HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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Administered by:

3rd June 2025

Dear Board Members

Upcoming meeting of the Board
Monday 9th June 2025

Please find overleaf the agenda for the meeting of the Board to be hosted at the Middle Level Offices, PE15 0AH at 2pm on Monday 9th June 2025.

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

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

As you'll be aware, we administer thirty Boards that mostly all meet within similar date ranges. Thank you to the majority of Members who already confirm their attendance proactively.

Please help us manage your Board effectively by **proactively letting Polly know as soon as possible, by telephone or email, if you can attend the meeting, or not, or if you're uncertain.** This results in less abortive time and cost to the running of all Boards.

It is important that we have early confirmation whether or not the Board will be quorate.

Yours truly

P BURROWS, FCIWEM C.WEM CEnv

Clerk to the Board

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Monday 9th June 2025 – 2pm
Middle Level Offices, PE15 0AH

Agenda:

Item No	*Topic*	*Format*	*Lead*
1	Welcome & apologies	Verbal	Chair
2	Declarations of Interest	Verbal	Chair
3	Minutes of last meeting and matters arising • Joint pumping agreement • Access issues	Pages 3 - 10	Chair
4	Constitution & Membership • Attendance • Vacancies & appointments • Composition and amalgamations • Training	Pages 11 - 13	Clerk
5	Clerk's Report	Pages 14 - 15	Clerk
5a	Transfer of Service Provision	Pages 16 - 18	Clerk
6	Environment Officer's Report	Pages 19 - 25	Clerk
7	Consulting Engineer's Reports, including: • Capital Programme & FCRM Grant-In-Aid	Pages 26 - 32	Clerk or Engineer
8	Health & Safety Environment Representative	Page 33	HS & Env rep
9	District Officer's Report Works report	Page 34 Verbal	DO
10	Governance • Internal Controls • Banking • Risk Assessment • Review Finance Regulations policy • Review Policy Statement • Exercise of Public Rights • Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments • Transparency code for smaller authorities (if relevant) • Defra IDB 1 Returns • Annual Governance Statement	Pages 35 -37 Pages 38 - 44 Pages 45 - 50 Pages 51 - 61 Page 62	Clerk
11	Finance Report: looking back • Finance officer's review • Budgeting • Payments 2024 • Annual Accounts and Finance papers 2024/2025	Pages 63 - 64 Page 65 Page 66 Pages 67 - 71	Clerk
12	Finance Report: looking forward • Finance Officer's summary • Fees, remuneration and subscriptions • Contributions from developers – Confidential Papers • Precept to the Environment Agency • Rating Estimates for 2024/2025 • Agricultural Drainage Rates and Special Levy requirements or 2024/2025	Pages 72 - 73 Page 74 Page 75	Clerk
13	Date of Next Meeting	Verbal	Chair
14	Any other business	Verbal	Chair

(NB: If required for any agenda item:

In pursuance of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting when the above matters are being considered by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.)

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board
held at Middle Level Offices on Thursday 14th November 2024

PRESENT

M G Day Esq (Chairman)	Ms J French	D Roy
N Buttress Esq (Vice Chairman)	Ms S Hoy	C Seaton
F D Leach (Deputy Vice Chairman)	Ms D Laws	
Ms B Barber	A Miscandlon	
C Boden	H Nawaz	
H Duncalfe	Ms L Foice-Beard	

Mr Robert Hill (representing the Clerk to the Board), Mr Graham Moore representing the Consulting Engineers and Mrs Ruth Martin (Lead Clerk) taking minutes were in attendance.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Ms M Davis, N J Harrison, S Imafidon, G Lake, J Leach, C Marks, Ms A Pinder, C Smart and B Wales.

Mr Hill reported that changes to the appointed members from Fenland District Council had been received by email this morning. He reported that from this information Lucie Foice-Beard, Samantha Hoy and Roy Gerstner had not been appointed and Dee Laws and Matthew Summers had been appointed as representatives.

C Boden confirmed that Lucie Foice-Beard had been appointed in place of David Oliver, Matthew Summers had been appointed in place of Roy Gerstner and it was not intended to remove Samantha Hoy.

He confirmed that the Fenland District Council's 15 appointed representatives were:

Brenda Barber
Chris Boden
Gavin Booth
Maureen Davies
Jan French
Lucie Foice-Beard
Samantha Hoy
Sidney Imafidon
Dee Laws
Charlie Marks
Alex Miscandlon
Haq Nawaz
Dal Roy
Chris Seaton
Matthew Summers

B.2136 Declarations of Interest

Mr Hill reminded Members of the importance of declaring an interest in any matter included in today's agenda that involved or was likely to affect any individual on the Board.
Alex Miscandlon (as a member of Waldersey IDB). declared interests in any matters concerning Waldersey IDB.

Alex Miscandlon (as a member of Middle Level Commissioners) declared interests in any matters concerning Middle Level Commissioners.

Dee Laws (as a Councillor for Fenland District Council) declared an interest on any Planning matters.

The Chairman, Messrs Buttress and Leach declared interests in items concerning the District Officers & related fees.

The Chairman declared an interest in any matters relating to the Thomas Squire Charity.

Alex Miscandlon & Dee Laws (as members of North Level District IDB) declared interests in any items relating to North Level District IDB.

B.2137 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

> Mr Hill reported on some 'typos' within the minutes – subject to these alterations, the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 10th June 2024 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.2138 Constitution & Membership

MLC Services to IDB's/Amalgamation

The Chairman reported on meetings held with Paul Sharman from North Level District IDB, Phil Camamile from Water Management Alliance, Brian Long from Kings Lynn IDB, and Innes Thompson from ADA.

- North Level District IDB
  The initial discussions had centred around both Boards (Hundred of Wisbech IDB & Waldersey IDB) being amalgamated with the current North Level District IDB. Members discussed possible elected membership of a proposed amalgamation.

- Water Management Alliance
  A possibility of joining as independent Boards administered by the Water Management Alliance.

Mr Leach referred to differing rates currently payable for land in Hundred of Wisbech, Kings Lynn and North Level areas.

Mrs Laws considered that North Level provided a professional and well organised service.

In response to the Chairman concerning planning matters, Mrs Laws confirmed that North Level currently had one full time officer dealing with planning applications, with other members of staff assisting on carrying out reviews of applications. She confirmed that all works in relation to planning applications were carried out 'in house' by North Level Staff.

The Chairman referred to discussions with the Chairman of Waldersey IDB and the Board agreed that any future discussions must involve Hundred of Wisbech IDB and Waldersey IDB acting together.
Mr Boden considered the strength of IDBs is in having local land users who are actively involved in the running of the Board and this representation should not be lost. The Chairman referred to the complexities of the Board and the district officers considered it important, that if there was to be an amalgamation with another Board then the local knowledge needed to be retained during a sensible period of transition. Members considered that this point needed to be part of discussions as it formed an important part of the future running of the Board.

