

Warboys, Somersham & Pidley IDB

**At an Inspection and Meeting of the Warboys, Somersham & Pidley IDB
hosted at Lakeside Lodge, Pidley at 5.30pm on Thursday 6th June 2024**

PRESENT

D Brown (Chairman)	J German	H Whittome
T Noble (Vice-Chairman)	I Johnson	S Whittome
D England	S Johnson	
M England	Ms C Lowe	
D Fabb	Ms L Munns	
M Heading	J Short	

Mr Robert Hill (representing the Clerk), Mr Alwyn Sweeney (District Officer) were also in attendance.

The Chairman welcomed members to this evening's meeting of the Board.

Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Jacob Armstrong, James Carney, David Cornwell, Stephen Edgley, Daniel Edwards and Charles Leadbetter.

B.1906 Declarations of Interest

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

Mr M Heading, Mr H Whittome and Mr S Whittome declared an interest in the payments made to and any matters concerning the Middle Level Commissioners (as members of the Middle Level Board).

Mr J German declared an interest in the payment made to K R German & Son.

Mr D Brown declared an interest in the payment made to himself.

B.1907 Confirmation of Minutes of meetings

RESOLVED

- i) That the Minutes of the Board held on 30th November 2023 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.
- ii) That the minutes for the Finance Committee meeting held on 23rd May 2024 be approved.
- iii) That the Board approve the recommendations of the Finance Committee save as to the rate as this would be considered later in the agenda.

B.1908 Matters arising from the minutes.

Puddock Bungalow

The Chairman reported that Mrs Kent is currently unwell but remains in the bungalow and the tenancy agreement therefore continues. He reported that a new heating system had been installed at the bungalow and referred to the Board's decision that the tenancy agreement should be relevant to the current tenant only.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk check that the agreement was relevant to the current tenant only and that, if necessary, the contractual agreement be updated every six months to ensure it remained a short-term tenancy only.

Access Issues – Womb Farm development (Abbots Walk, Chatteris)

The Chairman reported that he had carried out site visits with Tom Noble and Ian Johnson where they had set out the Board's requirements which had been agreed with the developers. These conditions had been taken away by the consulting engineer to formalise the agreements.

The Chairman confirmed that he and the District Officer would continue to monitor the situation.

Review of Easements (A Barlett & Sons Ltd)

Mr Hill reported on the agreements and arrangements in place on the site and that following the change of use felt it prudent to ensure all agreement and arrangements previously made continued to be relevant.

The District Officer reported on incidents with members of the public using the area around Washways pumping station as a meeting point in the evenings. He confirmed that the site does have a working CCTV camera close by the building.

Mr H Whittome queried if it was worth the Board installing its own CCTV and flood lights at the station. The District Officer reported that there was currently not any suitable point at the pumping station to put these on.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk update the Chairman on the agreements and arrangements in place and for the Chairman to be authorised to review and update these agreements as may be necessary.

Somersham Pocket Park (ref 333/22)

The Chairman referred to the decision of the Board at their last meeting to pause work related to and associated with this matter. He reported that he and the Vice-Chairman had attended a meeting with Mr & Mrs Leadbetter to review the current position and there was no further information presented to indicate that the transfer of the site from the developer included agreements concerning the Drainage Board.

B.1909 Constitution & Membership

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	4
Meeting:	WARBOYS, SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	Subject:	CONSTITUTION & MEMBERSHIP
Date:	Thursday 30th November 2023	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. Consider the 1 vacancy on the Board
- D. Determine whether there are composition changes and/or amalgamations it wishes to progress.
- E. Reenforce 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	21	N/A	24	12
Actual	20	1 FDC, 2 HDC	23	
Vacancies	1			

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

No	Name	Status (one of four categories)	Commentary
1	Jacob Armstrong	Nominee of ratepayer (Mr C Armstrong)	
2	Daniel Brown	Ratepayer	Chairman
3	Stuart Cornwell	Nominee of ratepayer (Mr D Cornwell)	
4	Lord de Ramsey	Ratepayer	
5	Stephen Edgley	Nominee of Ratepayer (Mr A Edgley)	
6	Daniel Edwards	Ratepayer	
7	David England	Ratepayer	
8	Mark England	Ratepayer	
9	Daniel Fabb	Ratepayer	
10	James German	Ratepayer	
11	Marc Heading	Ratepayer	
12	Ian Johnson	Ratepayer	
13	Sam Johnson	Ratepayer	
14	Charles Leadbetter	Ratepayer	
15	Lucy Munns	Nominee of ratepayer (Mr G Munns)	
16	Thomas Noble	Ratepayer	Vice-Chair
17	Jonathan Short	Ratepayer	
18	Rupert Waters	Nominee of ratepayer (Abbots Ripton Farming)	
19	Hugh Whittome	Ratepayer	
20	Stephen Whittome	Ratepayer	
21			

- 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	James Carney	FDC	Councillor
2	Adela Costello	HDC	Councillor
3	Charlotte Lowe	HDC	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	30/11/2023	8/6/2023	1/12/2022	26/5/2022
1	Jacob Armstrong	Present		attended	apologies
2	Daniel Brown	Present	attended	attended	apologies
3	David Cornwell	Present	N/A	N/A	N/A
4	Lord de Ramsey		apologies	apologies	apologies
5	Stephen Edgley	Present	attended	attended	apologies
6	Daniel Edwards	Present		attended	attended
7	David England	Present	attended	attended	attended
8	Mark England	Present	attended	attended	attended
9	Daniel Fabb	Present		Apologies	
10	James German	Present	attended	attended	attended
11	Marc Heading		attended		attended
12	Ian Johnson	Present	attended	attended	attended
13	Sam Johnson	Present	attended	attended	attended
14	Charles Leadbetter	Present	attended	attended	attended
15	Lucy Munns	Present	apologies	apologies	attended
16	Thomas Noble	Present	attended	attended	attended
17	Jonathan Short	Present	attended	attended	attended
18	Rupert Waters	Present	attended	attended	apologies
19	Hugh Whittome	Present	attended	attended	apologies
20	Stephen Whittome	Present	apologies	attended	apologies
21					

Attendance at Chairs Meetings

No	Name	6/10/2023	13/12/2022	12/4/2022	2/11/2021
1	Charles Leadbetter	apologies	attended		N/A

Appointed Members (current and previous)

No	Name (Council)	30/11/2023	8/6/2023	1/12/2022	26/5/2022
1	James Carney (FDC)	Apologies		N/A	N/A
2	Adela Costello (HDC) substitute if C Lowe not available	N/A	apologies	attended	
3	Charlotte Lowe (HDC)	Present		attended	

3. Elections, vacancies & appointments

- 3.1 There is currently **1** vacancy on the Board

3.2 To appoint the finance committee

4. Composition and amalgamations

4.1 The Clerk to provide an update on the reconstitution of the Board.

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 0 of 24 Board Members have reported viewing all five videos.
To date 14 of 24 Board Members have reported viewing 2 or 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

Mr Hill reported that although there was a vacancy on the Board, the Board had previously resolved not to fill vacancies as they arrive until the re-constitution had been finalised.

Appointments

Mr Hill reported that Mr M England had confirmed he wished to stand down from the Finance Committee and that for the last Finance Committee Meeting the committee had agreed to invite Mr S Johnson to attend.

RESOLVED

That Mr S Johnson be appointed to the Finance Committee.

Training

Mr Hill reported that ADA are in the process of updating the Good Governance Guide, and a new version is expected with new training materials. Mr Hill agreed that this would be circulated once it has been published.

Standing Order – reduction of elected members

Mr Hill reported that at last year's meeting it was approved to reduce the numbers of elected members from 21 to 15 with a quorum reduced to 8. He confirmed that a draft scheme had been prepared by the Environment Agency which had been sent to Defra. Following some suggested small amendments this had been re-submitted and was currently back with Defra.

B.1910 Clerks Report

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	5
Meeting:	WARBOYS, SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY IDB	Subject:	CLERK'S REPORT
Date:	Thursday 6 th June 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. Note the staffing update

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 There 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. Electricity and Insurance

2.1 The contract for the Middle Level Commissioners and our administered IDBs' electricity portfolio ends in September 2024. We have been impressed by the brokers of our current service (Green Energy Advice Bureau) however we and the brokers have complaints logged about the standard of service provided by our suppliers Corona Energy.

2.2 Complaints have been escalated to Corona's Managing Director with the request to release us from our contract with them at no penalty. This has resulted in a great impetus in terms of rectifying the issues, but at the time of writing the situation is far from perfect.

2.3 The additional time this has taken our Assistant Treasurer has been significant and the scale of pumping has compounded the issue. This has meant developing a plan for our next contract is behind where we'd like to be and will need due focus over the coming months, bringing together a small group of IDB Chairs to review options and ultimately decide on the next contract arrangements.

2.4 OFGEM's new approach to regulation has had an unexpected and considerable impact upon the standing charges within our electricity portfolio. Unless the regulations change this level of standing charge is now baked into future bills regardless of our supplier.

2.5 We have flagged the impact this issue will have on Highland Water Claims with the Environment Agency.

2.6 We responded to OFGEM's review of Standing Charges and also escalated the issues and our response with local MPs. However, it was the interest of BBC Countryfile who saw a MLC 'tweet' about the issue, that triggered OFGEM to reach out directly to ADA and we joined a session with their policy leads to discuss the issue.

2.7 From this and following BBC Countryfile, we understand there to be a recognition that our sector has been unfairly and unintentionally impacted and there's a commitment to review and address.

2.8 To clarify questions raised by Members and IDBs in response to our 2023/24 insurance renewal and personal accident cover for members over 80 years old.

2.9 With the current insurer, the age limit is 75 years of age to benefit from all the personal accident cover:

- Death - £100,000
- Permanent total disability - £100,000
- Permanent Disabling Injuries - £100,000
- Temporary Total Disablement – Weekly amount £200 for 104 weeks (Deferment period 34 weeks)
- Temporary Partial Disablement – Weekly amount £100 for 104 weeks (Deferment period 34 weeks)

2.10 The benefits, as above, will apply to persons above the age of 75 years with the exception of the temporary weekly benefits. This in no way affects the liability cover of the Board, as with all

employees & board members, if they are injured as a result of the Board's negligence, then a claim can be considered by them under the main AXA liability insurance.

