority comprising agricultural ratepayers (those rated on >100 acres of land) who benefit from drainage services provided by their watercourses and assets.

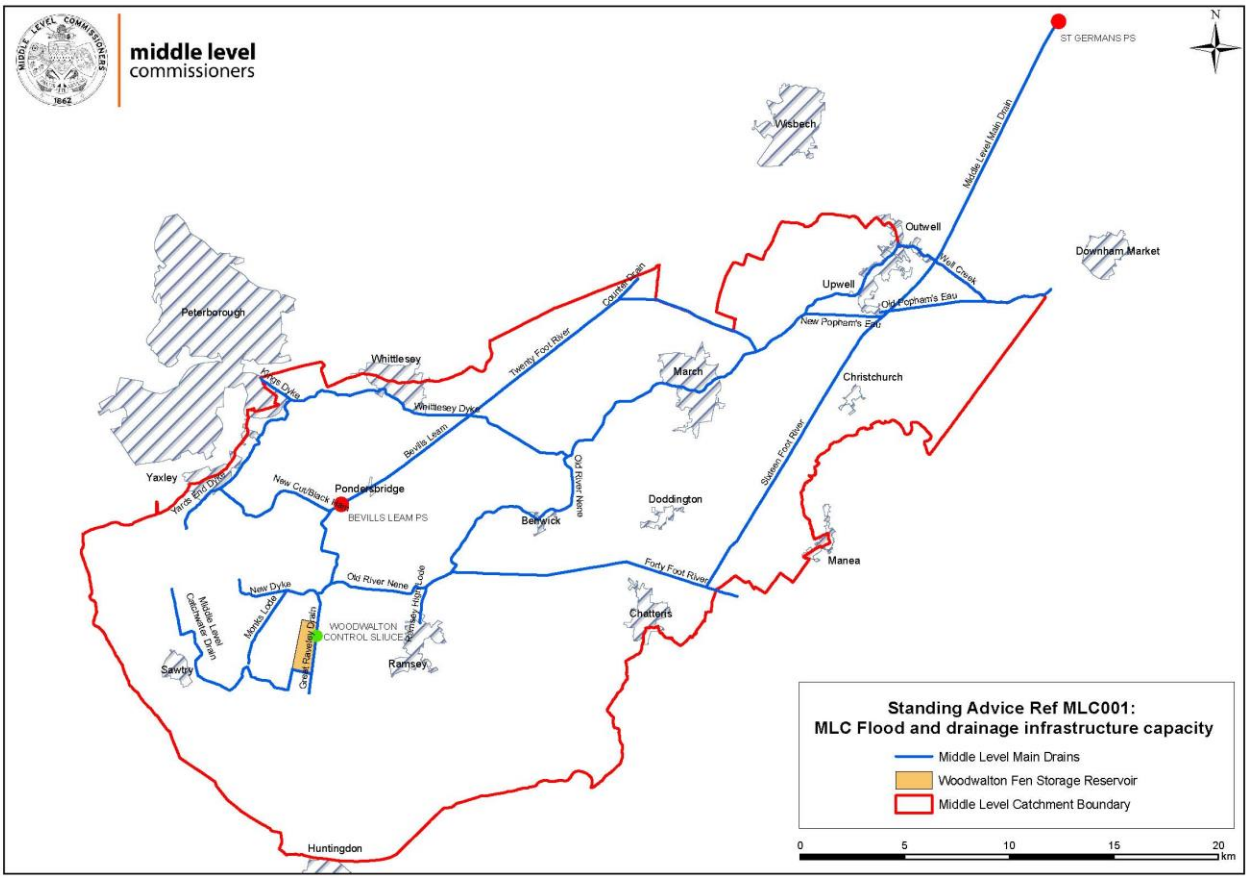
The Commissioners elect a Board and, via an Executive Committee, appoint a Chief Executive who leads a staffing structure to deliver their various statutory duties and responsibilities.

The Commissioners are, for all intents and purposes, an Internal Drainage Board (IDB) and therefore a Risk Management Authority under the Flood & Water Management Act 2010 and we have a duty to enhance the environment under the Environment Act 2021. The Commissioners also have duties and powers under bespoke Acts of Parliament, most notable of these is our role as the fourth largest Navigation Authority in England. We also provide a summer water transfer service, with legacy rights to import water into our catchment from the River Nene.

We are not statutory consultees in the Town & Country Planning Act process, however paragraph 166 of the National Planning Policy Framework advises that strategic policies "should take account of advice from the Environment Agency and other relevant flood risk management authorities, such as lead local flood authorities and internal drainage boards.". Independent from the planning process, developers are likely to need consent from us and/or an Internal Drainage Board under the Land Drainage Act 1991 and/or Byelaws.

We only have a technical team of 2.5 staff inputting and responding as a non-statutory consultee into planning applications and consent determinations on behalf of the Middle Level Commissioners and over thirty other Internal Drainage Boards in the area.

Geographical coverage:
The Middle Level catchment boundary plus areas where there is the potential through development to transfer water across the watershed into the Middle Level.



Our system:
We own and operate two major land drainage pumping stations. These work in combination with approximately 190km of waterways and 300km of raised embankments to convey excess water from, and provide flood resilience to, land, property and businesses within our 750km^2 catchment.

Whilst the Fens is known for being flat, the catchment's higher land towards and beyond the A1 is very responsive to rainfall and funnels water quickly into the lowest land in the country, below sea level. We provide the second tier of drainage along with 25 Internal Drainage Boards and a handful of private districts either pumping or gravity draining into our system. We have no operational control over the 70+ pumping stations that add water into our system. Within the Middle Level 61% of the catchment is pumped twice, 19% is pumped three times and 15% is pumped once.

Our booster station at Bevills Leam elevates and transfers water from the lowest land in the country (we call this our Bevills Pond) into the main Middle Level drainage system (we call this our St Germans Pond). Bevills Leam Pumping Station was constructed in the 1980s and requires major refurbishment in the coming years.

Our pumping station at Wiggenhall St Germans is the largest land drainage pumping station in the UK. It came online in 2010 and is the only outfall from our system, pumping excess water from the whole catchment into the Great Ouse Tidal River. It has an 80-year design life.

The biggest operational challenge we have in times of flood concern is the ability to get vast amounts of water through Bevills Leam Pumping Station and then through the main system (high level carriers and embanked watercourses) to St Germans. Both Stations need to pump early to lower water levels, creating a 'hole' which then draws water to them, given the fact there is no fall/gradient in their respective ponds.

Our system is effectively a giant bowl, with the Bevills Pond being a bowl within that giant bowl. The Bevills Pond is a greater concern in terms of capacity than the St Germans Pond and is considered particularly vulnerable to intense, repeat and elongated rainfall and run-off.

The standard of protection the system provides to local communities, businesses and agricultural land was last assessed prior to 2020. A strategic assessment recommended significant, complex and costly bank raising and desilting works to return the capacity of our system to a 1.51% (or 1 in 66 year) annual exceedance probability for a 15-year design life until the next major intervention will be required.

Will there be future increases in the capacity of our system?
This cannot be, and is not, guaranteed. The current management approach across the Great Ouse Fens is to sustain infrastructure standards of service until a longer-term strategic plan is developed. It should be noted that sustaining standards of service does not keep pace with the impacts of climate change on the standards of protection our infrastructure provides.

We are working with the Environment Agency as part of Fens 2100+. This is a £9.8m programme to develop a Fens-wide flood resilience investment strategy that achieves long-term value for money and generates regional and national benefits. It's being developed with, and for, Flood Risk Management Authorities so they can plan for the next 20-25 years of flood risk management.

Nicola Oldfield
Chief Engineer, Middle Level Commissioners
chiefofficers@middlelevel.gov.uk

1 May 2024

The Board considered the Reports to the Consulting Engineers.

New developments and the use of SuDS.

The Chairman considered that although the Board's district was not highly developed and had no major issues, it should support the guidelines and comments made by other Board, but would not have anything further to add. This was agreed by the Board Members.

Miss Ablett referred to the Capital Programme and advised that a District Wide study was due to start this year, which would identify works required regarding the district and pumping stations. She explained that once the study had been completed it would highlight what works were necessary, the urgency of the and the estimated costs and this information would be used to update the Capital Programme, which would then become more meaningful.

Miss Ablett confirmed the amounts shown in green were works already highlighted to the EA, and values shown for the pumping station was the cost of a total rebuild, based on a recent project that had been undertaken. She asked the Board to bear these figures in mind when discussing insurance valuations.

Miss Ablett warned the Board should bear in mind that all works may not be fully funded by GIA and therefore, the Board needed to consider how these works would be funded in the future

Miss Ablett referred to the Mechanical and Electrical Engineer Report and enquired whether the Board would consider authorising a sub-committee to make decisions in relation to pumping plant repairs. Members agreed the sub-committee would consist of the finance committee members.

The District Foreman reported that Padgetts Corner Pumping Station was currently working well, but the Board agreed that the level sensor should be investigated due to problems previously experienced.

It was agreed that, following on from the discussions during the Inspection, the discharge pipe thrust block at Upwell Fen Pumping Station should be encased in concrete, as a repair, until the outcome of the district-wide study. The Board highlighted some concerns that the outfall was lower than the pump so this work was essential.

Members considered that in the short term the pipe should be covered over and the Clerk be asked to establish who owns the land between the pumping station and the Environment Agency's bank. In addition, the Clerk should be asked to write to Waldersey Farms, explaining the situation and asking them to avoid driving over the pipe and also enquire whether the Board could erect a fence to prevent access.

Miss Ablett asked the Board to consider the pumping station key dates shown in the report, and the District Foreman noted some errors. It was agreed that he would contact the Consulting Engineer to discuss these.

The Chairman advised that during the Inspection, the previous practice of regular pump overhauls was discussed, and he felt that due to financial constraints a reactive rather than proactive approach should be taken, with good emergency plans in place. This was agreed by the Board for the moment.

The Chairman reported that he and the Vice Chairman had recently met with the Treasurer, at which time it was considered that a summary of expenditure incurred relating to the electrification of Cock Fen Pumping Station should be presented to the Board and he referred to the schedule in the agenda. The Chairman advised that to date the panel, motors and telemetry had all been purchased and £85,000 had been paid to UKPN. He advised that although the panels and motors could be sold any resale value was unlikely to recover costs.

