HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

At a Meeting of the Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners
hosted at the Baptist Hall, Station Road, Haddenham at 5.00pm on Thursday 25th April 2024

PRESENT

M Church Esq (Chairman)	T Chambers Esq	K Robinson Esq
J Smith (Vice-Chairman)	J Darby Esq	K Furness Esq
C Bidwell Esq	R Flint Esq	T Hughes Esq
S Cheetham Esq	R Darby Esq	A Lensen Esq
Mrs M Darby	R Lee Esq	N Tebbitt Esq
R Waddelow Esq	G Wilson Esq	A Yarrow Esq
I Chambers Esq		

Ms Sam Ablett (Representing the Clerk to the Commissioners), Gary Roberts (Engineer) and Mr David Jordan (District Engineer) were also present.

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

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

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs L Flint, P Mappledoram Esq, E Veal Esq and N Wright Esq.

C.529 Declarations of Interest

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

The Chairman declared interests in minute nos. C.539 and C.540.

C.530 Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

RESOLVED

> That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Commissioners held on the 2nd November 2023 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

C.531 Constitution & Membership

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**4**
Meeting:	**HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS**	**Subject:**	**CONSTITUTION & MEMBERSHIP**
Date:	**Thursday 25th April 2024**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Polly Tombleson**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Note the current status of its membership and the role they each play as members serving the interests of the Board.
B. Review attendance records and identify any resolutions as necessary.
C. No Vacancies of Elected members at this present time.
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	24	N/A		6
Actual	24	2 ECDC	26	
Vacancies	0			

1.2 The table below details the current appointed Commissioners

No	Name	Status (one of four categories)	Commentary
1	C Bidwell	Landowner/ratepayer	
2	C Chambers	Landowner/ratepayer	
3	I Chambers	Landowner/ratepayer	
4	T Chambers	Landowner/ratepayer	
5	M Church	Representative of A G Wright & Sons	Chairman
6	J Darby	Landowner/ratepayer	
7	M Darby	Landowner/ratepayer	
8	R Darby	Landowner/ratepayer	
9	J Dennis	Landowner/ratepayer	
10	W Dennis	Landowner/ratepayer	
11	L Flint	Nominee of Mrs L Burton	
12	R Flint	Nominee of Mrs L Burton	
13	K Furness	Representative of E R Everett & Son	
14	T Hughes	Representative of BS Pell Trust	
15	R Lee	Landowner/ratepayer	
16	A Lensen	Representative of A G Reserves Ltd	
17	P Mappledoram	Landowner/ratepayer	
18	K Robinson	Representative of Sutton Smallholders	
19	J Smith	Representative of A G Wright & Sons	Vice-Chair
20	N Tebbitt	Landowner/ratepayer	
21	E Veal	Landowner/ratepayer	
22	R Waddelow	Landowner/ratepayer	
23	N Wright	Landowner/ratepayer	

24	A Yarrow	Landowner/ratepayer	

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

No	Name	Appointing Council as at July 2023	Commentary (one of three categories)
1	S Cheetham	HPC	Councillor
2	G Wilson	ECDC	Councillor
3			
4			

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.

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	2/11/2023	27/04/2023	3/11/2022	28/4/2022
1	C Bidwell		apologies	apologies	apologies
2	C Chambers				
3	I Chambers	Present	Present		Present
4	T Chambers	Present	Present	Present	Present
5	M Church	Present	Present	Present	Present
6	A J Darby	Present	Present	Present	Present
7	M Darby	Present	Present	apologies	apologies
8	R Darby	Present	Present	Present	Present
9	J Dennis				apologies
10	W Dennis			Present	Present
11	L Flint	apologies	apologies		apologies
12	R Flint	apologies	Present	Present	apologies
13	K Furness	Present	apologies	apologies	Present
14	T Hughes	apologies			apologies
15	R Lee	Present	Present	Present	apologies
16	A Lensen	Present	apologies	apologies	Present
17	P Mappledoram	Present	Present	Present	apologies
18	K Robinson	Present	Present		
19	J Smith	Present	Present	Present	apologies
20	N Tebbitt		Present		apologies
21	E Veal		apologies		apologies
22	R Waddelow	Present	apologies	Present	Present
23	N Wright	Present	Present	Present	apologies
24	A Yarrow	Present	Present	Present	apologies

Attendance at Chairs Meetings

No	Name	6/10/2023	13/12/2022	12/04/2022	2/11/2021
1	M Church	Present	Present	Present	Present

Appointed Members (current and previous)

No	Name (Council)	2/11/2023	27/4/2023	3/11/2022	28/4/2022
1	Cllr S Cheetham HPC	Present	Present	Present	Present
2	Cllr G Wilson ECDC	Present	Present	Present	Apologies
3					
4					

3. Elections, vacancies & appointments

3.1 There are no current vacancies.

4. Composition and amalgamations

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

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

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 26 Board Members have reported viewing all five videos.
To date 17 of 26 Board members have reported viewing 2 of the five videos

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

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

Author Name: Polly Tombleson
Role: Senior Business Support Officer

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

<u>Appointments</u>

The Commissioners considered the annual appointment of the Chairman & Vice-Chairman and District Officer.

RESOLVED

That M Church Esq be appointed as Chairman of the Commissioners

That J Smith Esq be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Commissioners

That M Church Esq be appointed as District Officer to the Commissioners

C.532 Clerks Report

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**5**
Meeting:	**HADDENHAM LEVEL DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS**	**Subject:**	**CLERK'S REPORT**
Date:	**Thursday 25th April 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. Support the proposed approach to determining the next electricity contract.
C. In determining their valuations for insurance purposes, recognise the limitations associated with their current valuations and the risks they hold of being underinsured.
D. 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.

1. MLC Services available for IDBs

1.1 There has been significant incremental change over the last 10-20 years in terms of IDB governance standards, financial requirements, health & safety, environmental legislation and capital works delivery, along with a significant increase in the scale and nature of planning and partnership work.

1.2 However, what limited agreements and fee arrangements there are in place with IDBs about the MLC Services offered and received pre-date much of this evolution and as such there is significant ambiguity.

1.3 As an example of this, the current 'Clerkship agreements' with Boards was agreed in 2014 however there are many services provided by the MLC that all parties would consider as core 'clerkship' services that are not specified within the current agreement, including managing elections, arranging meeting, taking minutes, reviewing policies and publications.

1.4 The scale and nature of change ahead of us may well be more significant than that which has been experienced in the last decade. The services provided by the MLC to local IDBs require a review and refresh such that they become fit for the future.

1.5 The intent is to develop a service catalogue over the next 12-18 months that will clarify the full range of services that are offered by MLC staff, along with associated terms and conditions and fee arrangements.

1.6 Boards will be offered opportunity to engage in the development of the catalogue, such that if there are capacity and capability gaps between the services Boards want and what capacity and capability MLC staffing has to deliver, then the MLC Board can consider if and how they address this within a final service offer.

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

2.1 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

2.2 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?

2.3 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.

2.4 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.

2.5 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.

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

3. Association of Drainage Authorities - Summary

3.1 ADA continues to work effectively on behalf of IDBs and following their role in influencing the additional payments to Councils to help off-set the energy cost impacts on special levies, they have been in negotiation with Defra to secure the Lowland Agricultural Peat Small Infrastructure Pilot (LAPSIP) fund for IDBs. This marks a considerable departure with a new role within government funding administration.

3.2 Flood & Water Live retuned to the ADA calendar and was held in Lincolnshire during July 2023 and the annual conference returns to the Institution of Civil Engineers on 21st November 2023 with a different approach to the day. The AGM aspects has now taken place virtually, so the morning is focussed on stalls and networking, then a buffet lunch ahead of conference session with keynote attendees.

3.3 In February 2024, ADA hosted their second Environment Day, held at Park Farm, Thorney. Sofi Lloyd presented jointly with Robin Price of Anglian Water on the topic of IDB and water quality.

3.4 At the AGM it was confirmed that there would be 6.5% increase in fees for 2024/25 with and in principle same increase for the following two years.