- 2.11 In previous years, the personal accident cover only applied to persons up to 75 years of age. For 2023-2024 we requested the policy be extended to persons over 80 years of age. Although we were unable to do this for all benefits, we were able to increase the age for the benefits as mentioned above. The personal accident cover has only been in place since 2017/2018 as it is part of the AXA insurance policy. It was not included in any of the previous insurers' policies.
- 2.12 Over the last round of board meetings a number of IDBs have asked for re-assessments of their pumping stations for insurance purposes. Having taken stock on these requests, this is not a service we are currently able to offer at the Middle Level Commissioners without procuring what would likely be considerable supplier experience that would then be an additional cost to Boards.
- 2.13 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.

3. Banking

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 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.
- 3.7 Boards are asked to note that they will therefore not be maximising their potential interest individually and collectively.

4. Rating

- 4.1 On 7th September 2023 we were advised that South Holland IDB and the Water Management Alliance will no longer be supporting DRS operating on local area networks after 31 March 2025. This rating and election management software has been in place for 25 years. DRS is owned by South Holland IDB and was originally developed by this Board around the year 2000, primarily for its own use.
- 4.2 Since that time, most other IDBs have decided to use DRS under licence and it is therefore their view today that the next rating system should be controlled and developed by ADA, for use by its IDB membership should they want to, given that all but 3 IDBs and 1 DDC in England and Wales now use DRS. ADA have confirmed that they are in positive discussions on this matter.
- 4.3 This presents a significant risk to the Middle Level Commissioners as well as to the clerking service we provide to our administered IDBs which all rely on this system. However, it also presents an opportunity for an improved system as we are currently unable to efficiently and optimally use the full capabilities of the system, as it doesn't cater well for dual rated areas and penalties. We have asked to be part of any team scoping any future system and/or system support.
- 4.4 ADA has recently concluded that the Association is not best placed to drive the design or own or manage any DRS future software as they do not have the experience or knowledge to do that. We can, however, very much help administratively support an active working group and we will be setting up a meeting in Spring/Summer 2024 to seek volunteers for this working group.

5. MLC Staffing

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 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.

Author Name: Paul Burrows

Role: Clerk

Mr Hill referred to the Clerk's comments regarding the procurement of electricity for the Middle Level Commissioners and its administered Boards. He reported that an Electricity Committee had been formed bringing together a small group of IDB Chairs to review options and ultimately decide on the next contract arrangements.

He enquired whether the Board would authorise the Electricity Committee to decide the next electricity contract on their behalf.

RESOLVED

That the Board noted and approved the report

That the Electricity Committee be authorised to decide the next electricity contract on behalf of the Board.

B.1911 Environment Officer's Report

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	6
Meeting:	WARBOYS, SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	Subject:	ENVIRONMENT OFFICER'S REPORT
Date:	Thursday 6th June 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. New Hedgerow Regulations

The new Management of Hedgerows (England) Regulations 2024 puts the baseline for hedgerow management practices into law, providing a consistent approach for their protection across the country. This includes:

- a 2-metre buffer strip, measured from the centre of a hedgerow, where a green cover must be established and maintained. Also, no cultivation or the application of pesticides or fertilisers should take place within this buffer strip
- a hedgerow cutting ban from 1 March to 31 August (inclusive).

You can find guidance on these rules and exemptions in the buffer strip guidance and the cutting and trimming guidance here: [Hedgerow regulations now law – Farming \(blog.gov.uk\)](https://www.blog.gov.uk/2024/03/21/hedgerow-regulations-now-law/)

3. 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 \(middlelevel.wpenginepowered.com\)](https://www.middlelevel.wpenginepowered.com/)

4. 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.

5. 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 mid-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 or disturbing water voles. 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 down to the water line to ensure refuge and habitat is maintained

6. 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 \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/licence-to-interfere-with-badger-setts-for-watercourse-and-drainage-purposes-cl27)

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.

7. 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](#)

8. 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 \(waterliferecoverytrust.org.uk\)](https://www.waterliferecoverytrust.org.uk/Waterlife-Recovery-Trust-Newsletter-6-Final.pdf)

9. 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 alone in order to remain compliant.

10. 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

The District Officer reported that he had attended several training days with the Environment Officer and queried the latest position concerning works near badger setts. Mr Hill referred to the Environment Officers report and the apparent contradiction regarding conditions of licences and until these had been resolved, it was the Environment Officer's view that routine maintenance works should currently be avoided around badger setts and if urgent works are needed then contact the Environment officer to agree an approach.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be appointed as Environment Representative.

B.1912 Consulting Engineers Reports

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	7
Meeting:	WARBOYS SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)	Subject:	CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: CHIEF ENGINEER'S SUMMARY & CAPITAL PROGRAMME
Date:	Thursday 6 th June 2024	Officer Responsible:	Nicola Oldfield

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

- A. Provide its views on item 2.2.1 *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 decision can be made and parts ordered quickly without the need for a full Board meeting.
- D. Review the pumping station key dates provided in Appendix 4, item 4.1 and advise if there are any discrepancies or if further details can be added.

1. Chief Engineer's summary

1.1 Somersham Pocket Park (Ref 333/22)

The Board has instructed the Consulting Engineer to stop work on this until further notice.

1.2 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 A list of the planning, consent and infiltration device applications responded to since the last report are provided as Appendix 3.

2.1.1 Summary of key planning issues

2.2.1 *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.

2.2.2 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 5 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.

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

3. Capital Programme

The Board's Capital Programme is shown as Appendix 2. **The Board is asked to approve its capital programme.**

These works will be further informed by the completion of the grant-aided System Study which is currently programmed to start in 2025/26.

Author Name: Nicola Oldfield

Role: Chief Engineer

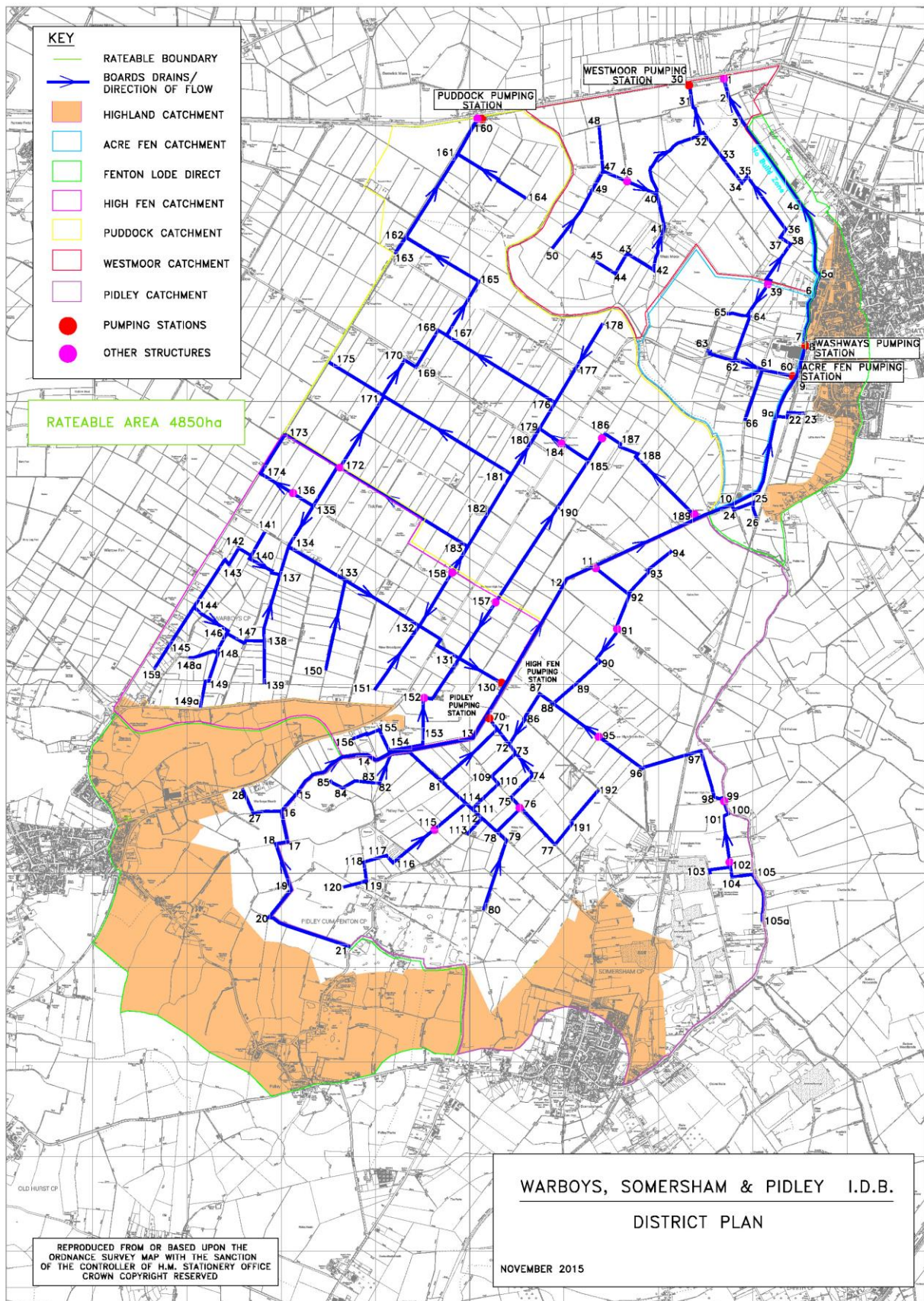
Appendix 1: District Plan

Appendix 2: Capital Programme

Appendix 3: List of planning applications since last report

Appendix 4: M&E Report

Appendix 5: MLC001: Middle Level System Flood & Drainage Infrastructure Capacity



Appendix 2

Warboys Somersham & Pidley Internal Drainage Board		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
Capital Improvement Programme (2024/2025)		Pre Yr 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Post Year 10	Total Expenditure
Acre Fen p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.6	252.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	356.6
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	90.0	0.0	90.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	20.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
High Fen p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.6	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.6
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Pidley p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	45.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	49.6
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Puddock p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.6	0.0	0.0	60.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	150.0	0.0	0.0	214.6
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	90.0	0.0	90.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Westmoor p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.6	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	94.6
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0	15.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	10.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Washways p/s	Refurbishment of pumping station	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.6	0.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	19.6
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	20.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0	30.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0
Plant	Isuzu d-Max - AO17 WMW	0	0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
	Doosan DX140W Excavator - AU09 FEW	0	0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0
Property	Puddock pumping station bungalow	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Drainage Channels	Washways discharge channel piling replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	75.0	0.0	0.0	75.0
		27.6	252.0	130	95	0	0	10	185	0	225	180	95	1,200