The Chairman reported the pumping station was isolated and was probably the station at which the District Foreman spends most of his time in the winter when high water levels were experienced. He added electrifying the station would also enable it to be monitored and operated remotely.

The Chairman advised that they had considered keeping the diesel pumps, in order to keep costs down in view of the electricity rates, but it was hoped these would reduce later in the year. He added that Governments were promoting green energy and it was unknown whether later down the line there would be a government directive instructing the diesel engines to be removed.

Miss Ablett advised the Board needed to consider whether UKPN would require a further payment to complete the work in view of the time that had passed since the original payment was made.

The Vice Chairman hoped this would not be the case as UKPN had been paid in advance and the Board had not cancelled the works.

The Vice Chairman reminded Members the Board had explored the possibility of installing a generator, which was considered unfeasible.

The Chairman enquired whether Members would approve to continue with the electrification of Cock Fen Pumping Station, (subject to discussions with the Chief Engineer and confirmation of whether any GiA would likely be made available).

Miss Ablett advised that if the Board approved to proceed with the electrification, they may wish to consider discussing the matter further with the Chief Engineer, to establish whether it was likely any GiA would be available following completion of the District Study.

The Chairman proposed moving forward with electrification, subject to discussions with the Chief Engineer and confirmation of whether any GiA would likely be made available, and this was seconded by Mr Rose and agreed by all Members. The Chairman and the Vice Chairman were authorised to move forward with the project.

The Board also discussed the overhaul of the gear box for Pump 1 at Cock Fen Pumping Station and, as this would remain in situ after electrification, it was agreed it would be prudent to carry out this work and funded from the Loan Funding.

<u>RESOLVED</u>

i) That the reports be approved.

ii) That the Capital Programme be approved in principle and updated further when the district study has been completed.

iii) That the Board support the response to SuDS by other Boards.

iv) That the Clerk check the Land Registry to ascertain who owns the land between Upwell Fen Pumping Station and the EA bank and advises the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

v) That a letter be sent to Waldersey Farms requesting they avoid driving over the outfall pipe at Upwell Fen Pumping Station in view of damage to the pipe.

vi) That the level sensor at Padgetts Corner Pumping Station be investigated.

vii) That the discharge pipe thrust block be repaired at Upwell Fen Pumping Station and funded from the Asset Fund.

viii) That the gear box on Pump 1 at Cock Fen Pumping Station be overhauled and funded from Loan Funding.

ix) That a sub-committee be formed, consisting of Members of the Finance Committee, to make decisions in relation to pumping plant repairs.

x) That the pump overhaul programme be put on hold and any works undertaken reactively.

xi) That the Board proceed with the electrification of Cock Fen Pumping Station, subject to discussions with the Chief Engineer and confirmation of whether any GiA would likely be made available and the Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to be points of contact for the project.

xii) That the District Foreman continue to take meter readings at the pumping stations and submit these at regular intervals to the engineer.

(NB: The Vice Chairman declared an interest in planning application MLC Ref. No. 569)

B.2138 Health and Safety

The Chairman gave a verbal update following his meeting with COPE Safety Management and reported that no concerns or recommendations had been raised.

B.2139 District Foreman's Report

Viz:

Upwell IDB

Cock Fen pumping station electrification.

Summary of transactions.

Public Works Loan Board

Loan drawn	£300,000.00	Deal date	17th February 2021
Standard interest	2.04%	Term	30 years
Total repayable	£402,586.39	Maturity date	19th February 2051

1/2 yearly repayments - £6,709.78

Payments made:

	Engineering Consultancy	Easement/ legal	E Rand & Co panels/ motors	UK Power Networks	Total	Loan balance
						300,000.00
2020/2021	4,388.50	0.00	14,009.40	85,461.07	103,858.97	196,141.03
2021/2022	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	196,141.03
2022/2023	606.12	2,771.15	51,364.80	0.00	54,742.07	141,398.96
2022/2023 Smart Level telemetry installation					10,970.87	130,428.09
2023/2024	1,058.50	0.00	7,263.80	0.00	8,322.30	122,105.79
2020/2024	**6,053.12**	**2,771.15**	**72,638.00**	**85,461.07**	**177,894.21**	**122,105.79**

Upwell IDB work report January 2024 to May 2024 – Report of the Board's District Foreman

Drainworks

The 2024 drainworks programme will be as stated in the January report concentrating on the Bedlam Bridge and Christchurch 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.

A new Fen Stock and pipework was installed at green lane on Bliss's farm in March due to sink holes caused by the existing pipework corroding away, a Fen Stock was installed as it provides better water management than the old dam board structure which was also corroding away.

Pumping Stations

Cock Fen - Both engines have been serviced over this period and both engines have had new batteries fitted, new temperature sensor was fitted to engine 2 along with a new starter motor. The vibration is concerning on engine 1 as it cracked one of the engine mounts which had to be repaired, the vibration seems to be coming from the gearbox or pump shaft and will be looked at soon.

Bedlam Bridge - Both pumps have been working well although there is an issue with pump one where the pump clock keeps going even though the pump has stopped (happens rarely but is being looked at). The weedscreen cleaner had some new switch gear fitted as it had failed.

Padgetts - The pump has been running fine with no issues since it had new contactors last year.

Upwell Fen - The pump and weedscreen cleaner are working fine but there is an ongoing issue with the outfall pipework which has a small leak and is being looked at being resolved shortly, the pipework was dug out further along to inspect the condition of it.

Nordelph - The pump is running well although there is still an issue with it knocking fuse breakers in the bungalow when it starts up since a new fuse board was fitted, an electrician has tested the bungalow and found no problem so it seems the new fuse board is sensitive to the power draw from the pump on start up.

Due to a recent health and safety inspection, I can no longer put the drain debris on the bridge so a barrow was purchased so I can clear it away as I do it but it just means it takes longer to do now.

Works Truck

The Ford Ranger has had a few more issues with a new starter motor and battery fitted in March, one of the rear springs snapped so was replaced with a used one that I kept from last year as it had 2 new ones fitted after one snapped previously.

Tractor and Flailmower

The Tractor and Flailmower was traded in at the start of April and currently waiting for the new on to arrive at time of writing.

Summary

Since the January meeting we had quite a lot more rainfall making it one of the wettest years in the last 24 years I can look back on, the pumps have all done considerably more hours than an average year but the drains all coped well although the was a lot of time clearing culverts due to the fast-moving water washing debris to pipes causing them to restrict flow and dam up on occasions.

All pumps are currently turned off with water backing up for the summer with levels monitored regularly.

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

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Pumping undertaken during the year

	Total No. of Hours to date	Hours run in 2023/24	Hours run in 2022/23
Cock Fen			
No.1 Perkins	**3215**	**511**	**83**
No.2 Perkins	**4561**	**1145**	**28**
Weedscreen	**2186**	**1387**	**143**
Upwell Fen	**1745**	**707**	**90**
Weedscreen	**362**	**78**	**97**
Nordelph	**4836**	**336**	**62**
Bedlam Bridge			
No.1 Old Electric	**2190***	**293**	**54**
No.2 New Electric	**5465**	**826**	**63**
Weedscreen	**2009**	**231**	**26**
Padgetts Corner	**3148**	**933**	**74**

***Pump 1 clock continued running with pump stopped over a few days for approximately 40 hours**

Oil Stocks on the 31st March 2024 were: -

Cock Fen	**-**	**5600 litres of Diesel Oil**	**10 litres of Engine Oil**
Nordelph	**-**	**800 litres of Diesel Oil**	**0 litres of Engine Oil** **40 litres of Hydraulic Oil**

Plant and vehicle

The New Holland tractor has worked **628** hrs during the year and to date has worked a total of **4052** hrs.

The Board's Ford Ranger Pick Up truck was purchased second hand in September 2022 and to date has a mileage of **91021.**

Carl Nunn

Mr Nunn referred the Board to his written report, which was noted by the Board.

B.2140 Finance Committee Report

The Chairman reported that as agreed at the board meeting in January, the finance committee had met regarding the potential purchase of a tractor and/or flail mower replacement.

He advised the recommendation was to purchase an ex hire 2021 Massey Ferguson tractor, which had undertaken 1100 hours in total and came with a warranty to April 2026, together with a new Bomford 8 metre mower, which would have a 1-year warranty. He confirmed that the plant would be purchased from Thurlow Nunn Standen and the benefit of them supplying both the tractor and the mower was that it should provide the Board with a good service for the tractor and mower going forward.

The Chairman advised other quotes and options had been explored, but this was both the most competitive option and the best choice in the finance committee's opinion.

The Chairman reported that an email had been sent to all members in February advising them of the recommendation and the financial impact on the Board seeking approval to proceed with the purchase. He confirmed that as 12 Members from a total of 19, had responded favourably it had been agreed to proceed with the purchase.

RESOLVED

> That the actions of the finance committee be approved and the Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to make any further arrangements concerning the purchase as necessary.

B.2141 Governance

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**11**
Meeting:	**UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**GOVERNANCE**
Date:	**Friday 31st May 2024**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Paul Burrows**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Review and approve the Financial Regulations & Financial Code.
B. Advise on any changes they wish to make to insured values.
C. Note the system of financial Internal Controls that are in place and consider whether additional controls are required within the running and decision making of the Board.
D. Exercise of Public Rights
E. Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments
G. Authorise the Chairman to sign the annual return for 2024.

1. Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) and Internal Auditor

1.1 The AGAR provides the framework by which the governance of the Board is assessed. The Board's last AGAR is available on its page via www.middlelevel.gov.uk

1.2 The Board is asked to act on the advice of the Auditor within its decision making.

2. Risk Assessment and Insured Values

2.1 The insured values for the Board's assets are detailed below:

UPWELL IDB
INSURED VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS

PUMPING STATIONS & BUNGALOW

	As At 1st April 2024
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
	4,212,500.00

3. Financial Regulations & Code

3.1 To review and approve the Financial Regulations & Financial Code and to confirm the next review period (Appendix 1)

4. Annual Governance Statement:

4.1 To review and complete the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31st March 2024. (Appendix 2)

5. Exercise of Public Rights

5.1 For completion of the Annual Governance Statement the Board is required to confirm that they provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

5.2 In order to warrant a positive response to this assertion the authority needs to have taken the following actions in respect of the previous annual return:

Exercise of Public Rights: The authority provided for the exercise of public rights set out in Sections 26 and 27 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. Part 5 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requires the RFO to have published including on the authority's website or other website:

- Sections 1 and 2 of the annual return
- A declaration that the status of the statement of accounts is 'unaudited;' and

- A statement that sets out details of how public rights can be exercised, as set out in Regulation 15(2)(b), which includes the period for the exercise of public rights.