3.5 Locally, Marc Heading continues to Chair the Great Ouse branch and the clerking role of the branch is being transferred from the Middle Level Commissioners to Phil Camamile at the Water Management Alliance on behalf of the Bedford Group of Drainage Boards. John Heading's term as the Gt Ouse branch's Director on the ADA Board ended in June with a replacement still to be confirmed.

3.6 IDBs locally continue to fund an ADA Directorship place on the Board of Water Resources East. With his retirement from the Middle Level Commissioners, David Thomas vacated this role and has been replaced by Giles Bloomfield of the Water Management Alliance.

4. Fens 2100+

4.1 The Environment Agency launched Fens 2100+ with an introductory session for IDB representatives in June 2023. This programme of activity is crucial in informing the medium to long term flood management decision making across the whole Fens as well as framing and driving more tactical and short-term investments.

4.2 The governance for the programme is currently being finalised. Paul Burrows will Chair the 'Asset Managers Steering Group' and through this have a seat on the Programme Board.

4.3 Projects in Fens 2100+

Fens-wide investment framework

- Give the justification to taking a catchment-scale investment approach.
- Explains how the asset managers (and wider partners) will work together across the landscape to determine what investment is needed when.
- In contract with suppliers and scope agreed.
- Underpinning evidence being developed along with communications and engagement plan.

Catchment-scale asset investment plans

- Applies the framework set out above to each catchment to determine the likely investment requirements over the next 30 years.
- Confirms the immediate (2027-2023) asset (and other) investment requirements across each catchment.
- Planning to scope and get suppliers on board in 2024

Catchment-baseline reports

- Provides an overview of each catchment and the current FCRM operational situation and current and future flood risk.
- Explains future asset investment funding challenges.
- Currently scoping contracts with suppliers, aiming to contract in early 2024.

5. Electricity and Insurance

5.1 The contract for the Middle Level Commissioners and our administrated 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 provide by our suppliers Corona Energy.

5.2 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.

5.3 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.

5.4 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.

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

5.6 We responded to OFGEMs 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.

5.7 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.

5.8 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.

5.9 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)

5.10 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.

5.11 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.

5.12 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.

5.13 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.

6. Banking

6.1 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.

6.2 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.

6.3 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.

6.4 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.

6.5 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.

6.6 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.

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

7. Rating

7.1 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.

7.2 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.

7.3 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.

7.4 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.

8. Lowland Agricultural Peat

8.1 Led by Robert Caudwell, the Lowland Agricultural Task Force's report was published by Defra in June 2023. The report has a strong focus on the role Internal Drainage Boards could play in supporting and enabling landowners and land-managers. In particular, recommendation three includes:

- Government assessing the legal implications of asking responsible bodies to raise water levels in the interests of preserving peat soil carbon.
- Government considers giving IDBs new powers.

8.2 The Government's response to the Caudwell report recommendation three:
Recommendation 3: Legal protection and powers for managing water for carbon

We agree with recommendation 3 that authorities responsible for water management must have the legal protection and powers to manage water differently to play their part in peat *preservation. We will undertake an assessment of the legal implications of asking responsible authorities to raise water levels in the interests of preserving peat soil carbon as we implement the Plan for Water action to streamline our water policy and legal framework. This will inform relevant new powers and any required legislation.*

8.3 Fenland SOIL is a not-for-profit members organisation that aims to inform and develop 'whole farm' land use policies, aimed at achieving climate change mitigation and biodiversity enhancement in the Fens, and to help establish an agreed set of numbers for GHG emissions for deep, shallow and wasted peat soils. They have a small, dedicated team with farmers at its core to tackle climate issues relating to agriculture and peat in the Fens. They have recently undertaken opportunity mapping assessments across Manea & Welney district and have just started similar covering Upwell district.

8.4 Fenland SOIL currently offer Growers/Farmers and Corporate Membership and are keen to develop an affordable membership offer for IDB Groups. We are working with them to agree a Middle Level Commissioners and administered IDB group membership. Not only is this important to help Boards with their environmental enhancement duties, but it will be crucial if we are to maximise future funding and partnership working opportunities.

9. MLC Staffing

9.1 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.

9.2 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.

9.3 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.

9.4 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

Appendix 1

middle level commissioners

MLC Services for IDBs

Pumping Station Insurance Valuations

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Paul Burrows, Chief Executive

Nicola Oldfield, Chief Engineer

October 2023

Miss Ablett referred to the Clerk's comments regarding the procurement of electricity for the Middle Level Commissioners and its administered Boards. She 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. She advised the Chairman was a member of the Electricity Committee.

Miss Ablett enquired whether the Commissioners would authorise the Electricity Committee to decide the next electricity contract on their behalf.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

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

C.533 Environment Officers Report

Miss Ablett referred members to the Environment Officers report, she had distributed earlier and advised this would help to maintain minimum legal compliance and should be integrated into the Commissioners standard practices.

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

Members expressed their concerns regarding appointing an Environmental Representative and enquired what this would involve. Miss Ablett gave a brief outline of the role, but advised that Sofi, the Environment Officer, would be able to explain this in detail.

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

RESOLVED

That the District Engineer be appointed as the Commissioners' Environmental Representative.

That the Environment Officer sends a brief note of what the role involves to the Chairman, Vice Chairman and District Engineer.

C.534 Chairman's Items

a) Construction of Irrigation Reservoirs

Mr Roberts reported that an agreement with Mick George Ltd. had been finalised. He advised that on instruction from the Chairman, he had issued a response to the planning variation application, removing the Commissioners' objection, but made some comments. He further advised he had requested conditions on the application, which mainly covered the clarification of the submitted document so that the agreement took precedent to resolve some inconsistencies and to ensure the groundwater monitoring regime is retained as per the agreement and previous planning conditions.

Mr Roberts cofirmed the recharge trenches required by the agreement were in place, with the exception of the section within the reservoir, which was restricted by archaeology conditions. He advised that a site meeting had been requested to agree management proposals, whilst this section was missing. He added that the site meeting would also inspect the recharge trenches to confirm they were at the required depth.

Mr Roberts reported that in addition to the agreement, Mick George Limited had asked for an additional dewatering discharge location and he advised the Chairman did not consider this would be a problem, but the site meeting would confirm this additional point of discharge was acceptable.

Mr Roberts advised that, at the date of this meeting, the planning variation was still pending consideration.

Members enquired whether the invoices raised to Mick George Limited had been paid and whether the Commissioners were able to charge interest for late payment.

Miss Ablett advised that all invoices had been paid by the due date and only the latest invoice raised on 5th April remained outstanding. She confirmed she would enquire whether the Commissioners were able to charge interest for late payment.

Mr Roberts advised that a review of costs would be undertaken when electricity prices were known.

RESOLVED

> That the Clerk be asked to advise the Chairman whether the Commissioners are able to charge interest on late payment of invoices.
>
> That the contract rates charged be re-visited once the new electricity rates were known.

b) Catchwater

The Chairman reported the Catchwater had overflown at Staples Leys to Highland Side, several times during heavy periods of rain, which had flooded AgReserves arable field, although this did drain after a few days.

He advised that after further heavy rainfall the Catchwater started to flood on the fen side and Mr Waddelow had kindly offered to assist and the District Engineer was able to source sufficient material to raise the bank to stop the flow and prevent a major flooding incident.

Mr Lensen thanked Waddelow Farms for their assistance, together with the District Engineer for identifying the problem and resolving it so quickly.

The Chairman expressed his concern that this type of incident would increase due to the amount of development planned for the area.

Further discussion occurred in relation to how this could be prevented in the future and whether the bank could be raised.

RESOLVED

> That the Chairman writes to Bill Hunt, a Cambridgeshire County Councillor regarding the raising of the bank.
>
> That the Chairman contacts Andrew Newton of the Ely Group of IDB's to ascertain what action they are taking with regards to the problems arising with the Catchwater.

c) Line Dykes

The Chairman reported that maintenance of line dykes was not being undertaken since the Commissioners had relinquished responsibility a few years ago.

The Vice Chairman enquired whether the Commissioners considered any of the line dykes needed collective maintenance.