Appendix 3

MLC Ref.	Council Ref	Applicant	Type of development	Location
1268	H/23/02053/FUL	Mr C Loizos	Residence (Annexe)	Heath Road, Warboys
1269	F/YR23/0940/F	Minster Property Group	Residential (70 dwellings)	West Street, Chatteris
1270	H/23/02272/HHFUL	Mr P Savill	Residence (Extension)	Parkhall Road, Somersham
1271	H/23/80450/COND	Qualitec Construction Ltd	Residential (6 dwellings)	Warboys Road, Pidley
1272	H/23/02300/HHFUL	Mr & Mrs King/Wall	Residence (Extension)	Puddock Road, Warboys,
1273	F/YR23/0997/F	Ely Design Group	Residential (7 dwellings)	Huntingdon Road, Chatteris
1274	F/YR23/1033/F	Urban Developments Peterborough Ltd	Residential (22 dwellings)	West Street, Chatteris
1275	H/23/02500/FUL	Mr & Mrs Robinson	Residence	Puddock Road, Warboys
1276	H/24/80025/COND	Mr M Hutchings	Residence	Pond Close, Pidley
1277	F/YR24/0085/O	Mr V Salisbury	Residential (5 dwellings)	Blackmill Road, Chatteris
1278	H/24/00202/HHFUL	Mr J Armstrong	Residence (Extension)	Puddock Road, Warboys
1279	H/24/00298/AGDET	D R A Fabb	Agricultural (Store)	Fenside Road, Warboys
1280	H/24/00311/FUL	Ms A Whittome	Wind Turbine (Repowering)	Puddock Road, Warboys
1281	H/24/00351/AGDET	J & V Short	Agricultural (building)	Heath Road, Warboys
1282	H/24/00275/AGDET	G W England & Son	Agricultural (store)	Heath Road, Warboys
1283	H/24/80089/COND	Qualitec Construction Ltd	Residential (6 dwellings)	Warboys Road, Pidley
1284	H/24/00427/HHFUL	Ms S Wall	Residence (Extension)	Puddock Road, Warboys
1285	H/24/00464/FUL	Fenside Leisure Ltd	Change of Use (Touring caravan site to mixed touring and caravan park)	Puddock Road, Warboys

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

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
1192	22/00221/HHFUL	Option 1	Mill Green, Warboys	10/10/23
1266	23/01964/AGDET	Option 1	Parkhall Road, Somersham	10/1/24 advised Option 2 required
1280	24/00311/FUL	Option 1	Puddock Road, Warboys	12/3/24

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	7
Meeting:	WARBOYS SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)	Subject:	CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL
Date:	Thursday 6th June 2024	Officer Responsible:	Dave Bantoft

1. M&E key messages and advice

- 1.1 **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.**

2. Minor Works

2.1 Puddock

The pumps have run well through this period but as previously reported they are at an age to consider overhaul or replacement.

2.2 Westmoor

Pump 2 is noisy and needs to be investigated, it is thought to be the thrust bearing which may be possible to rectify in situ, if not the pump will need to be removed for an overhaul. The pump overload was replaced during January 2024 as it was nuisance tripping.

2.3 Acre Fen

Nothing to report.

2.4 High Fen

Pump 2 insulation resistance has started to drop which may be an indication of water ingress into the motor. Pump 2 has been set to duty and will continue to be monitored. If pump 2 requires replacement the support frame will also need replacing as it is heavily corroded. Pump 2 discharge pipe is weeping which needs to be investigated to determine repair required.

2.5 Washways

Pump 2 power factor correction capacitors and main contactor need replacement, the cables had also overheated and have been replaced to ensure pump was available.

Pump 4 Newbrook gearbox needs overhaul which has been quoted as £3550, there will also be the costs involved with removal and refitting of the gearbox which may require crane onsite.

2.6 Pidley

New ultrasonic level sensor and cabling fitted.

3. Inspections

- 3.1 HSB Engineering annual inspections for insurance were carried out on 27th September 2023.

- 3.2 The mandatory site Electrical Installation Condition Reports (due every 5 years) were completed successfully in December 2023.

Station	EICR Date	EICR Due
Acre Fen	6-Dec-2023	6-Dec-2028
High Fen	6-Dec-2023	6-Dec-2028
Pidley	13-Dec-2023	13-Dec-2028
Puddock	13-Dec-2023	13-Dec-2028
Washways	6-Dec-2023	6-Dec-2028
Westmoor	13-Dec-2023	13-Dec-2028

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				Weedscreen			
Station	Built	Pump	Pump Overhaul	Controls	Weedscreen Bars	WSC	WSC O/H	Controls
Acre Fen	1984	1984	2006	1984	1984	N/A	N/A	N/A
High Fen	1976	2021 (1) 2009 (2)	2021 (1) 2009 (2)	2020	2020	2020		2020
Pidley	1940s	1979	2005 & 2007	2016	2003	2003		2003
Puddock	1992	1992	2004 (1)	1992	1992	N/A	N/A	N/A
Washways	1975	1975	2016	2016	1998	1998	2016	2016
Westmoor	1962	1962	2007 (1) 2008 (2)	2011	2000	2016		2016

Author Name: Dave Bantoft
Role: M&E Engineer



**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.

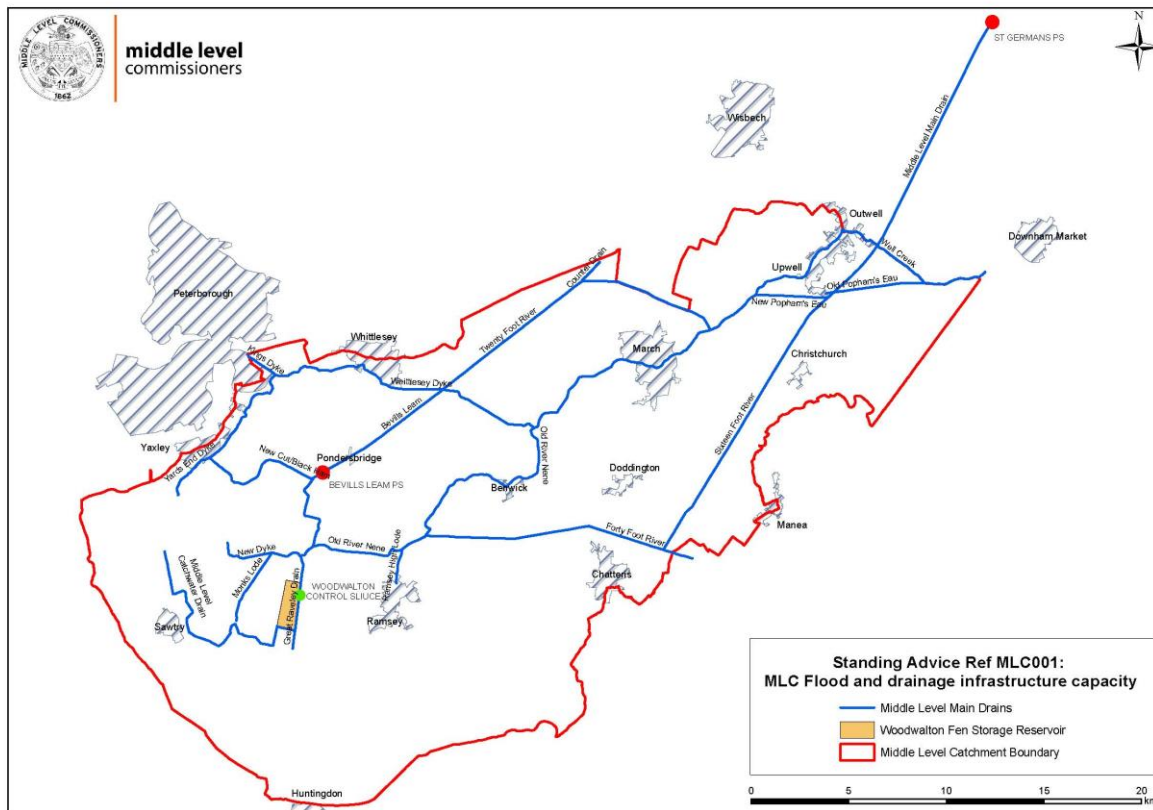
The Commissioners are, for all intents and purposes, an Internal Drainage Board (IDB) and therefore a Risk Management Authority under the Flood & Water Management Act 2010 and we have a duty to enhance the environment under the Environment Act 2021. The Commissioners also have duties and powers under 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 750km² 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 & noted the Consulting Engineers reports.

Mr D Fabb referred to the cost of dealing with planning applications. Mr H Whittome reported that as drainage authorities were not statutory consultees, they were unable to charge for dealing with the applications. Ms C Lowe reported that Huntingdon District Council would be updating the local plan and she will review this with the council to see if there was a way forward concerning this. Mr S Whittome reported that this is a long-standing problem and that there had been a number of ways investigated to resolved this position but none had been successful.

He referred to the Middle Lele pre-application advice service but this had not been supported by the developers.

New developments and the use of SuDs

Members discussed the use of SuDs and raised concerns over the effectiveness of these. Members considered that current systems do not operate effectively and Board's end up with all the water to deal with regardless, generally quicker than the design parameters. Members considered that current surface water design practises do not take into account exceptional weather conditions or the complex systems within the Fens.

Fairburn way, Chatteris

The Chairman referred to a proposed development on land to the south of Fairburn Avenue, Chatteris and a recent site visit. He informed the board that in a high rainfall event, water from the highland area near the villages of Warboys and Pidley can take 12 hours to reach Washways pumping station, which then runs at capacity to discharge the water into the Middle Level System.