5.3 In addition, a notice of the conclusion of the external auditor's limited assurance review of the annual return, together with relevant accompanying information, has been published in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 16 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. We also display the 'Local Authority Accounts – A Summary of Your Rights' with the notice.

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

6. Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments:

6.1 The clerk to report.

Author Name: Paul Burrows
Role: Clerk

Appendix 1 Financial Regulations & Financial Code
Appendix 2 Annual Governance Statement 2024

Appendix 1

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Financial Regulations

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A. INTRODUCTION

1. These Financial Regulations are designed to supplement the Board's Standing Orders and to ensure that the funds and assets of the Board are properly accounted for and controlled.

2. Any variation to these Regulations shall be made by a resolution of the Board.

3. The Clerk shall, where appropriate, prepare additional rules of procedure, supplementary to these Regulations, to ensure the maintenance of financial control and security.

4. The Clerk or such officer as shall be designated by him ("together referred to as "the Clerk") shall, together with the Board's Internal Auditor, be responsible for determining the format of the Board's accounting systems, annual Accounts and supporting records and shall ensure that the accounting systems determined by him are observed and that the accounts of the Board and supporting records are kept up to date.

5. The Clerk shall be responsible for maintaining an adequate and effective internal audit of the accounts of the Board in the manner he considers to be best.

6. The Clerk shall ensure that the Board's annual Accounts are prepared as soon as possible after 31st March in each year, and in accordance with the dates as set out in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (as amended).

7. "The Board" shall mean the Upwell Internal Drainage Board.

B. CONTRACTS

1. The Board shall determine the procedures to be employed in connection with the procurement of goods and services save that, if no procedures be specified, three (or more) written quotations shall be invited unless the obtaining of tenders is prescribed by the rules applicable to the particular procurement.

2. Tendering may be selective or open, although, whenever possible, selective tendering shall be used and tenders invited to seek to ensure that the required number of tenders are actually received.

3. Tenders shall be opened, not earlier than the closing date prescribed in the tender documents, in the presence of such person or persons as may be authorised by the Board. A declaration shall be signed to such effect by the persons present at the opening of the tender(s) and a report on the tenders received shall be made to the Board.

4. Where a tender is accepted other than the lowest, the approval of the Chairman of the Board, or of the Board itself shall be obtained.

5. In the case of a tender for rents or similar sums where these are to be paid <u>to</u> the Board, where a tender is accepted other than the highest, the approval of the Chairman of the Board, or of the Board itself shall be obtained.

C. RESPONSIBILITY OF OFFICERS

1. All employees, officers and members of the Board have a general responsibility for the security of the property of the Board, for the avoidance of loss and for economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.

D. ESTIMATES

1. The Clerk shall be responsible for the preparation of annual Estimates.

2. The Estimates should be determined as at the commencement of each financial year – using the best information available.

3. The Estimates shall be approved by the Board each year in order that the rates and special levies can be determined at the appropriate time.

4. The Clerk shall be responsible for seeking reasons and causes for deviation from the Estimates and shall inform the Board of all material variances.

E. BANKING

1. The Clerk shall advise the Board's bankers in writing of the conditions under which each bank account (which account must be in the Board's name) shall be operated.

2. All payments other than those made from Petty Cash shall be made by either cheque, BACS, direct debit or internet banking or via the Board's Office Credit card.

   The main bank accounts will be operated on the following basis:-

   a) Where payment is made by cheque:-

   Current Account – All cheques will be signed by both an authorised officer and an authorised member.

   Labour Account – All cheques will be signed by an authorised officer.

   b) Where payment is made by any other means the invoice will be authorised by a Board Member and payment made by an authorised officer.

3. Salaries and Wages will be paid by BACS and all BACS transactions will be authorised by the Clerk.

4. All bank transfers to non-Board bank accounts (save those solely made between inter office accounts which may be made by the Clerk) shall be authorised as in paragraph 2. of this Section.

5. The Clerk shall seek to ensure that the Board's bank accounts are managed so as to produce maximum benefits for the Board.

F. INCOME

1. An official receipt shall be made out for every sum received by the Board and must show:-

   (a) Date of receipt
   (b) Amount received
   (c) Type of remittance
   (d) Account Reference

   Copies of all receipts raised shall be retained by the Board.

2. Board monies shall not be used for the encashment of private cheques.

3. All cheques, cash etc received shall be banked at least weekly. Disbursements shall not be made from cash received but from the Petty Cash float. Banking shall be daily when large sums are received which require this.

4. Keys to safes, cash boxes etc shall be carried only by those authorised to do so and shall only be used by or under the supervision of such persons.

5. The Clerk shall be responsible for ensuring that all monies received are properly brought to account in the Board's accounting records.

6. Any debts which the Clerk considers are not recoverable may be written off with the Board's approval unless they are considered not recoverable following legal advice when the Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman may authorise them to be written off.

G. PURCHASES OF GOODS AND SERVICES

1. Any goods and services for which provision is made in the Estimates may be purchased by an authorised employee, officer or member.

2. The purchase of any goods or services may be effected by an authorised employee, officer or member where they are of a type the authority to purchase which has been delegated to that employee, officer or member by the Board.

3. The purchase of any goods or services not referred to in paragraphs 1 or 2 of this Section may be authorised by the Chairman or District Officer where they are of a routine or recurring nature or form part of the Board's maintenance expenditure.

4. For all goods and services other than as provided for in this Section, the Board's approval shall be obtained prior to the purchase being effected.

5. The requirements under this Section may be dispensed with if the goods or services are required urgently such that it would not be feasible or practical to obtain the necessary approval. In such cases, the Chairman shall be authorised to effect the purchase in conjunction with the Clerk. Any purchase made under this paragraph shall be specifically reported to the Board at the earliest opportunity.

6. An official order shall be placed for all goods and services.

7. All invoices for payment shall be examined, coded and approved and shall be certified by the appropriate authorised employee, officer or member.

8. See Section B "Contracts" for further Financial Regulations in connection with the purchase of goods and services.

H. EMPLOYEES

1. The Board's approval shall be required for the employment of additional permanent employees.

2. The Chairman or District Officer shall have authority to employ additional temporary employees provided the revenue consequences are contained within the current annual Estimates.

3. All time records and other pay records shall be in a form approved by the Chairman or District Officer in conjunction with the Clerk and shall be certified and submitted in accordance with their instructions.

4. The Clerk shall be responsible for the proper compilation of the payroll and for the final determination of pay.

I. STORES

1. Stores records shall be in such a form and shall comply with such systems of control as the Chairman or District Officer shall in conjunction with the Clerk approve.

2. All goods received shall be checked as regards quantity and/or weight and inspected as to quality, condition and specification. A delivery note shall be obtained from the supplier, wherever possible, and signed by the person receiving the goods. No goods shall be signed for as "in good condition" or similar wording without being properly inspected. Therefore most goods delivered should be signed for as 'received uninspected'.

3. All goods issued from stores shall be properly accounted for and recorded.

4. All breakages and losses of goods held in store shall be recorded and reported to the Board's office in order that appropriate action can be taken.

5. There shall be a physical check of all items in store at least once a year and the stock taking records shall be signed by the responsible person(s).

J. ASSETS

1. All assets other than stores owned by the Board shall be accounted for in an asset register maintained by the Clerk. The asset register shall reflect additions and disposals of assets and record the cost or valuation of the assets.

2. From time to time as the Board deem appropriate the accuracy of the asset register shall be compared with a physical inspection of the Board's assets.

3. The asset register shall be placed before the Board for inspection at the earliest opportunity following the completion of the annual Accounts.

4. Any sale of Board assets will be undertaken either through competitive Tender or in the manner approved of by the Board.

5. See Section B "Contracts" for further Financial Regulations in connection with Tenders.

K. AUDIT

1. As a requirement of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (as amended) the Clerk shall arrange for an internal audit of accounting, financial management and other operations of the Board to take place. This audit will be undertaken by an external person qualified to perform this function.

2. Authority of Internal Audit

   Auditors are authorised to:

   (a) Access/enter at all reasonable times any Board premises or land
   (b) Have access to all assets, records, documents, minutes, correspondence and control systems relating to any aspect of the Board
   (c) Require and receive any information and explanation considered necessary concerning any matter under examination
   (d) Require any employee, officer or member of the Board to produce or account for cash, stores or any other Board asset under his or her control
   (e) Request access to records belonging to third parties, such as contractors
   (f) Have full and free access to all employees, officers, members and committees
   (g) Allocate resources, set frequencies, select subjects, determine scope of work, and apply the techniques required to accompany audit objectives

   Auditors are not authorised to:

   (a) Perform any operational duties for the Board
   (b) Initiate or approve accounting transactions
   (c) Direct the activities of any Board employee, member or officer, except to the extent that such employee, member or officer has been appropriately assigned to assist the Internal Auditor.

3. In addition all employees, members or officers of the Board are required to assist the External Auditor, or his/her authorised representative, in the performance of his/her duties under the Audit Commission Act 1998.

L. FRAUD OR OTHER IRREGULARITIES

1. Any employee, officer or member concerned shall immediately notify the Clerk and/or the Internal Auditor in accordance with the Board's Fraud and Corruption Policy of any matter which involves, or is thought to involve, irregularities concerning cash, stores or other property of the Board or any suspected irregularity in the exercise of the functions of the Board.

2. Any financial irregularity involving an employee of the Board will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure.

M. WRITE OFFS

1. In addition to the exercise of any powers under Section F above the Clerk shall have the authority to write off the following:-

   (a) damaged or stolen goods for which it is not considered that the Board may make a valid insurance claim, where those goods do not form part of a stock account
   (b) surplus goods and materials
   (c) goods, vehicles or materials that are considered to have no material value due to deterioration or obsolescence.