This was discussed further and it was agreed that members would advise the Chairman and Vice Chairman if any were identified as requiring any maintenance.

d) Water Controllers

The Vice Chairman considered the Commissioners should identify if there were any locations within the district that would benefit from the installation of water control structures, should any further grant funding be made available.

The Chairman advised that both he and the District Engineer were aware of several structures that could be installed if further GiA became available.

e) Culverts

i) Cracknell Drove

The Chairman reminded the Commissioners that at their November meeting it had been resolved to replace the culvert at Cracknell Drove. He reported he had obtained 3 quotes and advised Members of the amounts and contractors to be considered. The Commissioners considered the quotes and approved the quote received from MN Jones Digger Service in the sum of £21,927 and agreed this should be funded from the asset replacement fund.

RESOLVED

That the replacement of the culvert be approved and that the cost be funded from the asset replacement fund.

ii) Hoghill to Aldreth

The Chairman reported that he had finally met with the Cambridgeshire County Council bridge surveyor who had agreed that the Council was responsible for the four culverts. It was agreed that the Commissioners should undertake the work to replace them and invoice the Council, once an order had been received.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman contacts Cambridgeshire County Council to obtain an order for the Commissioners to replace the four culverts on their behalf and once received the work be commenced.

iii) Dairy House Drove

The Chairman confirmed that the replacement of the culvert at Dairy House Drove was the responsibility of Cambridgeshire County Council and advised he had requested quotes to replace the culvert with twinwall plastic.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman obtain quotes for the replacement of the culvert and requests an order from Cambridgeshire County Council before any work is commenced.

C.535 Consulting Engineers' Reports
Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	8
Meeting:	**HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: CHIEF ENGINEER'S SUMMARY, TECHNICAL SERVICES, M&E & CAPITAL PROGRAMME**
Date:	**Thursday 25th April 2024**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Nicola Oldfield**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. **Provide its views on item 3.3 *New Developments and the Use of SuDs.***
B. **Review and approve its Capital Programme taking account of the advice in Section 4.**
C. **Advise if it would like the MLC to take quarterly meter readings at a cost of £60 per station. NB: Mr D Jordan has been providing regular monthly readings.**
D. **Review the pumping station key dates in item 1.4 of Appendix 3, advising if there are any discrepancies or further details are known.**

1. **Overview of services provided to the Commissioners**

The Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) currently act as Consulting Engineers to the Board providing the following services. These are provided for set fees, hourly rates and/or at cost by the in-house team (capped within our limited capacity and capability) and are supplemented by consultants, contractors and specialist services where necessary.

- Mechanical & Electrical (M&E): Providing general advice, routine maintenance, minor works and inspections. Supporting development of capital works programme.
- Capital works: Advising the Board and undertaking client, project and contract management roles.
- GIS & Survey
- Strategic Planning: Inputs on behalf of the Board to relevant spatial plans (eg Local Plans), flood & water strategies and plans (eg Drainage & Wastewater Management Plans, Fens 2100+)
- Planning and consenting: Responding to Planning Applications on behalf of the Board and advising on and issuing discharge and byelaw consents. A list of the planning, consent and infiltration device applications responded to since last reporting are provided as Appendix 2.

1.2 Please note that our planning and consenting services currently only have the capacity to be reactive and there is no proactive enforcement service defined and resourced with no allowance made in the Commissioners' budget for such action.

1.3 A Strategic Spatial Planning report will be compiled and published periodically on www.middlelevel.gov.uk and cover the interests of the MLC and all its administered Boards.

1.4 In order to reduce the cost to the Board and focus limited resources on delivery rather than reporting, the Board previously resolved to not have a planning report as part of the Consulting Engineer's report. However, this may have governance related implications and does place a burden on the MLC officers and/or the Clerk's representative attending the Board Meeting.

1.5 The MLC intend to refresh the services provided to IDBs by developing a service catalogue that will clarify the full range of services that are offered, along with associated terms and conditions and fee arrangements. This is expected to be developed over the next 12-18 months. Boards will be offered the opportunity to engage in this process to help define the final service offer.

2. Chief Engineer's summary

2.1 The new process for delivering grant-aided schemes is now in progress. As more grant-aided projects come online, the MLC engineers' workload will need to be balanced with additional resources. We are using a number of different external consultants and will be monitoring their performance, using this to inform our future delivery model. The Board is reminded that should it wish to progress any capital schemes that grant-in-aid may be available and any future proposals should be included in the forward capital forecasts provided to the Environment Agency.

2.2 Recent storms (Babet and Henk) may have provided a good opportunity to collect additional data about how the catchment responds to rainfall, however resources are always stretched during an event. We will be able to use telemetry data where it exists, but we encourage the Board members to gather evidence in the form of photos or water level marks (where it is safe to do so), and any other information about the system during an event, which will be useful in supporting any grant-in-aid applications for future works.

2.3 <u>Fens Reservoir</u>
Anglian Water's Fens Reservoir development work is moving fast. The Middle Level System has a significant role to play in enabling its delivery, with benefits to all parties; there are potentially significant improvements and financial benefit opportunities to secure. It is imperative that MLC staff continue to be closely involved in consultation with Anglian Water's various design and assessment teams to ensure that the Reservoir does not have any adverse impacts on the Middle Level System and our ability to continue to manage water for the IDB districts. Therefore, it is likely that MLC staff may be required to join meetings with the Anglian Water team at short notice and this may briefly affect work we are delivering for the Boards. In this event, we will make any necessary arrangements to limit the impacts this may have.

3. Technical Services

3.1 <u>Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Programme</u>
The County Council's Flood and Water team are currently in the process of developing a programme of flood risk schemes/works across sixteen locations in Cambridgeshire, which are identified in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy as key areas requiring further investigation. To undertake this piece of work the Council has commissioned AtkinsRéalis (SNC-Lavalin Atkins), a multi-disciplinary consultant that provides the County Council's Highways Management Services, who are currently working on the first phase which includes:

- A review of existing information at each of the locations
- Site walkovers
- Gap analysis

- Survey scoping
- Stakeholder analysis
- Concept solution identification

As key partners, the MLC Planning Engineer, together with representatives from other RMAs, attended a workshop before Christmas to identify and discuss any ongoing flood management projects that are being progressed, aspirations and needs for each area, opportunities for partnership working, option constraints, relevant data and general receptiveness to solutions within the areas.

No sites were identified within the Board's catchment.

3.2 Update on outstanding abstraction licences for Commissioners' inlets off the Old West River

The abstraction licence applications for the outstanding inlets off the Old West River have been produced. This identified a change in the application forms required by the Environment Agency, which has raised questions about the applications. To resolve this, the Chairman agreed to the use of the Environment Agency's pre-app consultation process so that the application can be verified.

A pre-app consultation was signed by the Clerk on 6th March 2024 and at the time of writing the MLC Engineer is liaising with the Environment Agency over the application to confirm all the correct information has been provided.

3.3 New Developments and the Use of SuDs

The introduction of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act has now been set back further, until the end of the year at the earliest.

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, due to increased flows and channel maintenance to serve developed areas. Some have requested contributions over and above the current method of determination and this is currently being investigated.

The matter was briefly discussed at a CPFloW Partnership meeting and other IDBs and Cambridge City Council raised similar concerns.

The Board's views on this would be appreciated.

3.4 Update on Willow Hall Farm irrigation reservoirs

The MLC Engineer has continued to liaise with the Chairman and Vice Chairman regarding the agreement between the Board and Mick George Ltd (MG Ltd) in respect of Willow Hall Farm irrigation reservoirs (MLC Ref No 356/PL/008). The Chairman, Vice Chairman, District Officer and MLC Engineer continue to liaise with MG Ltd to monitor the reservoir construction on a day-to-day basis.

Dewatering of the working area and first of the reservoirs has been ongoing throughout the year. An invoice for receipt of dewatering volumes to the Board' system was issued in November for volumes discharged between April 2023 to end September 2023. This invoice has been paid. An invoice for volumes discharged between October 2023 to the end of March 2024 is being raised and will be issued to MG Ltd for the year end.