Members considered that while these discussions were being held the potential amalgamation between Hundred of Wisbech IDB and Waldersey IDB should be put on hold.

Mrs Laws and Mr Miscandlon reported that they would be attending a Board meeting at North Level the following week and it was approved for them to raise these matters/considerations on behalf of the Board at that meeting.

The Chairman considered that a further Board meeting, or joint meeting with Waldersey IDB would be required in the new year.

RESOLVED

> That the Chairman be authorised to call a further meeting to discuss future Clerkship services and amalgamations at such time as he considers appropriate following receipt of additional information/proposals.

B.2139 Clerks Report

Charges for Planning & Consenting

In response to Mr Boden, Mr Hill reported that the proposal to review the charging model related to development and consenting applications and was intended to better align with the charging structures of neighbouring organisations.

Mr Boden queried if at this stage it would be possible to estimate potential income ahead of the drafting of the 2025/2026 budget proposal.

Mr Hill considered that this would be difficult as the proposal would need to be formally approved ahead of implementation. He further reported that the current policy is to 'ring fence' contributions for immediate or future works. He agreed with the comments of Mr Boden concerning the future use of development contributions and suggested that this could be discussed further by the Board as part of the future review. Mr Boden agreed with this proposed course of action and that the matter should be an agenda item at the next scheduled meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED

> The Board supported the review of the charging model for planning and consenting.

Debt Management

In response to Mr Boden, Mrs Martin outlined the current position concerning the new approach to debt management and that we have had positive responses to limited actions currently and the matter would be reported fully following further actions.

B.2140 Environment Report

Mr Hill reported that no update had been received from the Environmental Department and that matters would be updated at the next scheduled meeting of the Board.

B.2141 Engineers Report

Technical Services

RESOLVED

> The Board acknowledged and approved the interim charges approach.

Enforcement

Mr Leach referred to a number of encroachment issues within the byelaw distance and the problems this caused. He expressed frustration as he did not consider Middle Level were offering support concerning these matters.

Mr Boden queried if there would be any limitations to taking action due to time and Mrs Martin reported that any actions taken would be under the Land Drainage Act, which gave the Board 'powers to remove' – she further confirmed that there could be implications surrounding deemed consent if a proper application was made which had not been dealt with correctly and in a timely manner.

Mr Boden considered the implications of doing nothing would eventually end in flooding, so this was not an option that should be considered. He considered the Board should identify the most urgent case and proceed with action, and if this resulted in legal action to resolve the matter then the Board should proceed on this basis.

Mr Hill reported that if the Board were to proceed in this manner then the Board would need to formally pass a resolution to take action, he informed the Board that such action would be passed to external solicitors, so there would be initial cost implications.

The District Officers considered that the most pressing area of concern was the SB Components site. They confirmed that SB Components had consistently failed to allow access through their site for the Board to carry out essential drain maintenance works to protect the area from flooding. They reported that there were many items left within the byelaw distance including waste skips and old commercial vehicle fuel tanks, all left towards the brink of the watercourse restricting access.

Mr Hill considered that if action was going to be taken then, regardless of previous discussions, meetings with the site owners the Board should start with a meeting to formally inform SB Components of the Boards requirements and set a realistic timescale for this to be achieved, failure to do so would result in the Board pursuing enforcement action to resolve matters.

The Board resolved to commence a course of action to allow access to the watercourse to enable the board to carry out essential drain maintenance works, to involve the removal of all objects and materials from the 9m byelaw distance at the SB components site at Enterprise Way, Wisbech, Cambs.

RESOLVED

For the Board to issue notice of entry for the Boards contractor to carry out all necessary drain maintenance works on the watercourse at the (SB Components) site.

- In the event that the notice is not complied with and access to carry out the works is denied:
The Chairman and/or District Officer(s) to visit the SB Components site to inform them of the Boards requirements and timescale for removing all items from the 9m byelaw distance.

- In the event that this notice is not complied with:
The Board approve for enforcement action to be taken to meet the Boards requirements for clear access within the 9m byelaw distance at the SB Components site at Enterprise Way, Wisbech, Cambs. For the Chairman to be given authority to engage external solicitors to deal with any required enforcement action concerning the SB Components site.

Mr Moore gave updates on the progress of individual applications and asked the Board to give consideration to how applications which may go beyond the end of the current Middle Level Service Provision will be dealt with. He considered this may be an area to be considered when the Board were discussing the future service provision with other parties, as there could be benefit in retaining the current service for these larger ongoing developments.

Erection of a 2-storey 4-bed dwelling with integral double garage at land south of 111 Fridaybridge Road, Elm - Mrs L S Lucas (MLC Ref Nos 183) + Mr & Mrs Harris (MLC Ref Nos 1313, 1456 & 1654)

The Board approved the recommendation of the works committee to allow the maintenance access strip to be reduced to 5m (total width 10m).

Attenuation Area near Point 29 (Project Ref 346/23)

The Board approved for this work to be progressed as part of the Combined Catchment Flood Risk Study provided that its inclusion did not delay the delivery of the main works.

Combined Catchment Flood Risk Study

Mrs Laws raised concerns over the length of time the study was taking. Mr Boden queried how the study was being funded and as a result of delays, was this funding protected. Mr Hill reported that the study was approved at 100% grant-in-aid funded but there were current concerns as to the availability of grant funding during 2025/2026. He reported that while there were current uncertainty further avenues of funding were being considered with the Environment Agency should there be a shortfall for 2025/2026.

In response to Mr Boden, he confirmed that there was a risk associated with the funding but that this had not been fully quantified at this point.

He considered that in the scenario of no funding being available, it would still provide value for money for the Board to continue with the study, as this would then provide outcomes to enable the Boards to progress with a scheme of works (exactly how this would work would need clarification from the Environment Agency).

Members were concerned over delays and queried if the consultants were in breach of contract, against which penalties may be applied. Mr Hill referred to the addition of other areas of work, which while the engineer would look into this matter, these additions may have made matters more complex.

RESOLVED

> For the engineer to provide an update to the progress of works and expenditure to date and an anticipated finish date and final costs.

B.2142 Health & Safety

Mr Buttress reported that matters were being kept updated and although all necessary signage had been put in place there continued to be one site at which signs were damaged or destroyed.
The Board considered that it was important to keep signs in place and approved that the are replaced when required.