2. The appropriate employees, members or officers shall inform the Clerk of any item under paragraph 1 of this Section that they consider should be written off together with:-

   - details of the item or debt to be written off
   - the circumstances necessitating the write off
   - the reasons why he/she considers that the debt is irrecoverable or that no proceeds on sale would accrue to the Board

3. Where any items to be written off do constitute part of a stock account, the procedures for recording the write off within the Board's accounts and the method of disposing of the goods shall be approved of by the Clerk. The Clerk shall then make the appropriate adjustments to the Board's accounting records.

N. SALARIES, WAGES AND PENSIONS

1. The payment of all salaries, wages, compensation and other emoluments to all present or former employees, members or officers shall be made by the Clerk or under arrangements controlled by him.

2. Each responsible employee, member or officer shall notify the Clerk immediately, and in the form prescribed by him, of all matters affecting such payments, and in particular:-

   - resignations, dismissals, suspensions, secondments and transfers
   - absences from duty for sickness, unpaid leave or other reason, but not normal leave

- changes in remuneration, other than pay awards and agreements of general application
- information necessary to maintain records of service for pensions, income tax, national insurance and the like

3. Unless determined otherwise by the Board, the Clerk shall be responsible for overseeing the private use of the Board's vehicles and shall be notified by the responsible employee, member or officer of any financial contributions in respect thereof, to be made by members, employees or officers.

O. BOARD EMPLOYEES etc

1. All members, officers and employees of the Board shall conduct themselves in a polite and courteous manner as expected by the Board.

2. Members, officers and employees must declare to an appropriate responsible officer any financial or other interest, which could conflict with the Board's interests.

3. It is a criminal offence for a member, an employee or an officer of the Board to receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing or not doing anything, or showing favour or disfavour, from or to any person, in their official capacity as such a Board member, employee or officer.

4. In terms of hospitality and gifts, only usable gifts of a small value may be accepted by individual staff or a section as a whole. Under no circumstances may cash be accepted as a gift.

5. Hospitality of a value greater than the value specified from time to time by the Board by resolution must be recorded in a Hospitality Book to be kept at the Board's offices.

4\. Where an outside organisation is seeking to sponsor a Board activity (whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily), the basic rules concerning acceptance of gifts and hospitality shall apply.

P. MEMBERS' AND EMPLOYEES' ALLOWANCES

1. All claims for payment of car allowances, subsistence allowances, travelling and any other incidental expense shall be submitted as required duly certified, in a form approved by the Clerk.

2. The certification by or on behalf of the responsible member, employee or officer shall imply that the certifying person is satisfied that the journeys were authorised, the expenses properly and necessarily incurred and that the allowances are properly payable by the Board.

3. An employee or officer shall not certify a claim form made payable to him/herself.

4. Payments to members, (including co-opted members of the Board or its Committees), who are entitled to claim travelling or other allowances will be made by the Clerk upon receipt of the completed prescribed form.

5. No member shall be allowed to claim an allowance or expenses from more than one body.

Q. INSURANCES

1. The Clerk shall, in consultation with the Board's insurance broker initiate all insurance cover and oversee the negotiation of all claims in consultation with other members, employees or officers where necessary or appropriate.

2. Responsible employees, officers or members shall promptly notify the Clerk of all new risks, properties or vehicles needing to be insured, and of any disposals or alterations affecting existing insurances.

3. Responsible employees, officers or members shall promptly notify the Clerk of any loss, liability or damage or any event likely to lead to a claim on any Board policy, and shall where appropriate notify the police of the relevant circumstances.

4. All appropriate employees of the Board shall be included in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance.

5. The Clerk shall annually, or at such other period as he considers necessary, review all insurances held by the Board in consultation with such others as may be appropriate.

6. Responsible employees, members or officers shall consult the Clerk in respect of the terms of any indemnity which the Board is requested to give.

7. The responsible employee, member or officer shall inspect insurance policies of contractors who undertake works on behalf of the Board to ensure as far as possible that all necessary cover has been taken out.

R. SECURITY

1. Each responsible employee, member or officer is responsible for maintaining proper security at all times for all buildings, stores, plant, vehicles, equipment, cash, documents and information under his/her control. Each responsible person shall consult the Clerk in any case where security is thought to be defective or where it is considered that special security arrangements may be needed.

2. All members, employees and officers of the Board have a duty to comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and any amending legislation. Responsible officers shall ensure that members, employees and officers are aware of their responsibilities under this legislation through the provision of suitable training and the circulation of relevant information on the subject.

3. Keys to safes and similar receptacles are either to be carried on the person of those responsible or kept locked away in a safe and secure place at all times. A list of such key holders shall be supplied to the Clerk. Where keys are transferred, the new recipient assumes responsibility. The loss of any keys must be reported immediately to the Clerk.

S. PROTECTION OF PRIVATE PROPERTY

1. Each responsible employee, member or officer shall notify the Clerk of any case where steps are necessary to prevent or mitigate loss of or damage to moveable property.

2. The Board shall not be liable for accidental loss or damage to the personal possessions which members, employees or officers use whilst on Board business that are not included under the Board's insurance policies.

3. All recovered valuables such as jewellery, watches and other small items of a similar nature and documents of title shall be kept under safe custody as directed by the Clerk, and shall, if not claimed, be disposed of in a manner determined by him.

4. In the event of theft of personal items from employees, officers or members, a full report shall be made by the person affected as soon as the theft has been discovered. All such incidents shall be recorded and investigated and where appropriate reported to the Police. Where possible, the Clerk or responsible employee, officer or member shall make appropriate recommendations to improve security.

T. REVIEW

These Financial Regulations shall be reviewed at least every ten years by the Board.

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

FINANCIAL CODE

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A SUMMARY

1. This Financial Code supplements the Board's Financial Regulations, Standing Orders, Schedule of Reserved Matters and Scheme of Delegations to ensure that its resources are properly managed, accounted for and controlled. It should be read together with those Regulations, Orders, Schedule and Scheme together with any supplementary guidance produced by the Clerk in respect thereof.

2. The level at which decisions relating to the finances and functions of the Board are to be taken are as set out in the Schedule of Reserved Matters and the Scheme of Delegations

3. The Clerk shall be responsible for maintaining adequate and effective controls and procedures in the manner and format he/she considers to be best and shall where appropriate, prepare additional rules of procedure or guidance, supplementary to this Code.

4. The Clerk shall be responsible for setting up and maintaining the financial and management accounting/reporting systems, processes, procedures and coding lists. Such systems shall be properly documented and shall not be changed save by or with the approval of the Clerk. The Treasurer to the Middle Level Commissioners from time to time shall be the Board's Responsible Financial Officer, as defined in and for the purposes of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

5. The Clerk shall be responsible to the Board for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources and for ensuring that value for money is provided.

6. The Clerk shall ensure that the Board's Financial Statements for each Financial Year ending 31 March are prepared in accordance with any advice received from the Internal Auditor and with the provisions in force from time to time of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities and, so far as may be appropriate, the Practitioners' Guide to the Preparation of Financial Statements for IDBs..

7. The Clerk shall ensure that the Board considers and approves its Financial Statements for a Financial Year in accordance with the provisions of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

8 References in this Code to ''the Clerk'' shall be a reference to such officers of the Middle Level Commissioners as may from time to time undertake the relevant work or functions on behalf of the Board and references to "the Chairman" shall also include the Vice Chairman.

B SCHEME OF BUDGET DELEGATION

1. The Clerk shall be a budget holder and is responsible to the Board for the overall management of the Board's Finances, the Expenditure Estimates and all Budgets.

2. The Board's Consulting Engineer is responsible to the Board to the extent that he is so authorised by the Board and is allocated funds for the purpose for preparing and managing the Board's Capital Works Budget

3. The Board's Consulting Engineer and/or the Chairman and/or the District Officer are responsible to the Board to the extent that they are so authorised by the Board and are allocated funds for the purpose for preparing and managing the Board's Maintenance Works Budget, the Plant/Labour Operating Accounts, the Plant Renewals Budget, the Stock Control Account and the Rechargeable Works Budget and any other matter in respect of which they are authorised under the Scheme of Delegations.

4. Other than as set out in the Scheme of Delegations or where authorised to do so by a resolution of the Board, no other person shall be empowered to enter into contracts on behalf of the Board unless authorised to do so by a budget holder. Nor shall any other person commit the Board to a particular course of action or provide an undertaking or assurance to any third party without the prior consent of the Clerk or of the Chairman.

5. No budget holder other than the Chairman shall procure goods and services, charge, allocate or otherwise commit expenditure against a budget that they have no budgetary responsibility for.

6. All correcting journal entries shall always be authorised and approved by the Clerk.

7. All employees and members have a responsibility for health and safety, compliance with policies, procedures and codes of practice, for the general security of the Board's property, and, for economy efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.

8. All members and employees shall familiarise themselves with and observe the Schedule of Reserved Matters, the Financial Regulations, the Scheme of Delegations and this Code.

9. Failure to comply with any aspect of this Code may result in disciplinary action being taken against the individual(s) concerned. Serious breaches by Board Members may result in action being taken against them, in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct.

C MANAGING BUDGETS & REPORTING

1. The Clerk shall be responsible for preparing the Board's Estimates/Budgets, for monitoring income and expenditure during the course of the year, for alerting the Chairman to any material variances, and, for providing budget holders with the financial information that they require and assisting them as necessary to enable them to properly prepare/manage their budgets. The Clerk shall further ensure that the Board are presented with and consider the proposed expenditure estimates in order that the Rates and Special Levies can be determined for each financial year in due time in accordance with the Land Drainage Act 1991 and it is the individual budget holder's responsibility to provide him/her with their detailed budgets and supporting information in order that this may be done.

2. Any drainage rate refunds due for whatever reason shall be approved by the Clerk prior to being paid or otherwise accounted for.

3. The Clerk shall be responsible for ensuring that the Drainage Rates and Special Levies are substantially collected by **1 November** each year. Outstanding Rates/Levies shall be pursued in a timely manner after that date.