The variation to planning permission (Cambridgeshire County Council Ref: CCC/22/075/VAR, MLC Ref No 356/PL/015) has been reopened on the Cambridgeshire County Council planning portal and at the time of writing the status of the application is "pending consideration". A year-round abstraction licence was issued to the quarry operator, MG Ltd, in July 2023 by the Environment Agency.

We are pleased to confirm that the formal agreement between the Board and MG Ltd has now be signed. Final comments regarding the control levels to be applied in the summer months, between April and September, have been agreed based on the experience obtained over the 2023 summer period. To date all requirements of the agreement are being met by MG Ltd except for the section of recharge trench outstanding which is still subject to restrictions due to archaeological conditions.

Now that the agreement has been confirmed a response to Cambridgeshire County Council, removing the Board's previous objection to the variation, has been issued.

As part of the response to the planning variation a condition has been requested for the appropriate consent application to be made by Dennis Haddenham Ltd for the post construction abstraction for filling the reservoirs. Several concerns have been raised over the ability to abstract water for filling of the reservoirs from the Board's system so early engagement on these proposals to resolve the relevant consent has been requested. Abstraction for filling the reservoirs may require modification to and/or structures within the Board's controlled watercourses.

A site meeting is planned for early April to carry out a check on the installed recharge trenches and to discuss measures for managing the recharge of groundwater until the missing section of trench is installed along with a proposed additional dewatering discharge location to the south of the site.

4. Capital Programme

4.1 The Board's Capital Programme is shown as Appendix 1. Proposed works at the pumping stations are still to be reviewed with the M&E Engineer to determine a cost-effective solution ahead of the planned Pumping Station replacement in 28/29.

The Board is asked to review and approve its Capital Programme.

4.2 In terms of FCRM Grant-in-Aid (FCRM GiA) from the Environment Agency, the Sutton Gault Pumping Station Replacement, remains in the programme to start in 2025.

Author Name: Nicola Oldfield
Role: Chief Engineer

Appendix 1: Capital Programme
Appendix 2: List of applications since last meeting
Appendix 3: M&E Report

APPENDIX 1

Haddenham Drainage Commissioners

Capital Improvement Programme (2023/2024)

		PREVIOUS YEARS	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	FUTURE YEARS	ALL YEARS
		Pre Yr 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Post Year 10	Total Expenditure
Haddenham 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	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	45.0	49.6
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0	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	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
Sutton p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7000.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	8.4	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0	88.4
	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	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
Plant	Ford Ranger Truck	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
	Terex excavator	4.7	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	54.7
Structures	Slackers (x6)	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		0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		17.7	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**15**	**7,000**	**15**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**205**	**7,253**

Updated from engineers asset appraisal

Appendix 2

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

MLC Ref.	*Council Ref.*	*Applicant*	*Type of Development*	*Location*
17	23/00257/AGN	Mr William Dennis	Water Management (Excavation of additional peripheral drains on site)	Hillrow Causeway, Haddenham
18	18/01768/OUT DC application	Mr P Hutchinson	Discharge Consent (Surface Water)	The Row, Sutton

The following applications for Byelaw Consent (to undertake works in and around watercourses) have been granted since the last meeting:

MLC Ref	*Council Ref*	*Consent No*	*Applicant*	*Description of Works*	*Location*	*Date consent granted*
008	E/3003/18/CM	HL/BC/08	William Dennis	Construction of recharge trenches for managing groundwater levels and impacts associated with dewatering activities	Hillrow, Haddenham	30/5/23

No Byelaw Consent (to discharge to a watercourse) or infiltration device applications have been granted since the last meeting.

Appendix 3

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	8
Meeting:	**HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL**
Date:	**Tuesday 25th April 2024**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Dave Bantoft**

1. Mechanical & Electrical

1.1 M&E key messages and advice

Other than the matters described below, only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant at each of the stations is mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition.

Due to the volatility of the electricity market and issues with meters, taking regular and accurate manual electricity meter readings is becoming very important; even for sites with meters that are read remotely. This is so that bills can be verified to ensure correct rates are being applied. The pump run hours information is also very useful for comparing pumping seasons and for the district study.

Please can Pump Attendants/District Officers take electricity meter and pump run hours readings monthly (as close to the 1st of each month as they can) and then forward them onto the M&E Engineer on **david.bantoft@middlelevel.gov.uk** or 07768 026119.

If you are unable to provide readings, or would prefer, the MLC can take quarterly readings; these will be at a cost to the Board for the time and mileage involved**. Please approve this if it is required. Approximate cost will be £60 per station per quarter.**

Mr D Jordan has been providing regular monthly readings, so I do not see this being an issue for Haddenham IDB.

1.2 Minor Works

1.2.1 ***Sutton Gault***

The weedscreen trolley travel motor failed on the 22nd December 2023 a new replacement was sourced and fitted on 28th December 2023. The weedscreen is now in excess of 25 years old and would benefit from a complete overhaul including the control panel PLC. This will cost in the region of £15k to £20k. This could be left until the 2028/29 station overhaul but if so the weedscreen is likely to be unreliable and the station is not designed in a way that allows cleaning of the screen with a digger.

On 27th February the pump motor was reported as noisy and current fluctuating. The fault was traced to worn slip ring brushes; an old unit was fitted as a temporary repair while new replacements were sourced. A complete new set of brushes were fitted on 4th March and spares kept in stock. The brush rings are worn and pitted which increases brush wear. The slip ring unit may need to be removed after the pumping season to have the worn faces re-machined. This will have to be assessed after the pumping season.

The handrail on the concrete plinth has now been fitted.

1.2.2 ***Haddenham***

On 6th January there was a fault that stopped all pumps at the station, the pumps had restarted on arrival. The incoming supply voltage was low and it is suspected that the supply had temporarily failed. Pumps tested ok and subsequent checks on incoming voltage have been good.

The weedscreen grab had been catching intermittently on the screen at pump 1 when in the lowest position. This may be an indication of something stuck in the bottom of the screen, it could also just be due to the natural stretching of the wire ropes. On 13th February the depth of the grab was raised slightly and that has prevented the fault occurring. When the drain is next pumped down to drain works level the screen should be checked for damage or objects stuck within it.

1.3 Inspections

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

1.3.2 EICR Test and Due dates as below. Upcoming retests are booked for w/c 25th March 2024

Board	MLC Administered	Station	EICR Pass Date	EICR Due
Haddenham	Y	Haddenham Bungalow	19-Mar-2021	19-Mar-2024
Haddenham	Y	Haddenham PS	19-Mar-2021	19-Mar-2026
Haddenham	Y	Sutton Gault	26-Mar-2019	26-Mar-2024

1.4 Pumping Station Key Dates

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	Built	Pump	Pump Overhaul	Motor O/H	Thrust Bearing	Controls	Telemetry
Haddenham PS	2011	2011	2011	2011	2011	2011	Y
Sutton Gault	1971	1971	1990	1990	1990	2016	Y

	Weedscreen			
Station	**Bars**	**WSC**	**WSC O/H**	**Controls**
Haddenham PS	2011	2011	2011	2011
Sutton Gault	1998	1998	1998	1998

Author Name: Dave Bantoft
Role: M&E Engineer

Miss Ablett referred the Commissioners to the Consulting Engineers Reports.

Attention was drawn to item 3.3 of the report – New developments and the use of SuDS and Members were asked for their views.

This was discussed further and Members raised concerns over the effectiveness of the use of SuDS. They considered that current systems did not operate effectively and current surface water design practises did not take into account exceptional weather conditions or the complex systems within the Fens.
They expressed their concerns regarding the use of attenuation systems and confirmed they had the same concerns as those raised by other Boards, especially with the increased development within the district.

Miss Ablett referred to the Capital Programme and advised that a District Wide study was programmed to start in 2025, which would identify works required regarding the district and pumping stations. She explained that once the study had been completed it would highlight what works were necessary, the urgency of the works and the estimated costs and this information would be used to update the Capital Programme, which would then become more meaningful.