As the proposed development is close to Washways pumping station, it was felt that it caused less of a flood risk to the system if the water from the development could reach the pumping station before the 12-hours peak, when the station could better cope with the discharge. To do this would require a discharge higher than the proposed attenuated rate. Mr Hill reported that there was also a proposed second site north of Fairburn Way which might require the same conditions.

Mr H Whittome referred to the possibility of the Middle Level Commissioners making a charge for an increased discharge rate and in such circumstances did not wish for the Board to then receive a charge in relation to this.

RESOLVED

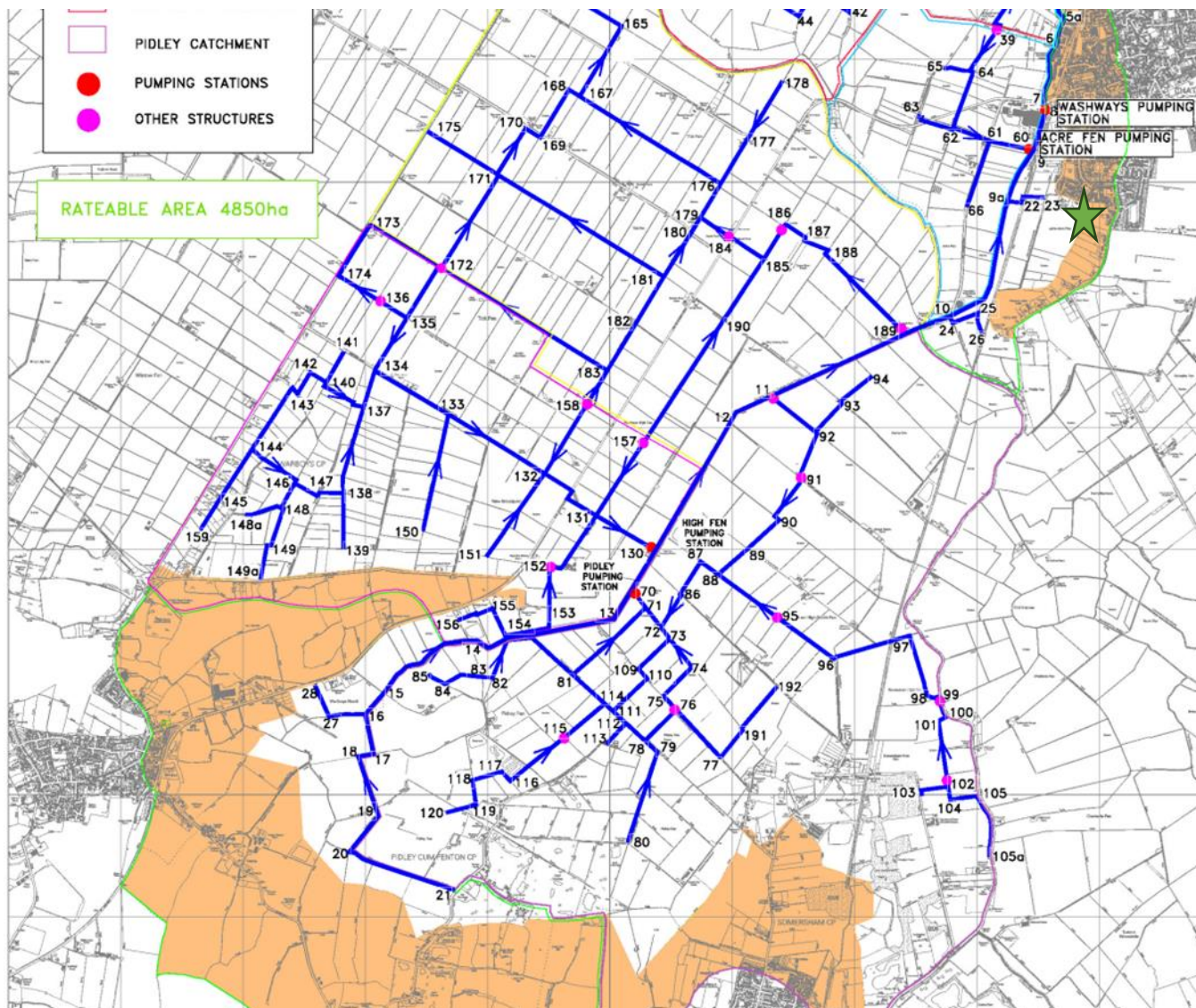
That the Board approved for the issuing of a statement regarding the disposal of surface water from the development. Viz:

Residential development on land to the south of 8 - 59 Fairbairn Way, Chatteris

Following the Board's recent annual meeting, the Board wishes to issue the following statement regarding the disposal of surface water from the above development.

- *The above development is within the highland area of the Board's system, close to the Washways Pumping Station.*
- *In a high rainfall event, water from the highland area near the villages of Warboys and Pidley can take 12 hours to reach the Washways Pumping Station, which then runs at capacity to discharge the water to the Middle Level system. Please see the map below showing the Board's system and the position of the development site.*
- *As the above development is close to the Washways Pumping Station, the Board feel that it would cause less of a flood risk to the system, if the water from the development could reach the pumping station before the 12-hour peak, when the station could better cope with the discharge. This would require a discharge higher than the proposed attenuated rate.*
- *As a rule, the Board request discharges from new developments to be at greenfield rates, but for the above reasons, an exception could be made in this case.*
- *This would not set a precedent for discharges over greenfield rate, but the Board may consider a similar solution if further development was proposed in this area south of Chatteris.*
- *The receiving ditch will need improvement to accept the discharge and the route that the discharge will take to meet the Board's system will need to be identified and possibly improved. These works would be consented as part of the discharge and byelaw consent applications and separate agreements would also need to be made between the developer and landowner.*
- *The proposed attenuation pond would not be reduced in size, but the Hydro-brake flow control diameter could be enlarged to increase the discharge rate to be agreed.*

Once the LLFA's comments have been received, regarding a discharge over greenfield rates, and details of the receiving ditch and onward route have been received, and confirmation of acceptance of works by landowner the discharge rate can be discussed with the applicant further to submission of consent application(s) to the Board.



Extract from Board's District Plan, development shown



Capital Programme

Mr Hill referred to the Capital Programme submitted by the engineer and that this will be updated on the completion of the grant aided study which is currently programmed for 2025/26.

He reported that the programme included for the replacement of the Boards Doosan excavator and referred to the discussions on this matter at the Finance Committee. The Chairman reported that the District Officer had recently carried out a second inspection of a machine for sale by a nearby drainage board. The District Officer reported that although the machine was in good order, the arrangement of the hydraulics would not allow travel and cutting with a flail head at the same time, so it would not be a viable option.

The Chairman reported that the Doosan excavator had had a full-service last year and was generally in good order.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Capital Programme be approved in principal and kept under review.

- ii) Further to minute B.1747, a sum up to £50,000 be available for the replacement of the Board's excavator and that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be authorised to make the decision when to change.

Mechanical & Electrical

Mr Hill referred to the discussions of the Finance Committee.

RESOLVED

That the recommendations of the Finance Committee concerning the Mechanical and electric repairs at the Board's pumping stations be approved.

The Chairman reported that the weedscreen cleaner at Washways pumping station does not have a surface clean ad he had contacted the engineer over providing this option and that the engineer had confirmed that it would cost around £1,000 to provide this. Mr I Johnson considered this would provide value for money as there are additional problems if the weed basket gets stuck or turns over.

RESOLVED

That the proposed work to provide a surface clean option for the automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment at Washways pumping station be approved.

B.1913 Health & Safety

Viz:



Site Safety Inspection Record

Warboys Somersham and Pidley IDB

Complete

Name of organisation:	Warboys Somersham and Pidley IDB
Date of site visit	19.01.2024 08:56 GMT
Address of inspected premises	Washways Pumping station PE16 6EG
Name of Advisor	Martin Clark
Audit Name	Warboys Somersham and Pidley IDB

Audit

An opening meeting was held with

Warboys Somersham and Pidley IDB

Have there been any accidents since our last visit?

No

None recorded

Have there been any new starters since our last visit?

No

None recorded

1

It was understood that a new district officer is due to take over on 29 March 2024 and in the interim a care taking arrangement has been in place.

No significant issues were raised during this visit.



Photo 1



Photo 2

2

Signage. Previous recommendations had been made regarding the replacement of faded or illegible hazard warning signage at the pumping station sites, e.g. electrical hazard and automated machinery operating without warning.

Most of the sites have been provided with replacement signage for automatic machinery.

In order to provide a consistent standard of signage at each of the pumping station sites, it is recommended that signage is displayed on the site access gate(s) or perimeter fencing where provided, or pumping station building that has the following information:

- Pumping Station Name.
- IDB Name.
- Location details. eg. Grid ref, 'What Three Words'
- Contact details for emergency (e.g. name, phone number, email).
- Hazard warning pictograms relevant to the site, e.g. electric shock, automatic machinery, deep water or fall from edge, no unauthorised entry, etc.

It was suggested that Middle Level Commissioners are contacted to facilitate this

3

With the exception of signage - see para 2 above, no significant issues were raised at Westmoor and Acre Fen and HighFen stations.

It was pleasing to note that housekeeping was observed to be at a good standard in all locations.



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11



Photo 12

4

It was understood that the old buildings at Puddock Bridge pumping station have been sold off and are being redeveloped into private dwellings.

At the time of this visit these were not yet completed and therefore public access to the pumping station is not likely.

The gate and fencing at the pumping station have now been extend around the pumping station and appropriate signage will be required before any occupation of the private dwellings.

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

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

It was understood that this is an ongoing issue and the developer is being engaged to resolve any potential issues.



Photo 13



Photo 14



Photo 15



Photo 16

Photographic Risk Assessment

Advisor's signature



Signed by advisor on behalf of district officer
23.01.2024 18:44 GMT

Departure time

19.01.2024 11:32 GMT

Photographic Risk Assessments closed out during the visit.

Nil

Number of outstanding Photographic Risk Assessments

0
From 0 to 99

Media summary



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11



Photo 12



Photo 13



Photo 14



Photo 15



Photo 16

The Chairman reported on the visit by Martin Clark from Cope safety Management on 19th January 2024 and informed members that matters raised had either been addressed or were planned. He confirmed he had spoken with the District Officer concerning the use of a life jacket when working near to the water, The District Officer reported on a number of signs at pumping stations which either needed updating or replacing.