B.2143 District Officers Report

The Officers reported that all areas had been covered elsewhere at today's meeting. Mr Leach raised the matter concerning the renewal of the Boards drain maintenance contract which was due to run-out February 2025. He further reported that this matter had been discussed at the joint meeting held 12th August 2024 and it was agreed that due to the Board needing to find another service provider and potential amalgamation, it would be sensible to extend the contract by one year and to review the position at this point next year.

RESOLVED

> For the Boards drain maintenance contract with Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd to be extended by one year and for the matter to be reviews again at the November 2025 meeting of the Board.

B.2144 Governance

Mr Hill referred the Board to the Governance report and summarised its content.

a) Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2023/2024

RESOLVED

i. The Board considered and approved the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year that ended on the 31st March 2024.

ii. The Board considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year that ended on the 31st March 2024.

iii. Members considered the comments of the Internal Auditor concerning the joint pumping arrangement and the land valuation. They considered that the comments of the Responsible Finance Officer adequately explained the situation and the Boards position in relation to both matters and that no further actions concerning either point was required at this this point.

b) Review of Internal Controls

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

c) Responsible Finance Officer

The Board considered and approved the recommendations that while there is a service level agreement for the provision of clerking services in place between the Board and the Middle Level Commissioners:

i. That the role of the position of Head of Finance to the Middle Level Commissioners is to include the appointment as Responsible Financial Officer to the Board.

ii. That the person appointed as Head of Finance for the Middle Level Commissioners be added to the Barclays Bank PLC mandate and authorised to sign cheques and authorised to make payments on behalf of the Board.

iii. That the person appointed as clerk to the Middle Level Commissioners be added to the Barclays Bank PLC mandate and be authorised to sign cheques and to authorise payments on behalf of the Board.

iv. That the person appointed as Head of Finance to the Middle Level Commissioners will be appointed as the administrator on behalf of the Middle Level Commissioners to the Barclays Bank PLC internet banking platform as used by the Middle Level Commissioners.

v. That following Mr Robert Hill leaving the employment of the Middle Level Commissioners that the Head of Finance of the Middle Level Commissioners be delegated the authority to appoint a member of the finance team to be an additional administrator on the Barclays Bank PLC internet banking platform as used by the Board.

d) Authorisations

The Board considered the review of authorisations, (while there is a service level agreement for the provision of clerking services in place between the Board and the Middle Level Commissioners):

i) The Board considered and authorised that all employees and contractors of the Middle Level Commissioners are considered as duly authorised officers and are therefore able to use the Boards powers and IDB byelaws for their operational and regulatory roles on behalf of the Board.

ii) The Board confirmed their stance that their Chairman, Vice-Chair and District Officers, Pump Attendants and employees are considered as duly authorised officers and therefore able to use the Boards powers and IDB byelaws for their operational and regulatory roles on behalf of the Board.

e) Policy Reviews & DPO

The Board considered the review of the policies, (while there is a service level agreement for the provision of clerking services in place between the Board and the Middle Level Commissioners):

RESOLVED

i. The Board considered and approved the policy reviews for the Complaints Procedure, Privacy policy and the Anti-Bribery policy.

ii. That the Board approve that while there is a service level agreement for provision of clerking services in place between the Board and the Middle Level Commissioners, the Middle Level Commissioner's Lead Clerk acts as their Data Protection Officer.

f) Exercise of Public Rights

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

B.2145 Finance Report

Fees & remuneration

District Officers Fees

That the arrangements remain unchanged for 2024/2025 and they be reviewed again at the November 2025 meeting.
(NB) – Messrs Buttress, Day and F Leach declared financial interests when this item was discussed.

Expenditure Forecast

Mr Hill reported that the forecast had been reviewed by the Chairman and District Officers and although these were additional slubbing works planned, it was currently anticipated that these could be completed within the existing budget.

He further reported that the main area for variance would be pumping costs, but currently there was no indication to vary the forecast from the approved budget.

RESOLVED

That the report and estimates be approved

B.2146 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board will be held on:

Monday 9th June 2024 (MLC offices) 2pm

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	4
Meeting:	**HUNDRED OF WISBECH IBD**	**Subject:**	**CONSTITUTION & MEMBERSHIP**
Date:	**Monday 9th June 2025**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Polly Tombleson**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Election notice
B. Note the current status of its membership and the role they each play as members serving the interests of the Board.
C. Review attendance records and identify any resolutions as necessary.
D. There are currently **2** vacancies on the Board.
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	14	N/A		8
Actual	12	15 FDC	27	
Vacancies	2		2	

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

No	Name	Status (one of four categories)	Commentary
1	J Bunning	Co-opted member - Hutchinsons	Could this be checked at the meeting?
2	N Buttress	Nominee of rate payer (DG Bullard)	Vice-Chair & District Officer
3	M Day	Ratepayer	Chairman
4	H Duncalfe	Ratepayer	
5	N Harrison	Ratepayer	
6	G Lake	Ratepayer	
7	F Leach	Nominee of rate payer (W Norman)	Dep Vice-Chair & District Officer
8	J Leach	Nominee of rate payer (W Norman)	
9	A Pinder	Ratepayer	
10	C Smart	Ratepayer	
11	B Wales	Co-opted member to vacancy – non-ratepayer	
12	N Pooley	Co-opted member to vacancy – non-ratepayer	
13			
14			

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

No	Name	Appointing Council as at June 2024	Commentary (one of three categories)
1	B Barber	FDC	Councillor
2	C Boden	FDC	Councillor
3	G Booth	FDC	Councillor
4	M Davis	FDC	Councillor
5	J French	FDC	Councillor
6	R Gerstner	FDC	Councillor
7	S Hoy	FDC	Councillor
8	S Imafidon	FDC	Councillor

9	L Foice-Beard	FDC	Councillor
10	C Marks	FDC	Councillor
11	A Miscandlon	FDC	Councillor
12	H Nawaz	FDC	Councillor
13	D Oliver	FDC	Councillor
14	D Roy	FDC	Councillor
15	C Seaton	FDC	Councillor

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	14/11/2024	10/06/2024	16/11/2023	14/6/2023
1	J Bunning				Apologies
2	N Buttress	Present	Present	Present	Present
3	M Day	Present	Present	Present	Present
4	H Duncalfe	Present	Present	Present	Present
5	N Harrison	Apologies	Present	Present	Present
6	G Lake	Apologies	Present	Present	Present
7	F Leach	Present	Present	Present	Present
8	J Leach	Apologies	Present	Present	Present
9	A Pinder	Apologies	Present	Present	Apologies
10	C Smart	Apologies		Present	
	P Tegerdine – no longer on the board		N/A	Present	Apologies
11	B Wales	Apologies	Present	Apologies	n/a
12	N Pooley		n/a	n/a	n/a
13					
14					

Attendance at Chairs Meetings

No	Name	6/12/2024	6/10/2023	13/12/2022	12/04/2022
1	M Day	Apologies	Present	Present	Present