Miss Ablett warned the Commissioners should bear in mind that not all works may be fully funded by GIA and
Therefore, they need to consider how these works would be funded in the future

RESOLVED

i) That the reports be approved

ii) New Developments – SuDs

That the Planning Engineer be advised that the Commissioners support the response to SuDS by other Boards and have concerns relating to increased development within the district and the use of attention systems.

iii) The Capital Programme be approved in principle and kept under review.

C.536 Health & Safety
Viz:

SAFETY MANAGEMENT

Site Safety Inspection Record

Haddenham DDC

Complete

Name of organisation:	Haddenham DDC
Date of site visit	23.01.2024 09:00 GMT
Address of inspected premises	Highland House 80 Aldreth Road Haddenham Ely Cambridgeshire CB6 3PN
Name of Advisor	Martin Clark
Time of arrival at site:	23.01.2024 09:00 GMT
Audit Name	Haddenham DDC

Audit

An opening meeting was held with

Micheal Church / David Jordan

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

No significant incident were noted since the previous site visit and it was pleasing to note the one outstanding observation has been addressed with the installation of a temporary handrail Sutton pumping station.

This will be permanently installed when appropriate equipment is supplied by Middle Level Commissioners.

2

Fly tipping in the area was discussed, it was understood that this has not impacted the pumping stations although it remains a concern in the local area.

3

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

4

The new telemetry fitted to Haddenham and Sutton pumping stations was discussed and it was understood that it has made day to day management of the stations easier.

The significant improvement to pump monitoring also reduces the exposure of the operator particularly in inclement weather or hours of darkness.

Photo 1

Photo 2

5

Some issues with pump / equipment reliability have occurred which have occasionally resulted in hand chroming to be conducted. This is not considered a significant issue and reliability issues are resolved swiftly.

Photographic Risk Assessment

Advisor's signature

Signed by advisor on behalf of Michael Church.
23.01.2024 17:51 GMT

Departure time	23.01.2024 12:00 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

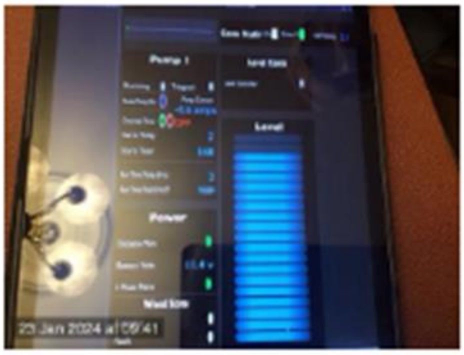

Photo 2

Private & confidential 5/5

The Chairman gave a verbal update following his meeting with COPE Safety Management and reported the only point raised was that relating to the erection of warning signage at both pumping stations. The Commissioners agreed that the consulting engineer should be asked to provide a quote to the Chairman and

Vice Chairman for the supply of the requested signage and that the Chairman and Vice Chairman take any action they see fit.

RESOLVED

> That the consulting engineer provides the Chairman with a quote for the supply of signage for both pumping stations and the Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to take any action considered necessary.

C.537 District Officer's Report

The District Officer reminded Commissioners of the extreme rainfall experienced since their last meeting in November and handed details of the pumping hours to the Commissioners for their information.

He advised that the telemetry provided valuable information and allowed remote access, which enabled the District Engineer to react when necessary.

He referred to the comments made by the Consulting Engineer in his report regarding repairs to the weedscreen trolley and of his comments regarding the overhaul of the weedscreen and control panel at Sutton Gault pumping station and confirmed he had nothing further to add.

Miss Ablett reminded the Commissioners of the costs associated with the overhaul should the weedscreen prove to be unreliable and advised they needed to consider how this would be funded when considering the rate and levy to be set for 2024-2025.

C.538 Governance

Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**11**
Meeting:	**HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS**	**Subject:**	**GOVERNANCE**
Date:	**Thursday 25th April 2024**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Paul Burrows**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Note the continued appointment of Whitings 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 Whitings 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

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.

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:

INSURED VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS

PUMPING STATIONS AND BUNGALOW

	As At 1st April 2024
Haddenham Pumping Station	1,842,392.00
Sutton Gault Pumping Station	1,048,466.00
Bungalow	181,815.00
	3,072,673.00

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 and Financial Code
Appendix 3 Annual Governance Statement 2024

Appendix 1

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Administered by:

middle level commissioners

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) 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.
f) Start to use language and terminology from this strategy at Board meetings within their consideration of risks.
g) Adopt formal project risk management as part of any capital works projects led by MLC staff on behalf of the Board.
h) 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

Appendix 2

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Financial Regulations

INDEX

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 Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners.

B. CONTRACTS

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

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

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

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

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

C. RESPONSIBILITY OF OFFICERS

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

D. ESTIMATES

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

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

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

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

E. BANKING

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

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

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

   a) Where payment is made by cheque:-

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

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

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

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

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

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

F. INCOME

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

G. PURCHASES OF GOODS AND SERVICES

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

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

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

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

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

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

7. All invoices for payment shall be examined, coded and approved and shall be certified by the appropriate authorised employee, officer or member.
8. See Section B "Contracts" for further Financial Regulations in connection with the purchase of goods and services.

H. EMPLOYEES

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

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

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

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

I. STORES

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

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

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

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

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

J. ASSETS

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

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

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

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

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

K. AUDIT

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

2. Authority of Internal Audit

   Auditors are authorised to:

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

   Auditors are not authorised to:

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

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

L. FRAUD OR OTHER IRREGULARITIES

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

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

M. WRITE OFFS

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

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

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

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

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

N. SALARIES, WAGES AND PENSIONS

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

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

    - resignations, dismissals, suspensions, secondments and transfers
    - absences from duty for sickness, unpaid leave or other reason, but not normal leave
    - changes in remuneration, other than pay awards and agreements of general application
    - information necessary to maintain records of service for pensions, income tax, national insurance and the like

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

O. BOARD EMPLOYEES etc

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

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

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

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

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

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.

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

T. REVIEW

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

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

FINANCIAL CODE

A SUMMARY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

B SCHEME OF BUDGET DELEGATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

C MANAGING BUDGETS & REPORTING

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

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

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

4. The Clerk shall ensure that appropriate procedures are in place for alerting the Clerk immediately should a Local Authority fail to make their Special Levy payment at the agreed time, or where Drainage Rates are outstanding following reminder.

5. Every budget holder is responsible for seeking to ensure that actual expenditure on each of their budgets does not exceed the budget as approved and shall regularly monitor income/expenditure to this end. Budget holders shall whenever practicable get approval for material adverse variances to any of their budgets that are anticipated. Approval shall be sought in accordance with the Schedule of Reserved Matters and the Scheme of Delegations.

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

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

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

D PURCHASING GOODS & SERVICES (INCLUDING PLANT)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

    i. The name of the supplier.

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

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

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

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

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

13. The Clerk shall ensure that all Invoices which have been approved for payment are duly scheduled for payment.
14. All Invoices shall be authorised by the Chairman and checked by the Clerk prior to making payment.

15. Where it is considered that there are valid reasons for departing from these procedures the approval of the Chairman shall be obtained. Any such departure shall be reported to the Board.

E BANK MANDATE AND INVESTMENTS

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

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

    1. The Chairman

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

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

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

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

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

F INVESTMENTS AND LOANS STRATEGY

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

    - The Board's investment activities are limited by statute

    - The Board may invest in major Banks and Building Societies

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

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

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

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

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

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

G COLLECTING MONEY

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

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

H SUNDRY DEBTORS

1. Each budget holder shall be responsible for providing the Clerk with the necessary information to enable rechargeable work to be properly accounted for and invoiced, and, any other debts due to be properly

invoiced. The budget holder shall advise the Clerk whenever an Invoice is to be raised for goods provided or services rendered, under their control.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I EMPLOYING/MANAGING STAFF

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

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

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

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

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

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

J STOCK IN STORES/DELIVERED TO SITE

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

K ASSET ACCOUNTING/MANAGEMENT

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

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

L AUDIT

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

M SALARIES AND WAGES

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

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

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

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

N INSURANCES

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

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

O SECURITY

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

P REVIEW OF FINANCIAL CODE

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

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

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

Appendix 3

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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

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

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

and recorded as minute reference:

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

Chair

Clerk

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a) Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Commissioners – 2022/2023

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

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

b) Risk Management Strategy

Miss Ablett outlined that the Commissioner'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 Commissioner's risks.