Mr I Johnson reported on an issue at Westmoor pumping station concerning mains electrical cables being placed next to the weedscreen and he considered the cables should be shielded with a metal cover.

RESOLVED

- i) That the report be approved
- ii) That the Middle level Commissioners be requested to update and replace the signage at the Board's pumping stations
- iii) That the Chairman and Mr I Johnson be authorised to take any action as they consider necessary to protect the mains electric cables at Westmoor pumping station and at any other pumping stations where this is an issue

B.1914 District Officer's Report

The District Officer introduced himself and reported that he had now been around the majority of the district. He has started with high rainfall and high-water levels so considered he had had a good grounding. He reported on a number of slips over-winter, the majority of which had been attended to and the remainder will be addressed through the routine maintenance programme.

He informed Members that he had started to tidy at the pumping stations and there was a pile of old tyres at Puddock pumping station for which he had a quote for their disposal at between £500 to £600. He confirmed that the air conditioning on the Doosan excavator had now been repaired and the works truck had received a full service. Mr H Whittome referred to the Fenland District Council rapid response team if there were instances of fly tipping within the district. The district officer reported that repairs/adjustments were required to the gates and Washways and Pidley pumping stations to allow for better access and more efficient working and that in tidying around the pumping stations there was now scrap metal to dispose of.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Board approved the District Officer's report and thanked him for his work.
- ii) The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Mr I Johnson be authorised to take any actions as they consider appropriate in the disposal of scrap tyres and metal.

- iii) The Chairman, Vice-Chairman & Mr I Johnson be authorised to approve repairs to the gates at Washways & Pidley pumping stations

B.1915 Governance

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	10
Meeting:	WARBOYS, SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	Subject:	GOVERNANCE
Date:	Thursday 6th June 2024	Officer Responsible:	Paul Burrows

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

- A. Note the continued appointment of Whittings as Internal Auditor.
- B. Review and approve the updated Risk Management Strategy.
- C. Review and approve the Financial Regulations & Financial Code
- D. Highlight if there are any specific risks or issues not covered within its Risk Management Strategy that may need review ahead of the next formal update.
- E. Advise on any changes they wish to make to insured values.
- F. 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.
- G. Exercise of Public Rights
- H. Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments
- I. 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 are reminded that Whittings LLP were appointed as internal auditor for a five-year period commencing 1st April 2023 (financial years 2023/24 to 2027/28).
- 1.3 The Board is asked to act on the advice of the Auditor within its decision making.

2. Internal Controls & Banking

- 2.1 Within the financial operations at the Middle Level offices there are a series of controls in place to ensure the segregation of duties, so as far as practical within a small workforce, that no one person has control of a single operation from start to finish. The [Internal Controls](#) are available via the website within the 'Governance' section on the Board's page.
- 2.2 Note the Financial Code for the Board is included within its 'Governance Documents' also available on its page via www.middlelevel.gov.uk
- 2.3 The Board needs to ensure there is adequate separation of duties within its running and decision making. Members are asked to refresh themselves as to the Member Code of Conduct (available within the Governance Documents on the Board's webpage) and ensure their declarations of interests are clear and up-to-date.

- 2.4 If a Board Member (or their business) undertakes contracted work (or bids for such work) for the Board it is recommended that they be excluded from any decision making as a matter of course and that appropriate contractual arrangements are in place.
- 2.5 If the Member also has a lead role for the Board (eg Chairman/Vice Chairman) then it is important that the Board puts in place safeguards to ensure a separation of duties, particularly being clear on who is acting as lead client for the contractor.
- 2.6 **Banking** - It is necessary to update the signatories on the Barclays accounts.

3. Risk Assessment and Insured Values

- 3.1 The Board's Risk Management Strategy has been recently updated and is available as Appendix 1. It is due for formal review and update in 2027. The Board are asked to review and approve the updated strategy.
- 3.2 The insured values for the Board's assets are detailed below:

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY IDB
INSURED VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS

PUMPING STATIONS & BUNGALOW

As at
1st April 2024

Puddock Pumping Station	770,000.00
Pidley Pumping Station	900,000.00
High Fen Pumping Station	734,000.00
Acre Fen Pumping Station	460,000.00
Washways Pumping Station	1,700,000.00
Westmoor Pumping Station	775,000.00
	5,339,000.00
Puddock Bungalow	150,000.00
	<u>5,489,000.00</u>

4. Financial Regulations & Code

- 4.1 To review and approve the Financial Regulations & Financial Code and to confirm the next review period (Appendix 2)

5. Annual Governance Statement:

- 5.1 To review and complete the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31st March 2024. (Appendix 3)

6. Exercise of Public Rights

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 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.

6.3 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.

6.4 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.

7. Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments:

7.1 The clerk to report.

Author Name: Paul Burrows

Role: Clerk

Appendix 1 Risk Management Strategy 2024 – 2027

Appendix 2 Financial Regulations & Financial Code

Appendix 3 Annual Governance Statement 2024

WARBOYS, SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Administered by:



Governance

Risk Management Strategy 2024 - 2027

This document replaces the Board's 2020 risk management documentation and outlines how Members, officers/employees and the Middle Level Commissioners staff govern the Board's risks.

Risk Management Principles

The five key principles from the UK Government's 'Orange Book' shall be used in a proportionate manner, recognising Internal Drainage Boards as small public authorities with limited resources.

- A. Risk management shall be an essential part of governance and leadership, and fundamental to how the organisation is directed, managed and controlled at all levels.
- B. Risk management shall be an integral part of all organisational activities to support decision-making in achieving objectives.
- C. Risk management shall be collaborative and informed by the best available information and expertise.
- D. Risk management processes shall be structured.
- E. Risk management shall be continually improved through learning and experience.

Risk Definition

A risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect the Board's ability to achieve its statutory responsibilities; remain viable and sustainable; deliver any wider objectives and; manage its reputation.

Risk is a function of the likelihood or probability of the event occurring versus the impact. A risk that materialises is no longer a risk, it is an issue.

Risk Categorisation

The Board will consider tactical risks and strategic risks that are within its control and/or influence to address.

Tactical risks will tend to be short term time horizon risks that are specific to the Board and within its control to address (ie it has the capacity, capability, finance, information, technology and responsibility).

Strategic risks will tend to be more generic to the local IDB community and potentially longer term in their time horizon. These are less likely to be within a single IDB's control to mitigate but will be within collective influence by IDBs working together and with other relevant authorities.

Risk (and Issue) Management Choices

The following four standard categories of risk response will be considered:

Terminate (heaviest strategy) - the risk will not be allowed to occur.

Treat - the risk may occur, but its impact or likelihood will be lessened through mitigating actions.

Transfer - the ownership of the risk will be formally moved to someone else not currently the risk manager. *The new owner may decide to terminate, treat or tolerate the risk.*

Tolerate (Lightest strategy) - the risk will be allowed to occur with little to no mitigating action.

Risk Management Approach

These are the actions and approaches the Board will take to managing its risks through the period 2024-2027.

- a) Receive papers and reports from MLC staff covering the topics Governance, Constitution & Membership, Finance, Environmental, Clerk's Report, Consulting Engineer (inc Operations, Capital Works and M&E) helping the Board identify and make choices around management of tactical and strategic risks.
- b) Receive papers and reports from the Board's District Officer(s), Health & Safety rep and others as appropriate to help the Board identify and make choices around management of tactical risks.
- c) Support the development and adoption of Key Health Indicators (KHIs) and Comparison Metrics across the portfolio of IDBs administered by MLC staff. These will be integrated into MLC staff authored papers and reports.
- d) The Chairman & Vice Chairman will actively engage with the MLC & IDB Chairs community and MLC Senior Officers to identify and mitigate generic tactical and strategic risks that impact multiple IDBs.
- e) Support the Middle Level Commissioners in managing its operational, environmental and asset management risks, including delivery of its capital programme, recognising the benefit to the IDBs within the MLC catchment.
- f) Empower and recognise that the MLC Senior Officers and staff engage in wider relationships, partnerships and strategic projects on their behalf to help identify and mitigate generic tactical and strategic risks. This includes Fens 2100+ and the Fens Reservoir programmes.
- g) Start to use language and terminology from this strategy at Board meetings within their consideration of risks.
- h) Adopt formal project risk management as part of any capital works projects led by MLC staff on behalf of the Board.
- i) Keep under review the need, benefit and cost of developing a formal risk assessment, risk register and risk response plan. It is currently not considered a proportionate approach.

Strategy published: January 2024

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM AND PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**Financial Regulations****INDEX**

<u>Section</u>		<u>Page</u>
A	INTRODUCTION	1
B	CONTRACTS	1
C	RESPONSIBILITY OF OFFICERS	2
D	ESTIMATES	2
E	BANKING	2
F	INCOME	2
G	PURCHASES OF GOODS AND SERVICES	3
H	EMPLOYEES	4
I	STORES	4
J	ASSETS	4
K	AUDIT	5
L	FRAUD OR OTHER IRREGULARITIES	5
M	WRITE OFFS	6
N	SALARIES, WAGES AND PENSIONS	6
O	BOARD EMPLOYEES ETC	6
P	MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES ALLOWANCES	7
Q	INSURANCES	7
R	SECURITY	8
S	PROTECTION OF PRIVATE PROPERTY	8
T	REVIEW	9

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 Warboys Somersham and Pidley 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 to 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.
6. 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.
3. 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.

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM AND PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

FINANCIAL CODE

SECTION		Page
A	SUMMARY	2
B	SCHEME OF BUDGET DELEGATION	2
C	MANAGING BUDGETS & REPORTING	3
D	PURCHASING GOODS & SERVICES	4
E	BANK MANDATE & INVESTMENTS	6
F	INVESTMENTS AND LOANS STRATEGY	6
G	COLLECTING MONEY	7
H	SUNDRY DEBTORS	7
I	EMPLOYING/MANAGING STAFF	7
J	STOCK IN STORES/DELIVERED TO SITE	8
K	ASSET ACCOUNTING/MANAGEMENT	8
L	AUDIT	8
M	SALARIES AND WAGES	8
N	INSURANCES	9
O	SECURITY	9
P	REVIEW OF FINANCIAL CODE	9

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:

<u>Estimated Value of Goods/Services Quotes/ obtained</u>	<u>Quotation/Tenders to be</u>
<= £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.