Appointed Members (current and previous)

No	Name (Council)	14/11/2024	10/06/2024	16/11/2023	14/6/2023
1	B Barber	Present	Present	Present	n/a
2	C Boden	Present	Present	Present	n/a
3	G Booth		Apologies	Present	Apologies
4	M Davis	Apologies	Present	Present	n/a
5	J French	Present	Present	Present	n/a
	R Gerstner			Present	n/a
6	S Hoy	Present	Present	Present	Apologies

7	S Imafidon	Apologies	Present	Present	n/a
8	L Foice-Beard	Present	Present	n/a	n/a
9	C Marks	Apologies		Present	n/a
10	A Miscandlon	Present	Present	Present	n/a
11	H Nawaz	Present	Apologies	Present	n/a
	D Oliver		Apologies	Present	n/a
12	D Roy	Present	Present	Apologies	n/a
13	C Seaton	Present	Present	Apologies	n/a
14	D Laws	Present			
15	M Summers	-	n/a	n/a	n/a

3. Elections, vacancies & appointments

3.1 The Election of members of the Board will take place this year. Members will receive an election notice during July/August and are requested to return their complete slip as soon as possible. This term for current members ends on 31st October 2025.

3.2 Current vacancies – May 2025 – **2** elected

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 2 of 28 Board Members have reported viewing all five videos.
To date 1 of 28 Board members have reported viewing 3 of the five videos.
To date 7 of 28 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

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	5
Meeting:	**HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**CLERK'S REPORT**
Date:	**Thursday 14th November 2024**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Paul Burrows**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Note the content of the report and feedback on items as appropriate.

1. Charging for Planning & Consenting

As previously reported, we have for a long time been reactive and had insufficient resources to cater for the amount and range of planning and consenting workload for the Commissioners and IDBs with an inability to step back and identify and implement improvements. Our reputation has suffered, and we receive regular complaints.

With new leadership capacity and capability within Technical Services, we are now in a healthier position to identify and drive improvements. A key foundation of improvement is a review and implementation of our charging approach for developers and consent applicants. We have identified that we are significantly out of sync with neighbours and have likely been missing out on substantial income over many years. This is income that could in part be reinvested into developing our capacity and capability to improve our service, as well as contributing to asset improvement budgets.

The Board is asked to support the need to review our charging model to maximise income. The new model will be implemented from the 1st April 2025. This will be reviewed annually, and the Clerk invites feedback.

2. Highland Water & IDB Precept.

A formal appeal to the Minister under Section 57 (4) of the Land Drainage Act 1991 was thankfully narrowly avoided in 2024/25 given that the Anglian (Great Ouse) Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC) agreed a one-off approach to covering the shortfall in the Environment Agency's budget to ensure highland water claims (HWC) to local IDBs were met.

In addition, the Environment Agency's HWC budget for 2025/26 was increased from that which was indicatively allocated. Had the indicative allocation stood, the forecast budget shortfall would have essentially resulted in the Environment Agency imposing an active withdrawal of management of a number of districts and the Middle Level catchment without any underpinning consultation with those affected, impact assessment, any clear policy position or procedure.

However, without a programme of reform and mitigations, we will potentially be in an appeal situation at some not too distant point in the future. The time that would have been spent drafting and lodging an appeal has been used more constructively to develop 'The Highland Water Conundrum' document. This has been submitted to the Minister, Defra, the Environment Agency and our Local Authorities.

There are a range of measures that are outside of the control or influence of ourselves and IDBs that would make a positive difference. I have identified these as recommendations within the document. Many of these recommendations are for the Environment Agency to consider and implement as appropriate. I would be happy to discuss further and contribute directly to any reviews that take account of this matter.

We feel that it is unfair that HWC payments are under threat without mitigations being available that provide us and IDBs with a greater degree of control, influence and/or choice. We and IDBs have no choice but to receive and manage water that flows into our/their districts from highland areas. We/they are providing a public service to beneficiaries within (and of) highland areas and we/they have no choice to not provide this service.

The 'Highland Water Conundrum' document is available to Middle Level Board Members and Commissioners upon request.

The Board is asked to delegate the decision on whether to appeal the IDB Precept (under s40 of the Water Resources Act) to the Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman. Any appeal must be lodged within 6-weeks of formal notification.

3. Insurance

Our insurance has been arranged using Towergate insurance brokers for the year to 31*st* March 2025. AXA offered a 2-year extension of the tripartite agreement we had previously signed and this was accepted as they offered to keep our business combined policy premium at the same rate for 2025-2026, subject to there not being any changes to the existing cover, i.e. increase in valuations.

Covering MLC and our administered IDBs, the business combined policy premium has increased this year by £16,875, due to the significant increase in pumping station valuations following the meetings last year. The fleet policy premium has also increased considerably due to the both the number and size of claims during the year, together with there being additional vehicles and plant. We have been warned that AXA capped the increase in the fleet premium, but if this had gone out to tender would probably have been in the region of £110,000 plus 12% Insurance Premium Tax. This equates to an increase of £68,000.

More concerningly, AXA will no longer be offering a specific policy for IDBs going forward so this is likely to have a significant impact on the premium for 2026-2027 as there are only a few insurance companies that will quote for our business. NFU have declined to quote.

Author Name: Paul Burrows
Role: Clerk

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	5a
Meeting:	**HUNDRED OF WISBECH IDB**	**Subject:**	**TRANSFER OF SERVICE PROVISION**
Date:	**Monday 9th June 2025**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Paul Burrows** **Clerk to the IDB and MLC Chief Executive**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Confirm their approval of their future service provider arrangements by minute at a quorate board meeting.

B. Review and approve the resolutions in Section 3 of this paper to enable the effective transfer of services to the nominated future service provider(s).

1. Recap

1.1 In July 2024, the Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) provided notice of a re-focussing of their service provision to local Internal Drainage Boards.

1.2 As a result, they issued notice to this Board that their service offer would discontinue and that the IDB would need to source an alternative service provider(s) to come into effect from 1st April 2026 at the latest. This covers all the services currently provided by MLC, i.e. clerking (admin, governance and finance), environment, M&E, planning & consenting, operations, survey, GIS and capital works.

1.3 The Middle Level Commissioners will conclude the year-end accounts and annual returns for the IDB for 2025/26, which happens after 1st April 2026. It should be acknowledged that there may be certain pieces of work or activities that need to continue after this date as part of a transition plan.

1.4 This Board have now confirmed that the following service provider(s) will be managing board affairs moving forward and they have agreed the service provider(s) relevant terms of engagement.