The Commissioners approved their new risk management strategy.

c) Insured Sums

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

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

RESOLVED

i) That the insured sums be approved and continue to be index linked until such time as valuations are available.
ii) That the Clerk obtains a quote for a professional valuation of the pumping stations and sent to the Chairman & Vice-Chairman.
iii) That the Clerk obtains a quote for a professional valuation of the Commissioners' bungalow and sent to the Chairman & Vice-Chairman.
iv) That the quotes be sent to the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

d) Finance Regulations & Finance Code

Miss Ablett reported that the Commissioner's Finance Regulations and Finance Code Policy were due for review and renewal this year. However, she informed the Commissioners 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 Commissioner's current Finance regulations and Finance Code Policy be approved for a further year and the Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer be authorised to carry out a full review of both and report at next year's meeting.

e) Review of Internal Controls

Miss Ablett reported that the financial controls that the Middle Level Commissioners have in place in their services to the Commissioners have now been summarised and are available on the Board's web-page.

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

f) Exercise of Public Rights

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

g) Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments.

Miss Ablett reported that as part of the Annual Governance review the Commissioners 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. She 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 Commissioners that would need to be included within the accounting statements for the financial year ended 31st March 2024.

h) Defra IDB1

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

i) Annual Governance Statement

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

RESOLVED

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

C.539 Finance – Looking Back
Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**12**
Meeting:	**HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING BACK**
Date:	**Thursday 25th April 2024**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Robert Hill/Sam Ablett**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

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

Finance Officer's review and key messages

For 2023/2024 the Commissioners set a rate of 44.00p to raise a total of £222,837 in 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. For the Commissioners November meeting a monitoring exercise was carried out, this was based around figures to the end of September and was hampered by the electricity supplier not being able to supply timely invoicing data. At this time, it was not possible to foresee the extent of rainfall and pumping that would be required through the winter. A subsequent exercise was carried out in January 2024 which at that point gave an indicative estimate that electricity costs could be in the region of an additional £55,000 higher, subsequent rainfall throughout January and February proved otherwise. 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.

Other areas of expenditure have been generally in-line with budget provisions, the labour costs reflect the increase approved at the November 2023 meeting.

Claims for highland water contributions were submitted and paid in full by the Environment Agency.

Increased income has been received from the metered discharge agreements.

The estimates against which the rate income was raised included the sum of £7,500 for the asset replacement fund and as a result of the increases for pumping this has not been achieved in the year.

Over-all this gives a decrease in the Commissioners General Fund balance of £56,034.48 in the year and this position is reflected in the Commissioners financial statements and Annual Return which they are requested to review and approve.

1. Payments for 2023

1.1 Payments are detailed within Appendix 1

2. Highland Water Contributions

2.1 The Clerk will report that following his submission of claims for contributions the gross sum of £11,236.44 (inclusive of supervision) has been received from the Environment Agency (£11,756.50 representing 80% of the Commissioners' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2023/24 less £520.06 overpaid in respect of the financial year 2022/23)

3. Annual Accounts and Finance papers 2023/2024:

3.1 Annual Return 2023/2024:

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

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

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

Appendix 1

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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

	Paid	VAT	Goods
East Cambridgeshire District Council - Council tax for 2023/2024	1,667.73	0.00	1,667.73
Michael Church - District Officer's Fees for 6 months to 31st March 2023	1,461.05	0.00	1,461.05
Middle Level Commissioners - IDB Health & Safety Re-charge 2022-2023 (Account from COPE Safety Management)	427.20	71.20	356.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery and travelling	6,581.36	1,096.89	5,484.47
Middle Level Commissioners - Installation of telemetry at pumping stations (net of grant in aid at 50%)	6,476.16	1,850.33	4,625.83
Environment Agency - Rent	1.00	0.00	1.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to Sutton Gault pumping station	4,187.93	697.98	3,489.95
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Attendance at Board meeting, planning & development applications)	551.40	91.90	459.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Court Fees	0.50		0.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply raingauge (Account from Casella)	817.28	136.21	681.07
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of 2,416 litres of gas oil	2,278.78	379.80	1,898.98
British Telecom - Telephone charges	177.24	29.54	147.70
L A Burton - Flail mowing	1,008.00	168.00	840.00
Rampton Motors - MOT and service of AK16 WNC	341.39	47.77	293.62
Npower - Meter operator agreement 12/4/2023 - 11/04/2024	234.00	39.00	195.00
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2023	814.80	135.80	679.00
Water Resources East - Contribution to operating costs for 2023-2024	150.00	25.00	125.00
Fenland Fire Appliance LLP - Servicing of fire extinguishers	54.60	9.10	45.50
Haddenham Baptist Church - Room hire for meeting of Commissioners	40.00	0.00	40.00
Environment Agency - Precept	18,886.32	0.00	18,886.32
British Telecom - Telephone charges	190.27	31.71	158.56
Wave - Water supply charges 9th February 2023 to 8th May 2023	1,332.19	0.00	1,332.19
David Harrison Handling Solutions Limited - Supply steel and fabricate as pattern	287.11	47.85	239.26
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	603.02	100.50	502.52
David Harrison Handling Solutions Limited - Supply and drill box section	41.40	6.90	34.50
AgReserves - Drain maintenance	1,008.00	168.00	840.00
Public Works Loan Board - Loan Repayment	21,481.93	0.00	21,481.93
Bush Tyres - Fitting of 2 new tyre and wheel balancing to Atlas 140W Wheeled Excavator and disposal of tyres	384.09	64.01	320.08
A G Wright & Son - Diesel	689.24	114.87	574.37
British Telecom - Telephone charges	227.36	37.89	189.47
Middle Level Commissioners - Road fund licence for AK16 WNC	320.00	0.00	320.00
David Harrison Handling Solutions Limited - Bolts and nyloc	5.00	0.83	4.17
British Telecom - Telephone charges	184.44	30.74	153.70
Middle Level Commissioners - Road fund licence for AD19 OJO	165.00	0.00	165.00
N L Hydraulics - 20 litres of hydaulic oil and 1/4" R8 x 9.8 metres	131.21	21.87	109.34
Wave - Water supply charges 9th May 2023 to 8th August 2023	847.05	0.00	847.05
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit Fee (2022-2023 accounts)	756.00	126.00	630.00
TDL Equipment - Service and repairs to Atlas 140W Wheeled Excavator	1,421.62	236.94	1,184.68
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning & development applications)	1,179.90	196.65	983.25
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages and telephone charges	6,462.29	1,077.05	5,385.24
Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2022-2023 accounts)	984.00	165.00	819.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	628.22	104.70	523.52
British Telecom - Telephone charges	202.71	33.78	168.93