4. The Clerk shall ensure that appropriate procedures are in place for alerting the Clerk immediately should a Local Authority fail to make their Special Levy payment at the agreed time, or where Drainage Rates are outstanding following reminder.
5. Every budget holder is responsible for seeking to ensure that actual expenditure on each of their budgets does not exceed the budget as approved and shall regularly monitor income/expenditure to this end. Budget holders shall whenever practicable get approval for material adverse variances to any of their budgets that are anticipated. Approval shall be sought in accordance with the Schedule of Reserved Matters and the Scheme of Delegations.

6. The Clerk may convene a meeting of the Board or a Committee. The Chairman or any 3 other Board members shall also have the power to convene such a meeting.

7. The Consulting Engineer shall prepare a Report for each Board meeting at which such items appear on the agenda detailing amongst other things the progress made on approved capital schemes in respect of which he has been instructed during the reporting period as compared to approved budgeted costs, and, when appropriate, will propose new capital schemes for consideration. Such Report will also detail any maintenance work which he has organised for the Board during the reporting period and the cost of such work.

8. The Clerk shall also prepare a Financial Report for each Board meeting and, shall prepare any other management accounting/financial report that may be required by the Board.

D PURCHASING GOODS & SERVICES (INCLUDING PLANT)

1. Unless otherwise authorised by the Board by resolution or required under the terms of any formal procedures relating to such work, budget holders shall always comply with the following procedures when procuring goods and services.

   Quotations/Tenders will be sought as follows, other than in emergency situations where approved buying groups or approved contractors/consultants/suppliers for a particular area of work or expertise have been appointed or are used or where approved service level agreements are in force. These threshold amounts may be amended from time to time by resolution of the Board:

Estimated Value of Goods/Services Quotes/ obtained	Quotation/Tenders to be
<= £2,000	No quotations/tenders required
> £2,000 and <= £5,000	Obtain 1 written quotation
> £5,000	Obtain 3 quotations or 3 tenders as appropriate

2. The budget holder shall be responsible for ensuring that quotations or tenders are sought when required by the above table. Where it is not possible to get the required quotations or tenders, the Chairman’s written approval must be obtained prior to awarding any contract.

3. Any approved contractors, consultants or suppliers list shall be maintained and kept up to date by the Clerk.

4. A budget holder must never agree to permit a third party to provide them with goods/services where tenders or quotations are required without obtaining a copy of their terms of business beforehand.

5. Budget holders shall fully comply with all competition law and the Bribery Act 2010 and shall so far as is reasonable, satisfy themselves as to the insurance policies of contractors, and their systems of work before awarding works contracts.

6. Budget holders shall not enter in to any contract that has been reserved to the Board or delegated to a Board Committee without obtaining the Clerk's approval beforehand. The Clerk shall not permit any budget holder to enter in to such a contract if he/she considers it to be inappropriate or that the required approval has not been given.

7. The relevant budget holder is responsible for ensuring that the procurement of all goods and services is authorised by the Board or in accordance with the Scheme of Delegations. All emergency work must be approved by the Chairman.

8. All procurement of goods and services shall be authorised by the signing and dating of an official purchase order or purchase instruction. On so authorising the procurement of goods or services the budget holder will have satisfied themselves that the Financial Regulations and this Code have been complied with and that any approval required by the Schedule of Reserved Matters and the Scheme of Delegations has been obtained. The Clerk shall be authorised to raise, sign and date a purchase order or purchase instruction where the procurement has been authorised by resolution of the Board.

9. The budget holder must never break down a job and string a number of purchase orders or authorisations together simply to avoid having to get 3 written quotations/tenders.

10. The following information must be clearly stated on each purchase order or instruction:

    i. The name of the supplier.

    ii. The agreed price of the goods/services required, other than in an emergency or where impractical to do so.

    iii. The cost centres to which the item(s) will be allocated and thereby charged to.

    iv The Unique Order No as approved by the budget holder.

11. The Clerk shall ensure that procedures are in place for establishing when goods or services, have been charged, allocated or otherwise expenditure has been committed against an unauthorised budget.

12. All quotes/tenders, delivery notes, invoices for payment and credit notes shall be matched to the official purchase order or instruction, examined and coded before they are proposed for payment or set off. If the budget holder or the Clerk deems any invoice/credit note to be incorrect they shall not process such invoices/credit notes for payment or set off until satisfied that payment or set off is properly due. The quotes/tenders, purchase orders and delivery notes where required to be signed or where amended, shall all be filed together with the invoices/credit notes as otherwise directed by the Clerk

13. The Clerk shall ensure that all Invoices which have been approved for payment are duly scheduled for payment.

14. All Invoices shall be authorised by the Chairman and checked by the Clerk prior to making payment.
15. Where it is considered that there are valid reasons for departing from these procedures the approval of the Chairman shall be obtained. Any such departure shall be reported to the Board.

E BANK MANDATE AND INVESTMENTS

1. No changes shall be made to the Board's bankers or the bank mandate without the prior consent of the Board.

2. Approved signatories for the Board's bank accounts are as follows:

    1. The Chairman

    2. Such other member(s) as shall from time to time be authorised by the Board

    3. Such officers of the Middle Level Commissioners as shall from time to time be authorised by the Board

3. All cheque books, deposit books, banking cards and other documentation or materials relating to the Board's bank accounts shall be retained in the custody of the Clerk.

4. All payments, bank transfers and Investments shall be made in the most efficient/secure manner as determined from time to time by the Clerk

5. The Clerk shall maintain a Register of Passwords and Contact Details relating to financial transactions. All bank accounts shall be reconciled monthly and checked at regular intervals by separate officers of the Clerk.

F INVESTMENTS AND LOANS STRATEGY

1. All investments made by the Board are made within guidance received from CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants) Guidance for the Public Sector, and relevant legislation:

    - The Board's investment activities are limited by statute

    - The Board may invest in major Banks and Building Societies

    - The Board's investments are to be regarded as low/medium risk

    - The Board's investments must be made in the name of the Board and not any named individual

2. All investments shall be negotiated by the Clerk and reported to the Board. They must be for an appropriate period.

3. All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the Board and shall be from the Public Works Loans Board unless a short term or emergency loan is required.

4. No loans shall be taken out without a resolution of the Board.

5. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the Clerk.

G COLLECTING MONEY

1. The Clerk shall be responsible for ensuring that all monies received are properly recorded in the accounting records.

2. Electronic copies of all receipts issued shall be retained for at least six years.

H SUNDRY DEBTORS

1. Each budget holder shall be responsible for providing the Clerk with the necessary information to enable rechargeable work to be properly accounted for and invoiced, and, any other debts due to be properly invoiced. The budget holder shall advise the Clerk whenever an Invoice is to be raised for goods provided or services rendered, under their control.

2. The Clerk shall ensure that all such Invoices are properly raised as soon as practicable after being authorised.

3. The Clerk shall be responsible for ensuring that all other debts due to the Board are properly raised when required and collected promptly.

4. The Clerk shall be responsible for ensuring that the Board consider whether any rents payable to them should be reviewed by a Chartered Surveyor at least once every 5 years.

5. The Clerk shall calculate any claims for highland water payments from the Environment Agency and send such claims to the Agency by the dates specified by the Agency.

6. Any refunds due to debtors for whatever reason shall be approved by the Clerk prior to being paid or otherwise accounted for.

7. The Clerk shall ensure that procedures are in place for all debts to be substantially collected within 30 days from the Debtor Invoice tax point date and for when a debt becomes 3 months overdue or whenever a debt becomes doubtful or is disputed.

8. The Clerk shall be empowered to collect all sundry debts due.

9 The Clerk shall obtain the Board’s approval for instigating legal proceedings to collect outstanding amounts in excess of the County Court Small Claims limit.

I EMPLOYING/MANAGING STAFF

1. The Chairman and/or the District Officer shall be responsible to the Board for all matters regarding any employees.

2. The Board’s approval shall be required for the employment of additional permanent staff.

3. The Chairman and/or the District Officer shall have the authority to employ temporary staff and replace permanent staff provided the employment costs are contained within the Expenditure Estimates/Budgets approved by the Board and to take disciplinary action against (including the dismissal of) Board employees.

4 Subject to the above paragraphs and to the terms of any employee's contract, Board members shall not individually have the power to formally offer anyone any form of employment or to dismiss a Board employee, or otherwise take disciplinary action against any of the Board’s employees unless the Board has specifically authorised such action by resolution.

5. Board members other than the Chairman and the District Officer shall not individually give instructions to any of the Board’s employees.

6. The Chairman and the District Officer shall be responsible for managing the day to day activities of employees and for determining the nature and extent of these activities.

J STOCK IN STORES/DELIVERED TO SITE

1. The Board's Consulting Engineer shall be responsible to the Board for all matters relating to the security of the stock in stores or delivered to site and for managing stock in and out in respect of any works which he is undertaking on behalf of the Board.
2. The responsible person regarding the physical check of and accounting for all other items in stock will be the Chairman or the District Officer.

K ASSET ACCOUNTING/MANAGEMENT

1. Any assets to be sold will be advertised in the appropriate media or by the method most appropriate for securing best value and will be sold for the highest offer unless they are being part-exchanged or traded-in when acquiring another asset, or otherwise sold for a budget price approved by the Board.

2. The Clerk shall be responsible for documenting and maintaining the records of the Board’s Assets.

L AUDIT

1. As a requirement of the Accounts and Audit Regulations the Clerk shall ensure that the Board is presented with the Internal Auditor’s Report each year.

M SALARIES AND WAGES

1. The Board shall where appropriate seek independent advice before making significant changes to terms and conditions of employment and, save where such changes are as a result of legislative change no changes shall be made to terms and conditions of employment (deliberately or otherwise) without the prior consent of the Board.

2. The Clerk shall be responsible for the proper compilation of the payroll(s) and for the final determination of pay, as approved by the Board.

3. All annual holiday entitlements (including any carried forward provisions) shall be agreed with the Chairman and/or the District Officer at the beginning of every financial year and signed off by him/her as such, in accordance with the Board's terms and conditions of employment.

4. All time-off in lieu, sick leave, working-from-home arrangements and other absences from work or the work place shall be approved in writing by the Chairman and/or the District Officer.
5. All proposed payments of salaries and wages shall be authorised by the Clerk prior to being made.