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY IDB

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

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

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

DATE APPROVED

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER URL: WWW.MIDDLELEVEL.GOV.UK: ICE ADDRESS

Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual return of the Board 2022/2023

- a) The Board considered and approved the comments of the auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on 31st March 2023.
- b) The Board considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended 31st March 2023.

Risk Management Strategy & Insured Values

Mr Hill 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. Mr Hill outlined the strategy for the Board.

Mr Hill reminded members that they had previously approved for the engineer to revalue all pumping stations and when this was completed to then index link the valuations for insurance purposes. However, valuations are ever increasingly complex and the Middle Level do not have the required expertise currently to offer a service for valuation for insurance purposes and there were currently no relevant pumping station replacements that can be used as a guide. Mr Whittome reported that on another Board he was a member of the Board approved to value pumping stations at £1m per pumping unit within the structure. Members discussed options available pending the engineer being able to either carry out this function or a suitably qualified way in which to do so.

RESOLVED

- i) The Board reviewed & approved the new Risk Management Strategy 2024-2027 and expressed satisfaction with their Risk Management Policy.
- ii) That the insured valuations for pumping stations be uplifted by 30% and then index link the valuations annually.
- iii) That when the engineer is able to provide a suitably qualified method of valuation the Boards pumping stations are revalued for insurance purposes.

Finance Regulations & Finance Code

Mr Hill reported that the Board's Finance Regulations and Finance Code Policy were due for review and renewal this year. However, he 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.

Review of Internal Controls

The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with the current system of internal controls.

Exercise of Public Rights

Mr Hill referred to the publishing of the Notice of Public Rights and publication of unaudited Annual return, Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and the Notice of Conclusion of the Audit and Right to inspect the Annual Return.

Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments.

Mr Hill 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.

Banking

Mr Hill reported that it was necessary to update the boards banking mandate at Barclays Plc but with his retirement, it was likely that the Board would also be requested to change its mandate at the November 2024 meeting and as there was no immediate need to change, he considered it more appropriate to make all the changes following the November 2024 meeting.

RESOLVED

That the Boards bank account mandate with Barclays Plc be reviewed at the November 2024 meeting.

That Mr T Noble be authorised as a new signatory on the Barclays Bank Plc account on his appointment to Vice-Chairman

Annual Governance Statement

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

RESOLVED

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

B.1916 Finance – Looking Back

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	11
Meeting:	WARBOYS, SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	Subject:	FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING BACK
Date:	Thursday 6th June 2024	Officer Responsible:	Robert Hill/Sam Ablett

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

- A. Note the Budgeting review within Appendix 1.
- B. Note the Highland Water contributions
- C. Consider and approve the payments detailed within Appendix 2.
- D. Consider and approve the Annual Accounts & Finance Papers 2023/2024 within Appendix 3.

Finance Officer's review and key messages

For 2023/2024 the Board had estimated expenditure for the year of £249,207 equivalent to a rate of 30.0p, adjustments were made to remove improvement works funding from the budget proposal – pump overhaul £10,000 and future works funding £12,461 and other reductions to leave net expenditure at £224,286 and set a rate of 27.00p 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 for the winter board meeting and this was reviewed 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 £60,000 more than that previously estimated. 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 for the year of £197,481.

Repairs have been higher than budgeted, with additional service/repair costs at the pumping stations resulting from increased wear. Also included is the installation of a new heating system at the bungalow - £8,799. District labour costs are down as there was a change of District Officer in the year. Other areas of expenditure have been generally in-line with budget provisions.

Over-all this gives a decrease in the Boards General Fund of £80,699 to a balance of £72,549 at 31st March 2024, the balance at 1st April 2023 being £153,248. 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. Budgeting

- 1.1 The budget comparison of the forecast out-turn and the actual out-turn for the financial year ending 31st March 2024 is included as Appendix 1.

2. Payments for 2023

- 2.1 Payments are detailed within Appendix 2

3. Highland Water Contributions

- 3.1 Under Section 57 of Land Drainage Act 1991 the Board can make a claim for funding to the Environment Agency for the additional costs of the onward management of water from the district's highland. It is at the Environment Agency's discretion if they pay the contribution and it is accounted for within the local team's annual maintenance budget.
- 3.2 Following the submission of claims for contributions the gross sum of £4,015.32 (£17,030.62 less £13,015.30 received on account) (inclusive of supervision) has been received from the Environment Agency for the financial year 2022/2023 based on the Board's actual expenditure on maintenance work for that financial year and the sum of £21,238.81 in respect of 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2023/2024.

4. Annual Accounts and Finance papers 2023/2024:

4.1 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 3

Author Name: Robert Hill/Sam Ablett

Role: Treasurer/Assistant Treasurer

Appendix 1 Budget Review

Appendix 2 Payments for 2023/24

Appendix 3 Annual Accounts & Finance Papers 2023/24

Appendix 1

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM AND PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

BUDGET MONITORING 2023/2024

	<u>Approved budget 2023/2024</u>	<u>Expenditure to 30.09.2023</u>	<u>Est. Expenditure 01.10.23 to 31.03.24</u>	<u>Estimated out-turn at 31.03.2024</u>	<u>Variance to budget</u>		<u>Actual 2022/2023</u>
	£	£		£	£		£
1 District labour (including District Officer's salary)	41,500	23,974	8,526	32,500 ^A	-9,000		65,747
2 Rates, insurances and telephones	6,000	5,670	330	6,000 ^B	0		4,616
3 Repairs and renewals	17,000 ^C	11,069 ^C	7,431	18,500 ^C	1,500		17,122
4 Drainworks	20,000 ^D	5,571 ^D	6,929	12,500 ^D	-7,500		16,267
Piling works							
5 Fuel (oil and electricity)-including District Officer's travelling	125,000 ^E	24,493 ^E	100,507	125,000 ^E	0		68,792
6 Administration charge, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	25,250	11,228	14,272	25,500	250		23,975
7 Environment Agency - Precept	22,984	11,492	11,492	22,984	0		22,314
8 Capital Reserve Fund	0	0	0	0	0		0
	257,734	93,497	149,486	242,984	-14,750		218,833
Improvement works	0	0	0	0	0		28,361
Bad debt provision	0	0	0	0	0		0
<u>Less income</u>							
Budgeted income	33,448 ^F	6,902 ^F	30,301	37,203 ^F	3,755		54,987
	224,286	86,596	119,185	205,781	-18,505		192,206
<i>Rate Requirement</i>	<i>0.2700 p</i>						
Rate set	<i>0.2700 p</i>						
<u>General Fund</u>							
Opening balance	153,248	153,248	200,964	153,248			162,670
Rate income	224,285	134,312	89,945	224,257			182,784
Write back of provisions							0
Net expenditure	224,286	86,596	119,185	205,781			192,206
Use of balances	0	0	0	0			0
Closing balance	153,247	200,964	171,724	171,724			153,248

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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

Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	371.40
Middle Level Commissioners - Telemetry charges up to termination of contract (Account from Vodafone)	507.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment (Washways pumping station)	2,629.89
Middle Level Commissioners - Court costs (Liability orders)	0.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment (Westmoor pumping station)	148.24
Middle Level Commissioners - IDB Health & Safety Re-charge 2022-2023 (Account from COPE Safety Management)	628.80
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	244.80
Middle Level Commissioners - Installation of telemetry at pumping stations (net of 50% grant-in-aid)	19,428.49
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery and traveling	12,776.18
L R Boon & Sons Ltd - 5 litres of screen wash, gas refill, roll of agri tape and 2 tins of tyre repair	58.43
Lakeside Lodge Golf Centre - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	120.00
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges and derv	447.76
L R Boon & Sons Ltd - Bulbs, roll of hand paper, 1 box of grease cartridges, 3 packs of gloves and 5 litres of TFR	109.07
Cambridgeshire County Council - Right of way (Warners Drove, Somersham)	30.00
Environment Agency - Precept	11,491.90
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges and derv	321.29
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,587.84
K R German & Son - Expenses in connection with finance meeting	66.50
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges and derv	295.10
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2023	1,098.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to guard on diesel pump (Washways pumping station)	209.92
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of a Stihl brushcutter with blade, 15 litres of knapsack sprayer, helmet and 5 litres of Aspen	716.28
Cole & Day - MOT and service of Isuzu D-Max AO17 WMW	1,140.28
C Leadbetter - Expenses in connection with retirement of District Officer	249.90
L R Boon & Sons Ltd - New 5344 battery supplied and fitted on truck	198.54
Mervyn Lambert Plant Ltd - 1,000 hour service to excavator AU09 FEW	2,425.76
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges and derv	354.13
L R Boon & Sons Ltd - Wiper blades	15.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply road tax - AO17 WMW	320.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Manufacture bracket and replace ultrasonic cable and test (High Fen pumping station)	541.04
Mrs J Payne - Refund of drainage rates due to redetermination of land	14.07
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges and derv	300.77
R Wilmer - Reimbursement for fuel purchased	39.80
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit fee (2022-2023 accounts)	756.00
Bank charges - Same day payment	15.00
Messrs L & E Munns - Refund of drainage rates paid twice	4,293.81
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges and derv	228.14
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, attendance at meetings, work in connection with investigation of pumping options, setting of summer levels, planning and development applications)	5,768.12
Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners 2022-2023 accounts)	1,596.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages and telephone charges,	11,932.27
Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal	40.00
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges, derv, supply and fit tyres to excavator and supply of gas for bungalow	2,077.07
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,664.64
R Wilmer - Reimbursement for fuel purchased	80.75