Service	Organisation
Clerking (inc Office functions, Finance, Governance, Insurance & Utilities)	further to board decision (Recommendation A)
Environmental	further to board decision (Recommendation A)
M&E	further to board decision (Recommendation A) or N/A where there are no M&E assets
Planning & Consenting	further to board decision (Recommendation A)
Capital Works and other Technical Services	further to board decision (Recommendation A)

2. Transition

2.1 Transition arrangements are to be completed by the 1st of April 2026 and will include elements set out in section 3 of this report. MLC and new service provider will work together to deliver these throughout the 2025/2026 financial year.

2.2 A year end/start handover is preferable to an in-year handover. However, an in-year transfer of some aspects of service provision may be practical.

3. Resolutions

3.1 The Board is asked to review and approve the following resolutions to enable the effective transfer of services and to manage their risks and those of the respective suppliers:

Ref	Theme	Resolution
A	Clerkship	That the position of clerk to the IDB transfer from Middle Level Commissioners to the approved future service provider at or as close to 1st April 2026 as possible and the provision of clerkship services begin from that date.
B	Finance	That the RFO from the approved future service provider be added to the Barclays Bank PLC Mandate and authorised to sign cheques and authorised to make payments on behalf of the Board. Once handover of Financial services is complete, then MLC staff are resolved to be removed from the mandate and authorisations. The Board also approve to change banks, if required, by the new service provider.
C	Finance	That the RFO from the approved future service provider be added as an additional administrator to the Barclays Bank PLC internet banking platform and once handover of Financial services is complete, they will become the primary administrator and MLC staff are resolved to be removed as administrators.
D	Finance	That the position of Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) to the IDB in transferred from the Middle Level Commissioners' Head of Finance to the RFO of the approved future service provider at or as close to 1st April 2026 as possible and the provision of clerkship services begin from that date. At this point the Board will need to adopt new Financial Regulations and Internal Controls.
E	Finance	That at the point of handover, the IDB are removed from the Middle Level Commissioners group banking arrangements with Barclays Bank PLC.
F	Finance	That the Middle Level Commissioners will finalise and submit accounts for 2025/26 and the IDB1 return.
G	Finance	That the preparation of 2026/27 budget estimates and rate assessment be developed by both parties, but any meetings and decisions made after the position of clerk has been handed-over be led by the approved future service provider. The issuing and collection of drainage rates for 2026/27 along with collection of past debt will be undertaken by the new service provider after handover of banking arrangements and the RFO role.
H	Finance	That the Board's internal audit services move from the Middle Level Commissioners' group arrangements with Whitings LLP to that as agreed with the approved future service provider as of April 2026.
I	Clerkship	That the approved future service provider provides a named person who becomes a shadow Data Protection Officer on behalf of the Board alongside the Lead Clerk of the Middle Level Commissioners and that both parties are considered as 'Data Handlers' on behalf of the Board who is 'Data Controller'.
J	Clerkship	Once handover of all data and information for all areas of service provision has been completed, then the person nominated in I above becomes the Board's sole Data Protection Officer.
K	Clerkship	That the Board authorise their 'Data Handlers' to transfer all relevant data and information, including personal data and any operational information held.
L	Clerkship	Authorise the approved future service provider to develop a shadow webpage for the Board and the removal of the MLC hosted webpage once clerkship services have transferred. At this point the Board approve to adopt their new supplier's Privacy Policy and Complaints Procedure with the new supplier being the new public and partner point of contact for the Board at this point for all incoming/outgoing correspondence.
M	Clerkship	Other than the Board's Financial Regulations, Internal Controls, Privacy Policy and Complaints Procedure, the Board's other existing policies will remain in place until new or adapted policies are proposed by their new suppliers.
N	Clerkship	That the Board will remain within the Middle Level Commissioners Group insurance policy until they are included within their new suppliers' arrangements.
O	Clerkship	Where relevant the Board will remain within the Middle Level Commissioners group approach to electricity contract arrangements (current contract ends Sept

		2025) until they are included within their new suppliers' arrangements. The Board recognise this may be before or after 1st April 2026.
P	Governance	The Board will adopt the model Reserved Matters, Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation of the new service provider from 1 April 2026.
Q	H&S	The IDB H&S lead and the new service provider will let the MLC know, if appropriate to the IDB, whether the current services of COPE Safety Management as advisors to the Board (within MLC Group arrangements with COPE) will continue or whether there will be a new approach. The IDB H&S lead will inform the new service provider of all details relating to any near miss, learning events, or other relevant Health and Safety related events or information pertaining to the IDB and its operation.
R	Capital Works	The MLC will provide transfer all details and IPR relating to capital projects and their management and admin underway or in a medium-term plan for the IDB and will inform the Environment Agency and DEFRA of the change of service provider where required.
S	Other Services	That the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the board are authorised to agree with the MLC Chief Executive and/or Chief Engineer and the approved future service provider to the transition arrangements (including timescales and fees) associated with the transition of M&E, Environmental, Planning & Consenting, Capital Works and other Technical Services.
T	Finance	That payroll functions for the Board's employee will transfer and their pension arrangements will transfer from MLC to the new service provider. As the employee is employed by the Board and not the MLC, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) – TUPE – does not apply.

4. Next steps

4.1 With resolutions in place, existing and approved future service provider(s) can undertake the transition and handover with confidence and with risk managed.

4.2 Timescales, handover dates and associated issues will be reported to the Chairman and tabled at future meetings of the Board. Special meetings of the Board may be required.

Author Name: Paul Burrows
Role:
Chief Executive, Middle Level Commissioners
Clerk to Hundred of Wisbech IDB

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	6
Meeting:	**HUNDRED OF WISBECH**	**Subject:**	**ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT**
Date:	**Monday 9th June 2025**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Sofi Lloyd**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Note the updated Environmental Services Package will take effect from April 2025.
B. Be informed that an environmental review and Biodiversity Action Plan update meeting is scheduled with the relevant Board members this spring. Please make interim provision for the new BAP to be reviewed, agreed and adopted prior to the next Board meeting.
C. Note that the new Hedgerow Regulations 2024 prohibits the cutting of any hedge growing on agricultural land between the 1st March - 31th August inclusive.
D. Please contact the ecology team ASAP to book a survey of any trees that require felling or trimming this year as this is the best time of year to survey for bats.
E. Be reminded that any non-routine maintenance including bank slip repairs or reprofiling, culvert installation or replacements, tree felling, established scrub removal and channel de-watering require environmental screening well ahead of the planned works, to ensure works are compliant, using the request form available on the MLC website: Conservation – Middle Level
F. Be aware that you will require licenced supervision of certain works that take place around badger setts, which MLC can provide.
G. Note that a Board Representative will be required to attend a biodiversity training day in 2025. Those who have some control over the works undertaken within the district is best placed to attend.
H. A reminder that the Board has a culverting policy and a presumption against culverting unless no other feasible option is available: Standing Advice – Middle Level.
I. Report bank slips that require remedial works as soon as they occur or are noticed.
J. Review the water vole myth busting summary attached as an Appendix to the Board Report.