N INSURANCES

1. The Clerk shall be responsible for expeditiously submitting all insurance claims that the Board agrees should be pursued. The Board shall be responsible for providing the Clerk with all of the necessary information he/she deems necessary in order to successfully make an insurance claim.

2. The Chairman and/or the District Officer shall immediately notify the Clerk of any loss, liability or damage or any event likely to lead to a claim on any of the Board's insurance policies and shall where appropriate notify the police of the relevant circumstances.

O SECURITY

1 Keys to the Board's buildings and property shall be controlled by the Chairman and/or the District Officer who shall maintain the list of such key holders.

P REVIEW OF FINANCIAL CODE

1. The Board reserves the right to make reasonable changes to this Code at any time in future.

2. Failure to take action against any employee following a breach of the Financial Regulations or of this Code does not constitute a waiver of the Board's right to take disciplinary action on any future breaches of the Financial Regulations or this Code and no single or partial action taken shall prevent any further disciplinary action being taken or other action being taken against any employee.

3. This Code shall be reviewed at the same time as the Financial Regulations.

Appendix 2

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

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 2024, 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:

and recorded as minute reference:

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

Chair

Clerk

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a) <u>Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2022/2023</u>

The Board considered and approved the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year that ended on the 31st March 2023.

The Board considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year that ended on the 31st March 2023.

b) Risk Management Strategy

Miss Ablett outlined that the Board's Risk Management Strategy had been due an update, that the Clerk had drafted and published an updated strategy for all IDBs clerked by the Middle Level Commissioners. The new strategy will run from 2024 to 2027 and outlines how Members and the Middle Level Commissioners staff govern the Board's risks.

The Board reviewed and approved their new risk management strategy 2024 – 2027 and expressed satisfaction with their Risk Management Policy.

c) Insured Sums

Miss Ablett referred to the insured sums of the pumping stations and reminded the Board of the Clerk's comments in his report, when determining their valuations for insurance purposes Members should recognise the limitations associated with their valuations and the risks, they hold of being underinsured.

Discussions followed regarding the valuation of pumping stations and Miss Ablett reported that it was hoped a meeting would soon be arranged with a company, recommended by the Board's insurers, who may be able to assist with the valuation of the pumping stations. She advised that once this meeting had taken place and further information was available this would be reported to the Boards.

The Chairman enquired of the cost of increasing the insured sums and Miss Ablett confirmed she could ask the insurers and advise the Chairman.
The Chairman suggested doubling the current values and obtaining a quote for the increased sums. Members agreed and authorised the Chairman and Vice Chairman to approve any increase considered necessary.

In addition, the Board asked if a cost per £1,000,000 of insurance could be established. Miss Ablett advised she would enquire, advise the Chairman and report at the next meeting.

RESOLVED

> That the cost to increase the insured sums of the pumping stations be obtained from the insurers and the Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to approve any increase.
>
> That the cost per £1,000,000 of insurance be established.

d) Finance Regulations & Finance Code

Miss Ablett reported that the Board's Finance Regulations and Finance Code Policy were due for review and renewal this year. However, she informed the Board that it was intended to carry out a full review of the Middle level Service Provision, the introduction of Key Health Indicators and to start a review of the IDB landscape of drainage boards within the Middle Level. Further, these reviews would also trigger a review of the finance dept. at the Middle Level and all these matters would likely influence areas of delegation regarding finance through the Middle Level offices, it would therefore make sense to retain the current regulations and policy pending a more in-depth review.

RESOLVED

> That the Board's current Finance regulations and Finance Code Policy be approved for a further year and the Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer be authorised to carry out a full review of both and report at next year's meeting.

e) 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.

f) Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments.

Miss Ablett reported that as part of the Annual Governance review the Board were required to consider if there were any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end that have a financial impact on the authority. He confirmed that there were no such matters that have been raised through the office of the clerk. Members gave consideration to the position.

RESOLVED

> That there are no such events that would have an adverse financial impact on the Board that would need to be included within the accounting statements for the financial year ended 31st March 2024.

g) IDB1

Miss Ablett referred to the completed IDB1 form for 2022/2023 which the Board noted and approved.

h) Annual Governance Statement

The Board considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31st March 2024.

RESOLVED

> That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement on behalf of the Board for the financial year ended 31st March 2024.

B.2142 Finance Report: looking back

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**12**
Meeting:	**UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING BACK**

Date:	Friday 31st May 2024	Officer Responsible:	Robert Hill/Sam Ablett

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Consider and approve the payments detailed within Appendix 1.
B. Consider and approve the Annual Accounts & Finance Papers 2023/2024 within Appendix 2.

Finance Officer's review and key messages

For 2023/2024 the Board had estimated expenditure for the year of £254,091 and set a rate of 27.0p to raise this through agricultural drainage rates and Special Levies. The rate setting process was centred around the new electricity contract and the uncertainty of the impact of a significant rainfall event. As members will be aware 2023/2024 became an ongoing rainfall event.

A budget monitoring exercise was carried out in January 2024 based on figures to December 2023 which at that point gave an indicative estimate that electricity costs could be in the region of the budget estimate of £47,800, with no supply accounts having been received from the supplier. Subsequently we had further significant rainfall in January and the wettest February on record. Accounts have now been received from the supplier to February 2024 and an estimate has been made for the month of March 2024 based on meter reads, giving a total cost of electricity for the year of £69,833.

Repairs have been higher than budgeted, with additional service/repair costs to the tractor/mower and works truck. Figures for the year also include the security system installed at Cock fen pumping station - £4,341. Other areas of expenditure have been generally in-line with budget provisions.

Over-all this gives a decrease in the Boards General Fund of £34,647 to a balance of £140,513 at 31st March 2024, the balance at 1st April 2023 being £175,160. This starting point is significantly lower than a recommended minimum of a year-in-hand and following reinstatement of the balances lost in 2023/2024 the Board must then look to restore balances to a minimum of a year-in-hand.

These balances are reflected in the Boards financial statements and Annual Return which they are requested to review and approve.

1. Payments for 2023/24

1.1 Payments are detailed within Appendix 1

2. Annual Accounts and Finance papers 2023/2024:

2.1 Annual Return 2023/2024:

To consider the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2024 and the completion of Section 2 of the Annual Return as required in the Audit Regulations. Appendix 2

Author Name: Robert Hill/Sam Ablett
Role: Treasurer/Assistant Treasurer

Appendix 1 Payments for 2023/24
Appendix 2 Annual Accounts & Finance Papers 2023/24

Appendix 1

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Payments 2023/2024 (1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024)

Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment and corroded floor plates (Cock Fen pumping station)	3,063.18
Middle Level Commissioners - Court costs - liability orders	1.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Telemetry charges up to termination of contract (Account from Vodafone)	255.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	1,824.23
Middle Level Commissioners - Legal fees in connection with deed of easement for Cock Fen pumping station - (Account from Fraser Dawbarns)	550.80
Middle Level Commissioners - Professional fees in connection with deed of easement for Cock Fen pumping station - (Account from Dalcour Maclaren Ltd)	2,774.58
Middle Level Commissioners - Mobile charges - Cock Fen p/s security (Account from Anglia Farmers)	94.04
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for MK15 YAY (Account from Allstar)	616.44
Middle Level Commissioners - IDB Health & Safety Re-charge 2022-2023 (Account from COPE Safety Management)	628.80
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery and travelling	13,028.88
Middle Level Commissioners - Installation of telemtry at pumping stations (net of 50% grant-in-aid)	15,359.22
Middle Level Commissioners - Refund of insurance premium - AU14 UTS	-168.00
Fen Group - Drain maintenance	120.00
LW Vehicle Services Limited - Supply and fit both rear leaf springs to MK15 YAY	634.79
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	8,449.00
Environment Agency - Precept	29,378.93
Carl Nunn - Fuel for hire truck	60.00
Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd - 2 litre of synthetic oil	37.51
EE - Mobile telephone charges	33.56
EE - Mobile telephone charges	19.56
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - Combination padlock and pair of dealer boots	168.56
EE - Mobile telephone charges	19.56
Hyperion Security Specialists - Deposit on security alarm system at Cock Fen pumping station	2,469.66
Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd - 24 T flails, bearings and adaptor sleeve	405.74
A J Farnham - Repairs to sink hole at Nordelph pumping station	396.00
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - 2 x flexiseal 100mm - 115mm drain couple and nitrile gloves	39.67
Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd - Shaft seal and hydraulic filters	77.62
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for MK15 YAY (Account from Allstar)	353.86
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of roundup and posts	288.80
EE - Mobile telephone charges	19.56
Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd - 20 litres of Mastergold oil	101.40
Watson Fuels - Supply of 3,773 litres of gas oil	3,133.10
Fenland Fire Appliance LLP - Servicing of fire extinguishers	124.14
L R Boon & Sons Ltd - Chequer plate	372.00
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	6,709.78
Hyperion Security Specialists - Balance payable on security alarm system at Cock Fen pumping station	2,739.66
EE - Mobile telephone charges	19.56
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for MK15 YAY (Account from Allstar)	340.40
The Lamb & Flag - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	500.00
The Lamb & Flag - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	282.60
Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd - Bolts and lh axle bracket	1,013.95
Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd - 200 litres of Adblue	239.94
Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd - 3,600 hour service of tractor - Reg. no. AE67 BXX	2,410.82

Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd - Replacement of axle casting on tractor - Reg. no. AE67 BXX	3,226.85
LW Vehicle Services Limited - MOT and service to MK15 YAY	382.65
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - 12 lithium complex cartridges and nitrile gloves	68.93
EE - Mobile telephone charges	19.56
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit fee (2022-2023 accounts)	756.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, work in connection with the electrifucation of Cock Fen pumping station, planning and development applications)	2,302.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2022-2023 accounts)	1,596.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages and telephone charges	12,435.92
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,148.38
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance and flail mowing	8,538.00
EE - Mobile telephone charges	19.56
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	3,629.41
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	4,819.59
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance and flail mowing	8,078.40
Watson Fuels - Supply of 4,067 litres of gas oil	3,997.04
LW Vehicle Services Limited - Supply abd fit DPF particulate filter and exhaust sensors to MK15 YAY	1,571.81
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	3,953.36
Middle Level Commissioners - Road tax for MK15 YAY	320.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply order books (Account from D J Richards)	48.29
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for MK15 YAY (Account from Allstar)	100.28
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for MK15 YAY (Account from Allstar)	219.56
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - Nitrile glovrs, 205 litres of Adblue and sealant	230.90
Environment Agency - Precept	29,378.92
EE - Mobile telephone charges	19.56
D J & A Lunn Ltd - Drainage pipes	330.00
LW Vehicle Services Limited - Supply and fit new temperature sensor and repair gear leaver mechanism to MK15 YAY	275.41
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Correspondence with Chairman concerning ownership of field no. 748, site meeting in connection with Cock Fen electrification, planning and development applications)	637.50
EE - Mobile telephone charges	19.56
Hyperion Security Specialists - Annual SIM charge for security alarm system at Cock Fen pumping station and SIM charge for EE SIM card for 4g router	192.00
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance and flail mowing	693.60
EE - Mobile telephone charges	19.56
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	6,709.78
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - Oil filters, fuel filters, head torch, AAA batteries, rain gauge	129.73
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - 40 litres of oil & fuel, LED floodlight bulb, LED security light bulb and hydraulic hose assembly	337.82
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2024	1,170.00
EE - Mobile telephone charges	19.56
K Goodger - Reimbursement of meeting expenses	95.70
Fen Group - Drain maintenance	5,177.76
Middle Level Commissioners - Retention on motors and control panel - Cock Fen pumping station (Account from E Rand)	8,716.56
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to pump panel at Padgetts Corner pumping station	1,278.76
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment and pump frame (Cock Fen pumping station)	591.28
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for MK15 YAY and rodent bait, together with personel safety lone workers course	974.29
Middle Level Commissioners - Environmental Officer Contribution	690.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	1,111.68
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance and flail mowing	664.80

Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal	40.00
King's Lynn Auto Electrical Ltd - Supply of starter motor	192.00
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - Twin wheel barrow, 5 litres of Synto gear oil, 25 litres of HD EP85/140 gear oil, silicon sealer, gloves and oil suction gun	335.28
EE - Mobile telephone charges	19.56
P Clabon - District Officer's Fee for 2023-2024	2,421.00
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Electricity supply (Bedlam Bridge pumping station)	3,177.60
Anglian Farmers Ltd - Electricity supply (Cock Fen pumping station)	262.21
Anglian Farmers Ltd - Electricity supply (Nordelph pumping station)	(3,678.12)
Anglian Farmers Ltd - Electricity supply (Padgetts Corner pumping station)	1,146.54
Anglian Farmers Ltd - Electricity supply (Upwell Fen pumping station)	(5,680.25)
Corona Energy - Electricity supply (Bedlam Bridge pumping station)	3,481.30
Corona Energy - Electricity supply (Cock Fen pumping station)	540.88
Corona Energy - Electricity supply (Nordelph pumping station)	4,176.83
Corona Energy - Electricity supply (Padgetts Corner pumping station)	583.87
Corona Energy - Electricity supply (Upwell Fen pumping station)	5,188.21
Anglian Farmers Ltd - Gas oil	29,122.85
District Labour	40,179.42
	297,194.40

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

Appendix 2

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2024
GENERAL FUND

2024			
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year		
	Precept		42,852.85
	Insurances, telephones etc	4,088.21	
	Repairs & Renewals (Mechanical)	20,373.68	
	Fuel	99,832.71	
	Drainworks	24,094.12	
	Contractors charges	4,842.00	
	District Labour	41,127.11	
	Administration charge, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising etc	25,712.59	220,070.42
	Asset Replacement Fund		
	- Raised in year		0.00
	Loan Repayments:		
	Principal	18,256.98	
	Interest	12,060.58	30,317.56
	Scheme costs		
	Cock Fen pumping station - Electrification		8,322.30
	Depreciation charge		
	Heavy Plant	15,090.44	
	Light Plant	0.00	15,090.44
	Balance carried forward		140,512.88
			457,166.45

2023			
Mar-31	Balance brought forward		175,159.96
2024			
Mar-31	Rate income & Special levies		253,978.40
	Interest on Deposit Accounts		1,960.00
	Private works		635.35
	Development Charges Account		1,770.00
	Consents		150.00
			0.00
	Asset Replacement Fund		
	Depreciation (Plant)	15,090.44	
	Cock Fen p/s electrification	8,322.30	23,412.74
	Write back of provisions		100.00
			457,166.45

BALANCE SHEET

Capital Section

Liabilities		
Capital Provisions		2,948,288.49
Public Works Loan (Outstanding)		465,711.51
		3,414,000.00

Assets		
Pumping Stations	3,304,000.00	
Nordelph Pumping Station-Bungalow	110,000.00	
Heavy Plant	8,161.25	
Light Plant	7.00	
Small Tool & Equipment	2.00	
Oils & Greases	7,177.51	
		3,429,347.76

Revenue Section

General Fund		
- Revenue balance	140,512.88	
- Asset Fund (plant)	29,212.10	
- Asset Fund (capital)	122,105.79	291,830.77
Sundry Creditors		101,607.54
Development Charges Account		33,567.50
		3,841,005.81

Ratepayers Account - Arrears		7,847.15
Value added Tax - Refunds due		16,884.91
Sundry Debtors		1,013.27
Private Works Account		0.00
Debtors - Old Croft River Account		0.00
Balance in hand -		
Barclays -Treasurer's Account	100,065.07	
Barclays -Business premium Account	130,010.53	
Barclays -Treasury deposit Account	150,000.00	
National Savings - Treasurer's Account	5,837.12	385,912.72
		3,841,005.81

Upwell Internal Drainage Board

Summary of Bank Reconciliations as at 31st March 2024

Barclays - Treasurers Account 2023/2024

1st April 2023			31st March 2024		
Balance brought forward		357,311.30	Payments made during the year	297,194.40	
			Rates payments returned	260.19	
31st March 2024					297,454.59
Receipts during the year					
Clerk's collection account	316,042.24				
Interest on deposit accounts	4,176.65	320,218.89	Balance carried forward		380,075.60
		677,530.19			**677,530.19**

National Savings - Treasurers Account 2023/2024

1st April 2023		31st March 2024	
Balance brought forward	5,831.62	Payments made during the year	0.00
31st March 2024			
Interest on deposit accounts	5.50	Balance carried forward	5,837.12
	5,837.12		**5,837.12**

Barclays Bank PLc

Current Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2024	100,065.07
Less unpresented cheques	0.00
Add outstanding lodgements	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	**100,065.07**

Cash balances as at 31st March 2024

Barclays Bank PLc

Current Account	**100,065.07**
Business Premium Account	**130,010.53**
Treasury Deposit Account	**150,000.00**

National Savings

Investment Account per passbook	**5,837.12**
Total reconciled cash balances per accounts	**385,912.72**

Upwell IDB

Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return

Financial year ended 31st March 2024

				Annual Return
Line 1	**Balances brought forward**			
	General Fund	245,427.60		
	Development charges account	34,202.52		
	Asset replacement fund	79,268.39		
			358,898.51	**358,899**
Line 2	**Rates and Special Levies**			
	Agricultural rates	192,204.90		
	Special Levies	61,886.00		
	Penalty	0.00		
	Costs	25.00		
	Write-off	-137.50		
			253,978.40	**253,978**
Line 3	**Total other receipts**			
	Interest			
	General fund	1,960.00		
	Development charges account	382.76		
	Asset replacement fund	1,933.91		
	Private works	635.35		
	Consent applications	150.00		
	Recoverable Costs	0.00		
	Grant in Aid	0.00		
	Contribution to Old Croft	0.00		
	Discharge contributions	0.00		
	Write Back of Provision	852.22		
	Sale of Assets	0.00		
	Public Works Loan - Loan Advance	0.00		
			5,914.24	**5,914**
Line 4	**Staff costs**			
	Wages/salaries	35,704.87		
	National insurance contributions	4,213.92		
	Pension costs	1,208.32		
	Travelling expenses	0.00		
			41,127.11	**41,127**
Line 5	**Loan repayments**			
	PWLB - Principal	18,256.98		
	PWLB - Interest	12,060.58		
			30,317.56	**30,318**

Upwell IDB

Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return

Financial year ended 31st March 2024

Line 6	**All other payments**			
	Precept	42,852.85		
	Rates, insurances, telephones	4,088.21		
	Repairs and renewals	20,373.68		
	Fuel	99,832.71		
	Drainworks	24,094.12		
	Administration	25,712.59		
	Development charges fees	0.00		
	Contractors charges	4,842.00		
	Inprovements	8,322.30		
	Purchase of Asset	0.00		
			230,118.46	**230,118**

Line 7	**Balances carried forward**			
	General Fund	225,870.96		
	Development charges account	33,567.50		
	Asset replacement fund	57,789.56		
			317,228.02	**317,228**

Reconciliation		
Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6		317,228.02
		0.00

Reconciliation to Accounts

Balances carried forward per Annual Return - As above		317,228.02
Add Back:-		
Adjustments for Prior Years	23,260.69	
Depreciation	-15,090.44	
		8,170.25
Balances carried forward per Accounts		
General Fund	140,512.88	
Development charges account	33,567.50	
Asset replacement fund - Plant	29,212.10	
Asset replacement fund - Capital	122,105.79	
		325,398.27

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	*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	404,696	358,899	*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	216,547	253,978	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	28,744	5,914	*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	35,778	41,127	*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	224,992	230,118	*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	358,899	317,228	*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	363,143	385,913	*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	3,540,347	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	483,968	465,712	*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 exclude any Trust transactions.*

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2024 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

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

Date 19/04/2024

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 Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Finance officer's review and key messages

Miss Ablett referred to the comments concerning the 2023/24 year which ended 31st March 2024.

The Board noted and approved the key finance messages.

Payments 2023

The Board considered and approved the Payments of £297,194.40 which had been made during the financial year ending 31st March 2024.

(NB: The Chairman and Vice Chairman declared interests in the payments made to them.)

Annual Accounts and Finance Papers 2023/2024

The Board considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended 31st March 2024 as required in the Audit Regulations.