Lakeside Lodge Golf Centre - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	120.00
Mervyn Lambert Plant Ltd - Supply of parts for repair of excavator AU09 FEW	548.70
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	5,552.91
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to flap door (Westmoor pumping station)	779.89
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply road tax - AU09 FEW	165.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Recover and repair truck (Accounts from KPS Services)	1,058.95
Cope Safety Management Ltd - Provision of Lone Working online training	33.60
White Plumbing Ltd - Installation of new heating system at Puddock bungalow	10,558.87
Environment Agency - Precept	11,491.90
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges, derv and supply of gas oil	5,698.73
T Underwood - Repair of excavator AU09 FEW	936.60
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	693.90
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges and derv	440.59
Lakeside Lodge Golf Centre - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	630.40
GR Wadsworth & Son - Emergency weed removal at Queens Drain	787.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Preparation of highland water claims	356.98
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges, derv and supply of gas oil	4,169.91
Daniel Brown - Recruitment advert and keys	285.00
L R Boon & Sons Ltd - 30mm combination spanner	38.47
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges, derv and supply of gas oil	1,615.51
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, correspondence with Chairman, planning and development applications)	5,966.52
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,194.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution (Environmental Officer)	708.00
Mervyn Lambert Plant Ltd - Supply of parts for repair of excavator AU09 FEW	82.08
Association of Drainage Authorities (River Great Ouse branch) - Subscription 2022-2023	30.00
Anglia Farmers Ltd - Mobile telephone charges and derv	189.73
Agri-mend - Repairs to excavator AU09 FEW	270.00
Lakeside Lodge Golf Centre - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	130.00
Mervyn Lambert Plant Ltd - Actuator, fuel filter and water sep filter	164.53
Corona Energy - Electricity supply (Acre Fen pumping station)	1,902.52
Corona Energy - Electricity supply (High Fen pumping station)	1,591.23
Corona Energy - Electricity supply (Pidley pumping station)	6,814.05
Corona Energy - Electricity supply (Puddock pumping station)	3,141.34
Corona Energy - Electricity supply (Westmoor pumping station)	1,923.88
Corona Energy - Electricity supply (Washways pumping station)	12,711.73
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply (Acre Fen pumping station)	293.94
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply (High Fen pumping station)	901.75
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply (Pidley pumping station)	3,323.73
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply (Puddock pumping station)	1,453.86
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply (Westmoor pumping station)	628.28
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply (Washways pumping station)	5,046.83
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Meter Operator Charges (Puddock pumping station)	210.47
Anglia Farmers - Electricity Meter Operator Charges (Washways pumping station)	210.47
District Labour	38,613.44
	<u>220,804.27</u>

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

Appendix 3

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM AND PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

GENERAL FUND

2024			2023		
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year:-		Apr-01	Balance brought forward	154,636.31
	Precept		2024		
	Rates, insurances, telephones	5,614.34	Mar-31	Rate income & Special levies	223,877.06
	Repairs & Renewals	29,493.68		Interest	3,154.30
	Fuel	210,246.51		Consents	50.00
	Drainworks	7,939.40		Rent	6,600.00
	District Labour	37,145.32		Highland Water Contributions	24,956.65
	Administration charge, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising etc	25,531.31		Vehicle Contribution	0.00
		315,970.56		Write back of provisions	100.00
	<u>Improvement works</u>				
	Low Level Restoration - consultancy fee	4,414.80		<u>Development Fund</u>	
		0.00		Low Level Restoration - consultancy fees	4,414.80
		4,414.80			
	<u>Transfers to Capital Reserve Fund:</u>				
	Rates Raised 2023/2024	0.00			
	Pump overhaul provision	0.00			
		0.00			
	Depreciation charge				
		981.71			
	Balance carried forward				
		73,438.25			
		417,789.12			
					417,789.12

BALANCE SHEET

Capital Section

Liabilities

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

Assets

Bungalow, Puddock Pumping Station	126,291.00	
Pumping Stations	5,013,500.00	
Plant Assets	889.34	
Stock	6,841.58	5,147,521.92

Revenue Section

General Fund

Revenue	72,548.91
Capital	889.34
	73,438.25
Development Charges Account	361,385.74
Grant in Aid	164,011.21
Sundry Creditors	237,512.95
Capital Reserve Fund	124,955.28
Low Level Restoration Fund	50,000.00
	6,151,094.43

Ratepayers' Account - Arrears		28,807.47
Sundry Debtors		1,535.89
Value Added Tax		36,087.58
Balance in hand -		
Treasurer's Account	79,691.40	
Business premium Account	257,450.17	
Treasury Deposit Account	600,000.00	937,141.57
		6,151,094.43

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM AND PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024
DEVELOPMENT CHARGES ACCOUNT

2024		2023	
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year:-	Apr-01	Balance brought forward
			358,488.03
	Middle Level Charges	0.00	
	Transfer to General Fund		
	Low Level restoration - consultancy fees	4,414.80	
			Interest
			7,312.51
	Balance carried forward	361,385.74	
		<u>365,800.54</u>	<u>365,800.54</u>

CAPITAL RESERVE ACCOUNT

2024		2023	
Mar-31		Apr-01	
<u>General Fund</u>	0.00	Balance brought forward	122,457.37
		2024	
		Rates Raised 2023/2024	0.00
		Mar-31 Pump overhaul provision	0.00
Balance carried forward	124,955.28	Interest	2497.91
	 124,955.28		124,955.28

Warboys Somersham & Pidley Internal Drainage Board

Summary of Bank Reconciliations as at 31st March 2024

Treasurers Account 2023/2024

1st April 2023			31st March 2024	
Balance brought forward	861,352.74		Payments made during the year	220,804.27
			Returned direct debit	770.74
31st March 2024				<u>221,575.01</u>
Receipts during the year				
Clerk's collection account	285,006.68			
Interest on deposit accounts	<u>12,357.16</u>	297,363.84	Balance carried forward	937,141.57
		<u><u>1,158,716.58</u></u>		<u><u>1,158,716.58</u></u>

Barclays Bank PLC

Current Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2024		80,000.00
Less unrepresented cheques:		
20/06/2023 Payne - refund	14.07	0.00
25/03/2024 2023/68	130.00	
25/03/2024 2023/69	<u>164.53</u>	
		308.60
Add outstanding lodgements:		0.00
Balance per Trial Balance		<u><u>79,691.40</u></u>

Cash balances as at 31st March 2024

Barclays Bank PLC

Current Account	79,691.40
Business Premium Account	257,450.17
Treasury Deposit Account	600,000.00
<u>Total reconciled cash balances per accounts</u>	<u><u>937,141.57</u></u>

Warboys Somersham & Pidley IDB**Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return****Financial year ended 31st March 2024****Per Annual
Return**

<u>Line 1</u>	<u>Balances brought forward</u>		
	General Fund	190,146.82	
	Development charges account	358,488.03	
	Capital reserve account	85,558.66	
	Low level restoration fund	50,000.00	
		684,193.51	684,194
<u>Line 2</u>	<u>Rates and Special Levies</u>		
	Agricultural rates	199,546.87	
	Special Levies	24,334.00	
	Penalty	0.00	
	Costs	25.00	
	Write-off	-28.81	
		223,877.06	223,877
<u>Line 3</u>	<u>Total other receipts</u>		
	Interest		
	General fund	3,154.30	
	Development charges account	7,312.51	
	Capital reserve account	2,497.91	
	Consent applications	50.00	
	Rent	6,600.00	
	Vehicle Contribution	0.00	
	Highland Water	24,956.65	
	Grant in Aid	0.00	
	Discharge contributions	0.00	
	Land owners consent	0.00	
	Private Works	0.00	
	Write back of provisions	100.00	
		44,671.37	44,671
<u>Line 4</u>	<u>Staff costs</u>		
	Wages/salaries	32,126.93	
	National insurance contributions	3,733.32	
	Pension costs	1,285.07	
	Travelling expenses	0.00	
		37,145.32	37,145
<u>Line 5</u>	<u>Loan repayments</u>		
	PWLB - Principal	0.00	
	PWLB - Interest	0.00	
		0.00	0

Warboys Somersham & Pidley IDB**Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return****Financial year ended 31st March 2024****Per Annual
Return**

<u>Line 6</u>	All other payments	22,983.80 5,614.34 29,493.68 217,246.51 7,939.40 25,531.31 0.00 0.00 0.00 482.85 0.00 4,414.80 313,706.69	313,707
<u>Line 7</u>	Balances carried forward	102,447.62 361,385.74 88,056.57 50,000.00 601,889.93	601,890

Reconciliation

Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6

601,889.93

Reconciliation to Accounts

Balances carried forward per Annual Return - As above

601,889.93

Add Back:-

Restatement of Assets

1,388.20

Depreciation

-981.71

Assets acquired in year

482.85

Assets disposed of in year

0.00

Profit on disposal

0.00

889.34

Balances carried forward per Accounts

General Fund

66,438.25

Development charges account

361,385.74

Capital reserve account

124,955.28

Low level restoration fund

50,000.00

602,779.27

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY IDB

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward	707,687	684,194	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	182,784	223,877	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	40,961	44,671	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	65,746	37,145	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	181,492	306,707	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	684,194	609,890	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	861,353	937,142	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	5,226,826	5,227,309	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				The figures in the accounting statements above 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

21/05/2024

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

as recorded in minute reference:

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

Mr Hill referred to the comments concerning the 2023/2024 year which the Board noted and approved.

Payments 2023/2024

The Board considered and approved the payments amounting to £220,804.27, which had been made during the financial year ending 31st March 2024.

NB. Mr M Heading, Mr H Whittome & Mr S Whittome declared an interest in the payments made to Middle Level Commissioners (as Members of the Middle Level Board).

NB. Mr J German declared an interest in the payment made to K R German.

NB. Mr D Brown declared an interest in the payment made to him.

Highland Water Contributions

Mr Hill referred to the Highland Water contributions the gross sum of £4,015.32 (£17,030.62 less £13,015.30 received on account) (inclusive of supervision) has been received from the Environment Agency for the financial year 2022/2023 based on the Board's actual expenditure on maintenance work for that financial year and the sum of £21,238.81 in respect of 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2023/2024.

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.1917 Finance – Looking Forward

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	12
Meeting:	WARBOYS, SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	Subject:	FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING FORWARD
Date:	Thursday 6 th June 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 Rate arrears (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 finance committee.

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 finance committee gave consideration to replacing the Boards excavator – see finance committee minutes for further detail. The budget proposal does not include provision to fund the replacement if the Board were to proceed and purchase a machine then they would need to 'borrow' the funds from the development account and replace this by money raised in future years rates.

Members should note that the budget proposal includes for the full recovery of highland water claims of £44,880.