1) Environmental Services Package Update

Further to the update and discussion at the Middle Level IDB Chairs meeting in December 2024, you will have seen and heard us over the previous 12 months, setting out our plans and reasoning for focussing, updating and re-defining the range of services that we provide to IDBs across and beyond the Middle Level. We plan to launch the new Environmental Services Package in 2025/26, as this will help IDBs to begin to significantly improve and evidence their environment compliance and delivery straight away. This also ensures that the Middle Level Commissioners are not under-writing other IDBs environmental responsibilities.

For the Boards where services from the Middle Level Commissioners will be discontinued from 1st April 2026, the new service provision will identify the actions and approaches the Board should progress through the 2025/26 period in order to maintain compliance until a new service provider is in place. The service package will also enable and facilitate a smooth transition. Please use information in this letter to help scope, define, compare and negotiate the environmental services you'll require from your new supplier(s).

Background

Historically, IDBs have made a small contribution towards the MLC Environment Officers' salary to access ecological and environmental advice and guidance if required, in a mostly re-active manner. There has been little definition around what services have been included.

However, protecting and improving biodiversity and the environment are higher than ever on the political agenda, and the Government is looking for strong and proactive environmental delivery from Public Bodies to contribute towards their own challenging statutory environmental targets. As such, legislation and scrutiny has strengthened significantly around how IDBs deliver their statutory environmental duties. This is demonstrated by the recent changes to the information Defra requests via the IDB1 report.

Also, the general public is nowadays much better informed and aware of the state of nature and have more confidence in challenging IDBs about their environmental delivery and compliance. For these reasons, it is more important than ever for IDBs to be able to evidence how they have considered the environment when determining their approaches to flood risk and water level management.

Inevitably, this has meant that IDBs now require greater support to meet and evidence their statutory environmental duties. There has also been a growth in demand for suitably capable and qualified ecologists and the market hasn't kept pace with the demand, therefore salaries have increased similarly to other in-demand professional services. This also reflects that these days ecologists also take personal liability, thus if something goes wrong on their watch then, notwithstanding the responsibility and prosecution risk for IDB Board members, they can also be 'struck-off', a bit like doctors. They therefore need to be reassured about who they are working for and the associated commitment to compliance of the organisation.

Going forward

As outlined at the Chairs meeting in December 2024, we have developed an Environmental Service Package that aims to support IDBs to achieve minimum statutory environmental compliance. The details of the new package are set out below:

Environmental Services Package

Ref:	Category:	Details:	Days Equivalent:
1.	**General Consultancy** *(inc. retained service)*	Up to 2 days general consultancy which can be used for: • Screening and assessment of non-routine works using the ESR (Environmental Screening Report) process. • Preliminary habitat and species surveys & reporting* • Ad-hoc advice and guidance. • Initial advice & communications for pollution incidents • INNS identification and advice. • Biodiversity Action Plan BAP ditch survey & reporting**	**2**
2.	**Environmental Compliance Health Checking**	• One environmental review with MLC Env. & Ecol. staff per year & subsequent reporting. • Review must include budget setting & expenditure recording for reporting to Defra (IDB1). • Review & assessment of proposed annual programme of works prior to Board approval. • BAP report & review for Board.	**1.25**
3.	**Planning Ecology Services**	• Up to 1 day for consent applications advice & guidance^ • Over 1 day will be charged on a time and materials basis. This includes responses to Local Plans and Strategies on the IDBs behalf.	**1**
4.	**Keeping up-to-date**	• Communication of relevant updates in policy, legislation, regulation and best practice.	**1**
5.	**Training**	• Attendance for up to 2 candidates at 1 environmental training day per year.	**1**
		Total:	**6.25 days p.a.**
		Cost (2025/26)	**£2,375**

Notes: *Any surveys or mitigations that follow on from preliminary surveys, including licenced work such as water vole displacement, will be charged on a time and materials basis or can be contracted out if MLC staff are fully booked.
** Any unused consultancy balance can be used to cover the recommended annual 1-day BAP ditch survey, with any shortfall charged separately. If any pre-works surveys (ESRs) are undertaken in the year, they will be extended so that they count as the BAP ditch survey for efficiency.
^ For activity not rechargeable to developers/consent applicants.
Unused category balances can be used to cover shortfalls in other categories within the financial year as mutually agreed. Unused balances cannot be carried forward outside the financial year but its use can be discussed with MLC with potential for it to be used to contribute towards assisting the IDB to progress a BAP objective instead if capacity allows.
For IDBs who also contract operational services from MLC (via Morgan Lakey, Operations Manager), there will be a 16% reduction in fees, reflective of the efficiency gained from being able to integrate your environmental compliance procedures into our operational processes and communicate freely with your other service providers, taking the annual charge down to £1995 (2025/26).

We are confident that the above service provision will deliver the range of support that is most frequently requested and required by IDBs and reflects what is necessary to achieve and demonstrate minimum environmental compliance.

However, the minimum service package is not exhaustive and is not all-inclusive, therefore additional ad-hoc consultancy, charged on a time and materials basis will still be available if needed and where MLC staff capacity allows. This could include:

- Supervision of Licenced CL27 drainage operations over a badger sett
- Licenced protected species activities including water vole displacements and badger sett disturbance / closures etc.
- Habitat creation or enhancement consultancy and habitat condition assessments
- Invasive species control

Where we have insufficient capacity to deliver additional consultancy, we will be able to advise on your selection of third-party supplier and provide them with advice, however the IDB would take on the client role and be the organisation commissioning the supplier, overseeing their delivery and performance.

Benefits of a service provided by MLC
Our commitment is that our fees will remain not for profit and will be very competitive compared with peer IDBs and those of qualified external profit-making environmental consultants.

It is our intention that from 1st April 2025, the service package fees will be charged. For IDBs who also contract their operational services from us via Morgan Lakey, there will be a 16% reduction in fees, reflective of the efficiency gained from being able to integrate your environmental compliance procedures into our operational processes and communicate freely with your other service providers, taking the annual charge down to £1995.

IDB ecology and the IDB industry is quite niche (e.g. bespoke ecological and environmental licenses and permits). Our ecologists specialise in and represent the local and national IDB industry interests and challenge local and national policy where it is not enabling of our work. We have strength of voice in representing the largest number of IDBs in the country. An example of this is the successful legal challenge made to Natural England last year to clarify and amend the conditions within the IDB-specific badger licence (CL27) to make it more enabling of our routine maintenance work taking place around badger setts. This was not something that ADA, our national representative was able to progress for us, despite the implications for IDBs nationally. Our ecologists also hold multiple IDB-relevant protected species licences and can carry out licenced activities most commonly required by IDBs for a much-reduced cost compared to an external ecological consultancy.