B.2143 Finance Report – Looking Forward

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**13**
Meeting:	**UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING FORWARD**
Date:	**Friday 31st May 2024**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Robert Hill/Sam Ablett**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Consider the Finance Officer's summary
B. Fees, remuneration and subscriptions
C. Review & approve Determination of land for rating purposes, Rate arrears & Contributions from Developers (Confidential papers)
D. Note the Precept to the Environment Agency
E. Review & Approve Rating Estimates for 2024/2025
F. Consider & approve the Agricultural Drainage Rates and Special Levy requirements for 2024/2025

Finance Officer's summary and key messages

For the rating estimates for 2024/2025 standard provisions have been made for general expenditure with specific items included where known. Standard figures have been reviewed and approved by the chairman and vice-chairman.

Estimates for pumping costs are as problematical as last year in that we need to factor in an 'average' pumping year, taking-into-account the impact of climate change. Further, we will have a new electricity supply contract from October 2024 with no current indications of possible unit costs. The provision is therefore an estimate of pumping volumes at an estimate of possible new contract rates. Members should therefore consider if they think the provision is reasonable when setting the rate.

The engineer has identified some works likely to be required during the year:

<u>Cock Fen pumping station:</u>

Gear box overhaul - £5,000

<u>Upwell Fen pumping station:</u>

Repairs to discharge pipework - £5,000

Please note since the drafting of this budget proposal the engineer has carried out further investigative works at Upwell fen pumping station and the costs of works required are likely to be significantly in excess of those shown above. The engineer will appraise these works within the engineers report together with updated budget costings. Members will need to take these into account when setting the rate for 2024/2025.

It is proposed to utilise £5,000 from the capital loans balance for the works at Cock Fen pumping station and £5,000 from the Asset Account for the works at Upwell Fen pumping station.

Members should note that if works in excess of these figures are required there are not sufficient balances to fund these and additional monies will need to be raised through the rates and Special Levies.

During the year the Board approved to replace the tractor and flail mower combination and although at that time the full impact of the winter pumping was not known it may have been more prudent, in view of the Board already reduced balances to have postpone this decision for a further year. Going forward sufficient provisions will need to be maintained within the annual rate budget to finance these and subsequent purchases.

The budget proposal includes for the recovery of balances depleted during winter 2023/2024 pumping to the years starting position of £175,160, this starting point is significantly lower than a recommended minimum of a year-in-hand and following reinstatement of the balances lost in 2023/2024 the Board must then look to restore balances to a minimum of a year-in-hand through future years rates.

Members should also consider likely future capital investment requirements at the pumping stations.

1. Fees, Renumerations and Subscriptions

1.1 Consider the District Labour fees for the Board's employees

1.2 Consider the District Officer's fees

1.3 Consider charge for hire of plant when engaged on private work for 2025:

The present charges are:-

<u>Flail mower</u>

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

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

2. Determination of land for rating purposes & rate arrears – Confidential papers

3. Estimates for 2024/25

3.1 The estimated budget for 2024/25 is shown in Appendix 1.

3.2 The Board are reminded that it is standard practice to budget for an average year in terms of rainfall and associated pumping requirements.

4. Rate Requirements for 2024/25

4.1 Appendix 2 details the rate requirement that needs to be set and approved by the Board in order to raise sufficient rate and special levy income to cover the budget estimate.

4.2 Board Members are welcome to propose alternative rate requirements and invite these for consideration by the Board along with their supporting rationale and proposed mechanism for catering within the budget estimate and/or the Board's investment strategy.

Author Name: Robert Hill/Sam Ablett
Role: Treasurer/Assistant Treasurer

Enclosure 1 Determination of Land Values for Rating (CONFIDENTIAL PAPERS)
Rate Arrears (CONFIDENTIAL PAPERS)

Appendix 1 Estimates for 2024/25
Appendix 2 Rate Requirements for 2024/25

Appendix 1

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET 2024/2025

		Approved budget 2023/2024 £	Actual 2023/2024 £	Budget 2024/2025 £
1	District labour	41,000	41,127	45,500
2	Insurances and telephones	5,000	4,088	4,750
3	Repairs and renewals	10,000	20,374 [A]	10,000
4	General maintenance	28,500 [B]	24,094 [C]	28,500 [D]
5	Fuel (oil and electricity)	47,800	99,833 [E]	66,750 [F]
6	District Officers' fees etc	5,000	4,842	5,200
7	Administration charge, Health and, Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising etc	26,175	25,713	27,275
8	Plant Replacement funding	14,116 [G]	0 [G]	19,375 [G]
9	Public Works Loan	30,318	30,318	30,318
10	Environment Agency - Precept	42,853	42,853	44,138 [H]
11	Tractor / Flail mower replacement	15,100 [I]	15,090 [I]	22,325 [I]
12	Improvement works	145,000 [J]	8,322 [J]	10,000 [K]
13	Reinstatement of balances	0	0	34,647 [L]
		410,862	316,654	348,777
	LESS Deposit Accounts interest, Fishery Rent etc	156,771	28,028 [M]	35,631 [N]
		254,091	288,625	313,146
	Estimated General Fund:			
	Open balance at 01.04.2024	175,160	175,160	140,513
	Rates Raised - 27.00p	254,091	253,978	313,146
	Net Expenditure	254,091	288,625	313,146
	Balances	0	0	34,647
	(Estimated) Closing balance	175,160	140,513	175,160

Remarks

A	Service/repair tractor-mower	6,262
	Serevice/repair works truck	2,167
B -	Includes for contractor hire: slubbing	20,000
C -	Includes for contractor hire: slubbing	14,979
D -	Includes for contractor hire: slubbing	20,000
E -	Includes accounts to February, estimated for March	
F -	Provision based on increased annual pumped volume and estimate for new contract rates from October 2024	
G -	Funding for plant replacement strategy	
H -	Environment Agency charge	60,521
	Middle Level contribution	-16,383
		44,138
I -	Asset replacement fund (Annual Depreciation)	
J -	Cock Fen p/s electrification	
	Cock Fen electrification on hold - engineer to update	
K -	Cock Fen p/s - gear box overhaul	5,000
	Upwell Fen p/s - Discharge pipework repairs	5,000
L -	Provision for reinstaement of balances reduced by winter 23/24 pumping (not to a 'year-in-hand')	
M -	Includes:	
	Asset replacement fund (Depreciation)	15,090
	Loan funding - Cock Fen p/s electrification	8,322
N -	Includes:	
	Asset replacement fund (Depreciation)	22,325
	Loan funding - Cock Fen p/s gear box overhaul	5,000
	Asset fund - Upwell Fen p/s discharge pipe repairs	5,000

Appendix 2

Upwell Internal Drainage Board

Rate and levy requirements

Under Section 37 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, the appropriate proportions in which the net expenditure of the Commissioners must be borne for 2024/2025 is:-

a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 75.55%

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

Borough of Kings Lynn & Norfolk –	14.74%	
Fenland District Council –	9.71%	
		24.45%

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £7,115.

In 2024/2025 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levies would raise £9,418

Revenue balance in hand on 31st March 2024 - £140,513

The estimated net expenditure of £313,146 in 2024/2025, 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 33.25p

b) a Special levy on the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk of £46,144 and

c) a Special levy on Fenland District Council of £30,420

In 2023/2024 a rate of 27.00p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £24,702 on Fenland District Council and £37,184 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 2024

Finance officer's review and key messages

The Board considered & approved the key messages of the Finance Officer.

Fees, Remuneration & Subscriptions:

i) District Labour Fees

The Board gave consideration to the District Labour fees for the Board's employee for 2024/2025.

Miss Ablett advised that the Board had previously resolved to increase the District Foreman's wages in accordance with the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award.

RESOLVED

That the District Foreman's wages for 2024/2025 be increased by 7.53% in accordance with the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award.

ii) District Officers Fees

a) The Board gave consideration to the District Officers' fees for 2024/2025.
b) The Board gave consideration to the expenses payable to the District Officers for 2024/2025.

RESOLVED

a) That the sum of £4,142 be allowed for the services of the District Officers for 2024/2025 and to be split equally between the District Officers.

b) That the Board agree that a sum of up to £1,065 for expenses be allowed and split between the District Officers as necessary.

(NB: The Chairman and Vice Chairman declared a financial interest when this item was discussed.)

iii) 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 when engaged on private work (last reviewed – May 2023): -

Flail mower

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

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

The Chairman reported that Euximoor IDB had enquired whether the Board would consider undertaking its flail mowing operations for the coming year. He considered this would be an opportunity for the Board, in view of the purchase of the new tractor and flail mower, and Carl had confirmed that he would be able to carry out the works without impinging on the Boards own maintenance requirements.

The Chairman enquired what rate Members considered to be reasonable.

Members agreed that £48 per hour would be reasonable as the Board did not increase the hourly charge last year and would still be charging less than other contractors.

RESOLVED

That the hire charge be increased to £48 per hour

That the Board undertake flail mowing on behalf of Euximoor IDB

iv) Determination of land for rating purposes & rate arrears

The Board considered the recommendation for the determination for rating purposes and rate arrears.

RESOLVED

The Board agreed to the determination of land for rating purposes and associated write off of rate arrears

v) Estimates & Rate Requirements for 2024/25

Miss Ablett advised that when considering the rating estimates and the Agricultural Drainage Rates and Special Levy requirements for 2024/2025, the Board should note the comments made by the Finance Officer, and she went through the detail of the report and asked the Board to be sure they were comfortable with the estimates made.

Members discussed the estimates and rate requirements and it was agreed the Board had to be responsible in view of its depleted funds and future capital requirements.

Mr Crofts proposed that the rate be increased from 27p to 33.25p which was seconded by Mr Miscandlon and this was approved by the Board.

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2024/2025 and were informed by the Clerk 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 75.55% and 24.45%.

RESOLVED

i) That the estimates be approved.

ii) That a total sum of £313,146 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 £236,582 and £76,564 respectively.

iv) That a rate of 33.25p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the district.

v) a) That a Special levy of £ 46,144 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 £30,420 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 levy referred to in resolution iv).

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

B.2144 Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED

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

i) Wednesday 22nd January 2025 at 5.30pm

ii) Wednesday 4th June 2025 –
Inspection at 2.45pm meeting at the Lamb & Flag
Meeting at 5.30pm at the Lamb & Flag followed by a meal at 7pm

…………………………………..
Chairman

…………………….
Date