L A Burton - Flail mowing	6,120.00	1,020.00	5,100.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	4,058.03	78.50	3,979.53
M D Contracting & Farming Ltd - Flail mowig	145.20	24.20	121.00
Michael Church - District Officer's Fees for 6 months to 30th September 2023	1,375.00	0.00	1,375.00
Rampton Motors - Repairs to AK16 WNC	662.45	110.41	552.04
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of 2,501 litres of gas	2,454.98	409.16	2,045.82
Environment Agency - Precept	18,886.32	0.00	18,886.32
Wave - Water supply charges 9th August 2023 to 8th November 2023	1,019.84	0.00	1,019.84
Haddenham Baptist Church - Room hire for meeting of Commissioners	40.00	0.00	40.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning & development applications)	2,172.00	362.00	1,810.00
Public Works Loan Board - Loan Repayment	21,481.93	0.00	21,481.93
TDL Equipment - Repairs to Atlas 140W Wheeled Excavator	631.04	105.17	525.87
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	628.22	104.70	523.52
Middle Level Commissioners - Preparation of highland water claims	22.81	3.80	19.01
Wolseley - Pipe coupling	53.71	8.95	44.76
Cambridge Rewinds Ltd - New brake motor for automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment	952.44	158.74	793.70
British Telecom - Telephone charges	184.44	30.74	153.70
British Telecom - Telephone charges	202.71	33.78	168.93
CW Group - Repairs to automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment	1,395.00	232.50	1,162.50
TDL Equipment - Replacement windscreen for Atlas 140W Wheeled Excavator	744.82	124.14	620.68
A G Wright & Son - Diesel	1,018.22	169.70	848.52
Fenland Plant Glazing Ltd - Fit upper and lower windscreen to Atlas 140W Wheeled Excavator	156.00	26.00	130.00
Rampton Motors - Repairs to AK16 WNC	63.74	10.62	53.12
Wave - Water supply charges 9th November 2023 to 8th February 2024	1,567.01	0.00	1,567.01
British Telecom - Telephone charges	184.44	30.74	153.70
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment	1,191.09	198.52	992.57
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of 4,839 litres of gas oil , road planings and introduction to personal safety lone workers course (Accounts from Watson, D Haird & Cope Safety Management)	5,532.39	922.06	4,610.33
Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution (Environmental Officer)	492.50	0.00	492.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, attendance at meeting, planning & development applications)	2,058.00	343.00	1,715.00
Rampton Motors - Repairs to AK16 WNC	568.96	94.82	474.14
David Harrison Handling Solutions Limited - Hacksaw blades	17.88	2.98	14.90
Information Commissioners - Renewal of Data Protection registration	40.00	0.00	40.00
Association of Drainage Authorities (River Great Ouse branch) - Subscription 2023-2024	36.00	6.00	30.00
District labour	42,797.05	0.00	42,797.05
Corona Energy - Electricity supply - (Haddenham pumping station)	13,114.07	1,810.73	11,303.34
Corona Energy - Electricity supply - (Sutton Gault pumping station)	6,778.23	966.05	5,812.18
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply - (Haddenham pumping station)	6,861.63	1,168.60	5,693.03
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply - (Sutton Gault pumping station)	3,702.68	642.11	3,060.57
Anglia Farmers - Electricity metering charges - (Haddenham pumping station)	210.47	35.08	175.39
	235,310.09	16,577.61	218,732.48

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

Appendix 2

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2024
GENERAL FUND

2024				2023		
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year			Apr-01	Balance brought forward	204,927.89
	Precept		37,772.64			
	Rates, insurances, telephones	11,944.04		2024	Rate income & Special levy	223,465.38
	Repairs & Renewals	11,933.74		Mar-31	Interest	2763.96
	Fuel	163,524.52			Highland water contributions	11,217.43
	Contractors Charges	2,933.60			Consents	50.00
	District Labour	44,437.68			Water recharge	4,250.91
	Drainworks	20,499.90			Private works	8,327.00
	Administration charge, printing, stationery				Development Charges	190.00
	advertising, Association of Drainage				Telephone charges	29.59
	Authorities subscription	14,004.84	269,278.32		Metered discharge	42,905.65
					Insurance claim	680.68
	Improvement works:				Write back of provisions	99.74
	Funds raised 2023/2024		0.00			
	Public Works Loan Repayment -					
	Principal	34,138.25				
	Interest	8,825.61	42,963.86			
	Balance carried forward		148,893.41			
			498,908.23			498,908.23

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2024
BALANCE SHEET

Capital Section

Liabilities		Assets		
Capital Provisions	2,174,645.75	Pumping Stations		2,225,000.00
Public Works Loan Board -		Bungalow		114,920.00
Loan outstanding	202,855.13	Heavy Plant		35,938.68
		Motor Vehicles		1,600.54
		Computer Equipment		41.66
	2,377,500.88			2,377,500.88

Revenue Section

General Fund	148,893.41	Ratepayers' Account - Arrears		201.64
		Sundry Debtors		24,515.91
Asset Replacement Fund	48,488.69	Value added Tax - Refunds due		32,635.78
		Stock		932.00
Development Contribution Fund	3,626.01	Balance in hand -		
		Barclays - Current account	81,976.63	
Sundry Creditors	196,500.26	Barclays - Business Premium	155,210.22	
		Barclays - Treasury Deposit	100,000.00	
		Lloyds Accounts	2,036.19	339,223.04
	2,775,009.25			2,775,009.25

Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners

Treasurers Account 2023/2024

1st April 2023			31st March 2024	
Balance brought forward		283,859.15	Payments made during the year	235,310.09
31st March 2024				
Receipts during the year				
Clerk's collection account	287,281.48			
Interest on deposit accounts	3,392.50	290,673.98	Balance carried forward	339,223.04
		574,533.13		**574,533.13**

Summary of Bank Reconciliations as at 31st March 2024

Barclays Bank Plc

Current Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2024	80,644.68
Less unpresented cheques	0.00
Add outstanding lodgements	1,331.95
Balance per Trial Balance	**81,976.63**

Lloyds Bank Plc

Current Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2024	2,036.19
Less unpresented cheques	0.00
Add outstanding lodgements	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	**2,036.19**

Cash balances as at 31st March 2024

Barclays Bank PLc

Current Account	**81,976.63**
Business Premium Account	**155,210.22**
Treasury Deposit	**100,000.00**

Lloyds Bank Plc

Current Account	**2,036.19**
Total reconciled cash balances per accounts	**339,223.04**

Haddenham Level DC
Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return
Financial year ended 31st March 2024

				Per Annual Return
Line 1	**Balances brought forward**			
	General Fund	204,927.89		
	Asset replacement fund	47,843.40		
	Development charges	3,429.75		
			256,201.04	**256,201**
Line 2	**Rates and Special Levies**			
	Agricultural rates	143,249.48		
	Special Levies	79,588.00		
	Penalty	602.90		
	Costs	25.00		
	Write-off	0.00		
			223,465.38	**223,465**
Line 3	**Total other receipts**			
	Interest			
	General fund	2,763.96		
	Asset replacement fund	645.29		
	Development charges	46.26		
	Write Back of Provisions	99.74		
	Metered Discharge	42,905.65		
	Discharge contribution	340.00		
	Consent	50.00		
	Telephone Charges Recoverable	29.59		
	Highland Water	11,217.43		
	Hire of Excavator	8,327.00		
	Re-charge of expenses	4,250.91		
	Grant in Aid	0.00		
	Insurance Claim	680.68		
			71,356.51	**71,357**
Line 4	**Staff costs**			
	Wages/salaries	33,794.48		
	National insurance contributions	3,715.33		
	Pension costs	6,927.87		
	Travelling expenses	0.00		
			44,437.68	**44,438**
Line 5	**Loan repayments**			
	PWLB - Principal	34,138.25		
	PWLB - Interest	8,825.61		
			42,963.86	**42,964**

Haddenham Level DC
Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return
Financial year ended 31st March 2024

				Per Annual Return
Line 6	**All other payments**			
	Precept	37,772.64		
	Rates, insurances, telephones	11,944.04		
	Repairs and renewals	11,933.74		
	Fuel	163,524.52		
	Drainworks	20,499.90		
	Administration	14,004.84		
	Contractors charges	2,933.60		
	Write back of provisions	0.00		
			262,613.28	**262,613**
Line 7	**Balances carried forward**			
	General Fund	148,893.41		
	Asset replacement fund	48,488.69		
	Development charges	3,626.01		
			201,008.11	**201,008**

Reconciliation
Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6 201,008.11

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward	252,941	256,201	*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	192,882	223,465	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	38,946	71,357	*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	37,016	44,438	*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	42,964	42,964	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	148,588	262,613	*Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).*
7. (=) Balances carried forward	256,201	201,008	*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	283,859	339,223	*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	2,493,805	2,493,805	*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	236,993	202,855	*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 05/04/2024

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

Finance officer's review and key messages

Miss Ablett referred to the comments concerning the 2023/24 year which the Commissioners considered and approved.

Payments 2023

The Commissioners considered and approved the Payments amounting to £235,310.09 which had been made during the financial year ending 31st March 2024.

(NB: The Chairman declared an interest in the payments made to him as District Officer.)

Annual Accounts and Finance Papers 2023/2024

The Commissioners considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended 31st March 2024 as required in the Audit Regulations, and authorised the Chairman to complete and sign the Annual Return 2023/2024.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Return on behalf of the Commissioners for the year ended 31st March 2024.