There are an increasing number of funding opportunities available for a wide range of environmental improvements, including those which could be of benefit to IDBs. This includes biodiversity net gain funding, peat conservation and developer contributions such as Section 106 funding. Many of these require use of local, regional and national networks, personal relationships and partnerships, along with a landscape scale view. We provide this as we invest in it to benefit the Middle Level Commissioners. We therefore can help IDBs to be better placed and more competitive to access such funding by evidencing their experience and competence in delivering positive outcomes for biodiversity in a consistent way and in partnership with other local environmental managers.

Some of the benefits you will have received to date from the ecology and environmental services department are not always visible and would be difficult for an external consultancy to replicate in the same efficient manner. A lot of work has taken place in the background to significantly improve the way that you can evidence your environmental compliance. This has included:

- Assessment of all relevant consent applications on behalf of many IDBs to ensure their statutory duties in relation to the environment are discharged and evidenced. This sometimes includes site visits, meetings and reports. It also includes the development and publication of new pre-application environmental guidance for consent applicants, for all IDBs.
- Influencing and contributing towards national, regional and local policy and strategy development. This includes wildlife licencing, Local Nature Recovery Strategies, which IDBs have a statutory duty to consider, Local Plans, Fens Reservoir planning and Environmental Stewardship options which will benefit IDBs.
- New templates, processes and services available to all IDBs to help them deliver and evidence their environmental compliance in relation to non-routine works using the ESR (Environmental Screening Report) process.
- Development and launch of compliant standard operating procedures for routine works including flail mowing and desilting. Associated training provided to a number of IDB contractors.
- A retained ecological consultancy service (which you may have chosen not to use)
- Monitoring, influencing and communicating legislative changes that affect IDBs such as badger licenses and Hedgerow Regulations
- A scheduled environmental review and BAP refresh visit (the BAP is required to deliver an IDBs statutory biodiversity duty)

We hope that this has provided you with sufficient information regarding the new service package from 1st April 2025. I appreciate that the step-change in fee may not be universally well received by Board Members that are less engaged and aware of their personal and collective environmental liabilities and risks.

We will work on the premise that your Board will opt in and engage with the Environmental Service Package. Indeed, it’s success and your compliance requires a two-way relationship and input.

You may choose to benchmark this package against other service providers and opt-out. If so, please feel free to use the information above to secure comparable quotes.

We commit to reviewing the Service Package both qualitatively and quantitatively as it beds-in to ensure continued value for money for the IDBs and the Middle Level Commissioners.

2) The Management of Hedgerows (England) Regulations 2024

In May 2024, Defra announced The Management of Hedgerows (England) Regulations 2024 which put the baseline for hedgerow management practices into law, and replaced the regulation of management previously provided for via cross compliance. The Regulations require:

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

These Regulations apply to any hedgerow growing on land used for agriculture if that hedgerow has:

- a continuous length of 20 metres or more; or
- a continuous length of less than 20 metres and, at each end, meets (whether by intersection or junction) another hedgerow.

Please advise your workforce / contractors of the change and programme such works to take place within the compliant period: [Hedgerow management rules: cutting and trimming - GOV.UK]

3) **Licensing of IDB works around badger setts.**

Previously, MLC had planned to roll out training and licence administration services to enable all IDBs to access the CL27 Badger Licence and to conduct their routine and periodic maintenance work compliantly around badger setts. However there were some issues with licence returns in 2023 which highlighted some regional variation in the regulation and enforcement of CL27 licence requirements within Natural England, and some developing impractical licence requirements. MLC and representatives from 3 other IDBs made a successful legal challenge to Natural England regarding the issues and have secured some positive changes to the licence which are more enabling of our low-risk routine maintenance work taking place around badger setts. This has removed the need for all IDBs to hold their own badger licences (although they may wish to do so anyway) and makes it much easier for MLC to continue to provide qualified and licenced supervision of works where necessary. Any work that carries any risk of damaging a badger sett or disturbing a badger within a sett, even if the risk is deemed to be small, is still licensable and MLC should be contacted for further advice where such works are planned. This includes desilting over or near to a badger sett. Where there is uncertainty, if any works are planned within 30m of a badger sett, please contact MLC for advice and guidance. Please see the updated CL27 licence on-line for full details of activities that are likely to be licensable: Licence to interfere with badger setts for watercourse and drainage purposes (CL27) - GOV.UK

4) **Improved advice and guidance provision:**

a) We have developed some extended pre-application advice and guidance for consent applicants to help them understand what environmental considerations they need to make before submitting an application to us. This includes helping them to secure the correct ecological advice and what ecological assessments they need to submit with their application. This will help applicants to avoid delays in us processing their application until such information is received. It has already reduced the number of queries and frequently asked questions that we have had to respond to. It also helps to ensure more efficient delivery of the IDBs statutory responsibilities regarding the environment that are associated with consenting the work of others in and around IDB channels. Please take a look on the website for more information.

b) We have welcomed new ecological resource at MLC who will be assisting with delivering the new service package to IDBs. **Abigail Leach** has a wealth of relevant knowledge and experience that she has brought with her, most recently from working at the Broads Authority, and is very well regarded in the industry. Abigail has already revised and updated the **biosecurity policy** and will be launching it later this year at the next IDB training event.

5) **Water Vole Displacement Myth Busting**

A number of recent, licenced IDB water vole displacements have taken place throughout the MLC area, which have enabled some of the DEFRA-funded improvement works to be completed. There appears to be some mis-information circulating amongst some IDBs around the need for and cost of water vole displacements which is causing some concern and confusion. To help all stakeholders to be better informed, we have produced a myth-busting document, attached as an Appendix to the Board report. We will also circulate a pamphlet summarising what activity, presence and timescales landowners and farmers can expect when a water vole displacement is taking place on their land along with the notice of entry for all future displacements to help to set expectations correctly. Please contact us should you have any further questions

Author Name: Sofi Lloyd **Role: Ecology and Environmental Services Manager**

Water Voles - Myth Busting

1.	**Claim** - ***Water vole displacements cost a lot of money!*** **Fact -** Water vole displacements do add some additional costs to bank works but if MLC services are used, this is much less than some may think. It is most certainly an incalculable amount less

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="7"></td><td colspan="2">than legal, financial and reputational costs if criminal proceedings were progressed in relation to a water vole offence under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Approx. cost of bank repair per 150m (no water voles):</td></tr>
<tr><td>£4,680 – 5,140</td><td>£31-34 per metre</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Additional cost of MLC-progressed water vole displacement per 150m</td></tr>
<tr><td>£2,110 - £2,260</td><td>£14-15 per metre</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Cost of using external consultants for displacement per 150m</td></tr>
<tr><td>£4,810 - £9,810</td><td>£32-65 per metre</td></tr>
<tr><td>2.</td><td colspan="2">Claim – Other IDBs and RMAs and farmers etc. just get on with bank work without surveying for or displacing water voles and they aren’t getting into trouble.