The budget proposal includes for the recovery of balances depleted during winter 2023/2024 pumping over a three-year period. Longer term the board will need to address balances to restore them to a minimum of a year-in-hand. When considering the rate for 2024/2025 members should also consider likely future capital investment requirements at the pumping stations.

After fully reviewing the Estimates, the Boards Reserves, and likely future annual running costs, the Finance Committee recommend that for 2024/2025 the rate should be increased to 32.00p together with a Special levy of £7,346 on Fenland District Council and a Special levy of £21,585 on Huntingdonshire District Council.

1. Fees, Remunerations and Subscriptions

1.1 Subscription to the Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA) will increase by 6.5%, from £915 to £975.

1.2 Consider the Clerk's fee.

1.3 Consider the District Officer's salary

1.4 Consider the charges for hire of plant on private work;

charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work last reviewed June 2023:-

(i) Doosan DX 140W Excavator

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

£65 per hour outside the District)

(ii) Flail Mower

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

£70 per hour outside the District)

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

2. Precept to the Environment Agency

- 2.1 Internal Drainage Boards are required to pay a Precept (IDB Precept) to the Environment Agency for their expenses managing water passing into main rivers. Predominantly, the Precept funds additional maintenance downstream of and/or benefitting IDB districts.
- 2.2 The Anglian (Great Ouse) Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC) determined that the Precept will increase by 3% for 2024
- 2.3 The precept for 2022/2023 was £22,314.

3. Rate arrears – Confidential papers

4. Estimates for 2024/25

- 4.1 The estimated budget for 2024/25 is shown in Appendix 1.
- 4.2 The Board are reminded that it is standard practice to budget for an average year in terms of rainfall and associated pumping requirements.

5. Rate Requirements for 2024/25

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 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 Rate Arrears (CONFIDENTIAL PAPERS)

Appendix 1 Estimates for 2024/25

Appendix 2 Rate Requirements for 2024/25

Appendix 1

WARBOYS SOMERSHAM AND PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET PROPOSAL 2024/2025

	<u>Actual</u> <u>2019/2020</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>2020/2021</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>2021/2022</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>2022/2023</u>	<u>Approved budget</u> <u>2023/2024</u> £	<u>Actual</u> <u>2023/2024</u> £	<u>Proposed budget</u> <u>2024/2025</u> £
1 District labour (including District Officer's salary)	34,055	35,077	36,089	65,747	41,500	37,145	42,500 ^A
2 Rates, insurances and telephones	4,622	4,430	4,452	4,616	6,000	5,614	6,300 ^B
3 Repairs and renewals	27,260	16,700	19,401	17,122	17,000 ^C	29,494 ^C	37,000 ^C
4 Drainworks	21,813	26,894	83,345	16,267	20,000 ^D	12,354 ^D	25,000 ^D
Piling works							
5 Fuel (oil and electricity)-including District Officer's travelling	48,319	61,477	48,545	68,792	125,000	210,247 ^E	141,750 ^F
6 Administration charge, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	26,570	23,218	23,516	23,975	25,250	25,531	26,500
7 Environment Agency - Precept	21,343	21,877	21,877	22,314	22,984	22,984	23,673
8 Reinstatement of balances	0	0	0	0	0	0	27,066 ^G
9 Capital Reserve Fund	17,532	22,532	12,532	0	0	0	0 ^H
	201,514	212,205	249,757	218,833	257,734	343,369	329,789
Bad debt provision	0	0	0	0		0	
Improvement works	48,181	99,562	10,632	28,361	0	0	0
Washways improvement scheme	0	0	0	0	0	483	0
LESS Interest on Deposit Accounts, private works, Highland water contributions, contributions from Development Charges Account etc	85,880	122,844	72,719	54,987	33,448 ^I	39,276 ^I	64,062 ^I
	163,815	188,923	187,669	192,207	224,286	304,576	265,726
Net Expenditure							
					224,286	304,576	265,726
Rate Requirement					224,286		0.3200 ^p
Rate set	20.00p	20.00p	21.00p	22.00p	27.00 p	27.00 p	

<u>General Fund</u>			
Opening balance	153,248	153,248	72,549
Rate income	224,286	223,877	265,726
Write back of provisions		0	
Net expenditure	224,286	304,576	265,726
use of balances	0	0	27,066
Closing balance	153,248	72,549	99,615

<u>Budget proposal 2024/2025</u>			
<u>Remarks</u>	<u>Budget 2023/2024</u>	<u>Actual 2023/2024</u>	<u>Budget 2024/2025</u>
A - Includes provision to increase by Middle Level pay award from anniversary of commencement of employment.			
B - Includes provision for increased insurances, telephones			
C - <u>Includes provisions for:</u>			
General provisions	17,000	13,420	13,000
Replace heating system at bungalow	0	8,799	0
Washways p/s screen cleaner overhaul and power capaci	0	0	15,000
Westmoor p/s bearing replacement	0	0	5,000
truck	0	2,336	1,000
digger	0	4,939	3,000
	<u>17,000</u>	<u>29,494</u>	<u>37,000</u>
Pump overhaul provision 2023/24 not raised			
D - <u>Includes contractors accounts:-</u>			
Flail Mowing	4,000	656	0
Slubbing (machine hire)	6,000	0	15,000
Chemical weed control	500	0	500
	<u>10,500</u>	<u>656</u>	<u>15,500</u>
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 - Provision for recovery of balances depleted in winter 2023/2024 pumping. Proposal to recover to balance at 31st March 2023 over a three year period.			
H - Does not include provision for future asset improvement fund			
F - <u>Estimated income includes:</u>			
Full calculated highland water claim	25,000	24,957	44,880
aa <u>Development charges account</u>			
Opening balance at 01.04.2023	358,488	358,488	361,385
Receipts in year	0	7,312	0
Expenditure in year	0	-4,415	-10,800
Estimated closing balance -	<u>358,488</u>	<u>361,385</u>	<u>350,585</u>
ab <u>Capital reserve Fund</u>			
Opening balance at 01.04.2023	122,457	122,457	124,955
Raised - Provision at 1.50p	0	0	0
Rates raised - Pump overhaul provision	0	0	0
Income in year	0	2,498	0
Replacement pump - Puddock pumping station	0	0	0
Telemetry installation at pumping stations	0	0	0
High Fen p/s pump replacement	0	0	0
Puddock outfall flap valves	0	0	0
Piling - Pidley catchment	0	0	0
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Estimated closing balance -	<u>122,457</u>	<u>124,955</u>	<u>124,955</u>

Appendix 2Warboys Somersham & Pidley Internal Drainage BoardRate and levy requirements

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

- | | | |
|----|---|---------------------|
| a) | Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector - | 89.11% |
| b) | Proportion to be borne by Special levies issued to Councils:- | |
| | Huntingdonshire District Council - | 8.12% |
| | Fenland District Council - | <u>2.77%</u> 10.89% |

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £7,400.

In 2024/2025 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levies would raise £8,304.

Revenue cash balance in hand on 31st March 2024 - £72,549.

The estimated net expenditure for the Boards Revenue and Capital Programmes in 2024/2025 is £265,726, this does not include for any future works funding and equivalent to:-

- | | |
|----|--|
| a) | a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of <u>32.00p</u> |
| b) | a Special levy on Fenland District Council of <u>£7,346</u> and |
| c) | a Special levy on Huntingdonshire District Council of <u>£21,585</u> |

In 2023/2024 a rate of 27.00p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £6,198 on Fenland District Council and a Special levy of £18,136 on Huntingdonshire District Council.

P BURROWS

Clerk of the Board

May 2024

Mr Hill referred to the comments concerning the 2024/2025 year which the Board noted and approved.

Fees, remuneration & Subscriptions

i) ADA Subscription

RESOLVED

That the increased ADA subscription of £975 for 2024 be paid.

ii) Clerks Fee

Mr Hill reported that for 2024/2025 there would be a small inflationary increase applied.

iii) Charges for Plant Hire

The Board approved the recommendation of the Finance Committee to increase all rates by £10 per hour

charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work (reviewed June 2024):-

(a) Doosan DX 140W Excavator

- £70 per hour in the District (inclusive of operator's wages)

£75 per hour outside the District

(b) Flail Mower

- £75 per hour inside the District (inclusive of operator's wages)

£80 per hour outside the District

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

iv) District Officers Salary

The Board approved the recommendation of the Finance Committee that the salary of the District Officer be increased by the Middle Level pay award for the current year on the anniversary of his commencement of employment with the Board, and that this indicator be used annually.

v) Precept to the Environment Agency

Mr Hill reported that the Anglian (Great Ouse) Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC) determined that the Precept will increase by 3% for 2024

Rate Arrears

The Board approved that the Rate Arrears of £156.06 be written off.

Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2024/2025

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 89.11% and 10.88%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £265,726 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 £236,795 and £28,931 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 32.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v)
 - a) That a Special levy of £21,585 be made and issued to Huntingdonshire District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
 - b) That a Special levy of £7,346 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vi) That the seal of the Board be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levies referred to in resolution (v).
- vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levies by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.1918 Date & Time of next Meetings

Thursday 28th November 2024, 14.00 (inspection 9.30am, meal & meeting)

Thursday 5th June 2025, 17:30, Lakeside Lodge, Pidley

B.1919 Any Other Business

The Chairman reported on the section of watercourse at 23-22-9a which has restricted access and is an issue for the Board to properly maintain. In response to the Chairman, Mr Hill confirmed that if the Board were to consider relinquishing this section of district watercourse then they should look to clean it out thoroughly and then issue notices following a resolution of the board to do so.

RESOLVED

For the District Officer to arrange for the section to be flailed and slubbed and for the matter to be discussed at the November 2024 meeting.

Millennium Bridge

The District Officer reported on the poor condition of the bridge at the Washways discharge channels discharge point into the Forty Foot River and that he had received telephone calls from members of the public concerning this. He confirmed that he had discussed matters with Cambridgeshire County Council who had confirmed this was a permissive right of way and that responsibility would rest with the land-owner. In response to Mr S Whittome, Mr Hill considered that the bridge was originally put up by Chatteris Rotary Club following discussions with the Chief Engineer of the Middle Level Commissioners at the time.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to the land-owner to inform them of the condition of the bridge and concerns of members of the public and that as this is a permissive pathway the bridge is their responsibility.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date