C.540 Finance – Looking Forward
Viz:

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**13**
Meeting:	**HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING FORWARD**
Date:	**Thursday 25th April 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. Note the Precept to the Environment Agency
D. Review & Approve Rating Estimates for 2024/2025
E. 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. The figures include a provision towards future asset replacements of £10,000, nothing being raised in 2023/2024. Also included is a provision of £30,000 for three new culverts, it is proposed to utilise the asset fund to finance these works – however, when setting the rate members need to be aware of the impact this could have on cash flow requirements – labour costs and electricity accounts will need to be met monthly.

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.

Due to the pumping costs over winter the Commissioners general fund balance has been reduced by £56,034 leaving the balance at below two-thirds of a year-in-hand. Members should consider how these balances are to be replaced and also need to consider the installation of culverts at a budgeted costs of £30,000 which is proposed to be taken from balances. If members were to consider raising less than the full £56,000 in this financial year, they should also consider either delaying the installation of the culverts or phasing them to assist with current cash flow requirements.

1. Fees, Renumerations and Subscriptions

1.1 Consider the District Officer Renumeration.

1.2 Consider the District Labour wage increase

1.3 Subscription to the Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA) will increase by 6.5%, from £679 to £724. The Board is also asked to consider and reaffirm its contribution estimated to be £150 towards the Board Member role representing local IDBs within Water Resources East (WRE).

1.4 Consider the charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work. (last reviewed April 2023):

Atlas 360 Wheeled Excavator

£30 per hour in the district)
) Inclusive of operator's wages and travelling time
£45 per hour outside of the district)

2. Highland Water & 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 £36,672.

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

The Clerk will report that following his submission of claims for contributions the gross sum of £11,236.44 (inclusive of supervision) has been received from the Environment Agency (£11,756.50 representing 80% of the Commissioners' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2023/24 less £520.06 overpaid in respect of the financial year 2022/23)

3. Estimates for 2024/25

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

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

4. Rate Requirements for 2024/25

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

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

Author Name: Robert Hill/Sam Ablett
Role: Treasurer/Assistant Treasurer
Appendix 1 Estimates for 2024/25
Appendix 2 Rate Requirements for 2024/25

Appendix 1

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET 2023/2024

		Approved Budget 2023/2024	Actual 2023/2024	Budget 2024/2025
1	CHANNEL MAINTENANCE	16,500	20,500 [A]	16,800 [B]
2	LABOUR	43,000	47,371 [C]	52,000 [D]
3	REPAIRS AND RENEWALS	12,000	11,934	13,000
4	FUEL	72,000	163,525 [E]	92,000 [F]
5	RATES, INSURANCES & TELEPHONES	11,850 [G]	11,944 [G]	12,425 [G]
6	ADMINISTRATION	14,250	14,005	14,750
7	ASSET REPLACEMENT	7,500	0	10,000
8	E. A. PRECEPT	37,773	37,773	38,906
9	LOAN REPAYMENT	42,964	42,964	42,964
10	IMPROVEMENT WORKS	0	0	30,000 [H]
11	REINSTATEMENT OF BALANCES	0	0.00	56,034 [I]
		257,837	**350,015**	**378,879**
	INCOME	**35,000**	**70,515** [J]	**75,010** [K]
	Net Expenditure	**222,837**	**279,500**	**303,869** [L]
	Rate Requirement	**44.00** p		**60.00** p
	Rate set			
AV	506,448			
	Gen. Fund balance open	204,928	204,928	148,893
	Rates raised 44.00p	222,837	223,465	303,869
	net expenditure	222,837	279,500	303,869
	adj. balances			56,034
	closing balance	**204,928**	**148,893**	**204,927**

A - Includes for:
Flail mowing - Contractor 6,061
Slubbing - Contractor 840
6,901

B - Includes provision for contractor accounts 7,000

C - Includes pay award at November 2023 meeting

D - Includes estimated increase from November 2024

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 - Includes gross water charges (re-charged to 3rd party)

H - Provision for replacement of 3 culverts

I - Provision for reinstaement of balances reduced by winter 23/24 pumping

J - Includes metered discharge 42,906

K - Includes metered discharge
Includes calculated highland water claim
Includes asset fund for new culverts 30,000

Appendix 2

Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners

Rate and levy requirements 2024/2025

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 are:-

a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 64.28%

b) Proportion to be borne by Special levy issued to East Cambridgeshire District Council - 35.72%

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £3,256

In 2024/2025 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levy would raise £5,064.

Revenue cash balance in hand at 31st March 2024 is - £148,893

Asset replacement fund at 31st March 2024 is £48,489.

The estimated net expenditure of £303,869 in 2024/2025, which includes for the full reinstatement of balances reduced in 2023/2024 is equivalent to:-

a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 60.00p

b) a Special levy on the East Cambridgeshire District Council of £108,529

In 2023/2024 a rate of 44.00p in the £ was set together with a Special levy of £79,588 on East Cambridgeshire District Council.

P BURROWS, FCIWEM C.WEM CEnv

Clerk to the Commissioners

April 2024

Finance officer’s review and key messages

The Commissioners considered & approved the comments concerning the 2024/25 forecast period.

Fees, Remuneration & Subscriptions:

i) District Labour - District Engineer's Wage Increase – 2024/2025

Miss Ablett reported the District Engineer's wages would be increased in accordance with the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award.

ii) District Officers Fees

The Chairman declared an interest and the Vice Chairman took the Chair.

The Commissioners gave consideration to the District Officers’ fees for 2024/2025.

RESOLVED

a) That the sum of £2,957 be allowed for the services of the District Officer for 2024/2025.

Charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work

Consideration was given to whether any revisions were necessary in the Commissioners' charges for hiring plant for private work (last reviewed – April 2023): -

Atlas 360 Wheeled Excavator

Present charges inclusive of operator's wages and travelling time:

- £30.00 per hour in the District
- £45.00 per hour outside the District

RESOLVED

That no change be made to the hire charges.

iii) ADA subscription

That the increased ADA subscription of £724 be paid.

iv) Water Resources East Contribution

The Commissioners were asked to consider and reaffirm its contribution estimated at £150 towards the Board Member role representing local IDBs within Water Resources East (WRE)

RESOLVED

The Commissioners approved to contribute a further £150.

v) Precept to the Environment Agency

Miss Ablett advised the Anglian (Great Ouse) Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC) determined that the Precept will increase by 3% for 2024

The precept for 2022/2023 was £36,672.

vi) Highland Water

Miss Ablett reported that following the submission of claims for contributions the gross sum of £11,236.44 (inclusive of supervision) has been received from the Environment Agency (£11,756.50 representing 80% of the Commissioners' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2023/24 less £520.06 overpaid in respect of the financial year 2022/23)

Estimates & Rate Requirements for 2024/25

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

The Commissioners 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 64.28% and 35.72%.

RESOLVED

i) That the estimates be amended to reduce improvement works to the quote received of £22,000 and that no transfer be made to the asset replacement fund in 2024-2025 and the reinstatement of balances be recovered over the next couple of years.

ii) That a total sum of £253,224 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 £162,783 and £90,441 respectively

iv) That a rate of 50p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the district.

v) That a Special levy of £90,441 be made and issued to East Cambridgeshire District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.

vi) That the seal of the Commissioners be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levy referred to in resolution iv).

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

C.541 Date & Time of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Commissioners be held on Thursday 7th November 2024.

C.542 Any Other Business

a) Mr Darby brought to the Commissioners attention that water from a potato washing farm/facility was entering the drain north of Cracknell Drove and expressed his concern regarding the water quality and whether it posed a threat to crops.

b) The Chairman enquired whether the Commissioners wished for him to become a member of Fenland Soil, on behalf of the Commissioners, which would be at cost of £50.

RESOLVED

That the District Engineer arranges for water samples to be taken at the drain north of Cracknell Drove and tested.

That the Chairman be authorised to become a member of Fenland Soil and that the membership fee of £50 be paid.

…………………………………………………
Chairman

………………………………..
Date