Fact – Other IDBs and RMAs do displace water voles under licence before bank works as our ecologists have worked with them to do so. Where bank works take place without water vole displacements, it is likely that no water vole have been found in the works area to displace. There are also an increasing number of investigations and prosecutions where water vole offences have been committed in areas of bank works.</td></tr>
<tr><td>3.</td><td colspan="2">Claim – If you are undertaking flood risk management work, you are exempt from needing to displace water voles as you are keeping land and property safe from flooding.

Fact – Protected species legislation is law an no-one is exempt so routine and regular bank works must be undertaken compliantly. Urgent has a different legal meaning to emergency. Urgent works are those that require prompt action to resolve an expected but not imminent threat to public health and safety such as a bank slip. It is not likely that a repairing a bank slip after harvest to avoid damaging crops, that had originally occurred months previously will be seen legally as either an emergency or urgent works because sufficient time would have passed to allow for the works to be planned compliantly with a displacement if necessary. An emergency would be where an unexpected event requires immediate works to prevent or alleviate a significant threat to public health and safety, such as the sudden collapse of a bank and flood water threatening surrounding residential or developed areas. In an emergency it may be necessary to fix the problem first but be confident that you can provide evidence of threat to public health and safety to the Regulator as soon as possible after the works, as is legally required. The emergency declaration must always be made in partnership with a range of professionals including an ecologist.</td></tr>
<tr><td>4.</td><td colspan="2">Claim – You can’t do any bank works or maintenance where there are water voles anymore.

Fact – There are safe standard operating procedures that allow routine work such as desilting and flail mowing to be undertaken compliantly where there are water voles which help to avoid or minimise the risk of committing an offence. Any invasive work that breaks ground on the bank toe or bank face should be informed by a water vole survey, undertaken in the right season, well before works begin. For small areas of impact, for example a field drain or headwall installation, of a metre or so wide, it may be possible to reposition the works away from burrows under ecological supervision so a licenced displacement is not required. For longer lengths of bank impacts such as culvert installation or bank reprofile or repair, if a survey showed that water vole were present a displacement under licence would be required.</td></tr>
<tr><td>5.</td><td colspan="2">Claim - You can get rid of water voles to avoid the need for a displacement if you flail all the banks and marginal vegetation before a survey or dewater a channel.

Fact – Dewatering a channel where water voles were known to be present is a licensable activity could be classed as an offence if it were not for specific and very short-term purposes or where a survey had not taken place to determine their presence or absence. Cutting bankside vegetation</td></tr>
</table>

	alone would be unlikely to displace water voles but could be classed as an offence if it damaged burrows or disturbed water voles in their burrows.
6.	**Claim –** ***If you fix a bank slip straight away it is unlikely to require a water vole displacement.*** **Fact –** A survey would still be needed but it is likely that water vole burrows would have been destroyed or damaged during the slip in many cases and they may have therefore left the damaged areas. If the survey proved this to be the case, then the slip could be repaired as usual without the need for a licenced displacement.
7.	**Claim** – ***Water voles are still in our ditches and we have done bank works before without displacing them so it can't bother them that much.*** **Fact –** Regardless of this, damaging water vole burrows or disturbing them in their burrows is unlawful and carries a custodial sentence and/or a fine if found guilty. The law is based on huge volumes of scientific evidence which demonstrates that habitat damage and loss is a key factor in the drastic decline in water vole populations. The displacement approaches are shown to conserve and enhance water vole populations.
8.	**Claim -** ***You can only repair one 150m length of bank where there are water voles.*** **Fact -** The IDB water vole licence states that you can only legally displace from 150m at a time when you are displacing from both banks. You have to leave a 150m bank length for refuge in-between repaired sections. If only one bank is being repaired, theoretically you could displace from an unlimited length but only if an ecologist calculated that the opposite and adjacent habitat was suitable to take an increased number of water vole from the impacted area, which in most cases is unlikely. The usual maximum licensable displacement length for IDBs in all cases is 150m.
9.	**Claim** ***– You can only displace water voles during a few specific weeks of the year.*** **Fact –** This is true as licenced displacements during these weeks are shown to impact the water vole population the least and it avoids their dormant and breeding seasons. Displacement licence periods are from 15th Feb-15th April or 15th Sept to 31st Oct. You can also only survey for water voles between 15th Feb to 31st Oct as they are dormant during winter.
10.	**Claim** ***– It is best not to tell anyone that you have water voles as they can stop you doing the work that you want to do, and don't allow surveys*** **Fact –** It is assumed that water voles are everywhere in IDB ditches and drains so a survey would always be required ahead of any invasive works. Demonstrating transparency and competence in supporting biodiversity is likely to be attractive to potential funding partners and sources whereas having a lack of biodiversity data and evidence or being evasive can be conspicuous and can attract scrutiny.
NOTE! Water Vole displacement are only needed where there are water voles! If a survey shows they are not, then bank works can go ahead.	

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:		7
Meeting:	**HUNDRED OF WISBECH IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: CHIEF ENGINEER'S SUMMARY & CAPITAL PROGRAMME**	
Date:	**Monday 9th June 2025**	**Officer Responsible:**		**Nicola Oldfield**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. **Consider the need for future capital investment and how it will fund any works.**

1. Summary

The Chief Engineer is currently developing capital investment programmes across the catchment, starting with estimated refurbishment/replacement costs based on the age of assets.

A new FCERM grant in aid programme will start in 2026/27.

2. Summary of key planning issues

We continue to receive an increasing number of consent applications and developer enquiries across the catchment. Managing this workload is a significant pressure on available staff resources. As a result, we are prioritising this critical work and will not be including any specific information for any Board report, other than if directly requested.

We will, when possible, seek the Board's input, rather than wait for Board meetings. This will be done via correspondence with the Chair, Vice Chair, District Officer and any appropriate sub-committees.

2.1 **Engagement with the Local Planning Authorities (LPA)**

We have been prioritising proactive efforts to reengage with local planning departments and developers since the new Head of Technical Services started.

There is particular concern about the larger strategic sites which will take several years to build out and involve several RMAs. In view of our revised charging model a more robust response to developers seeking advice and guidance is being adopted which may enable additional resource that would benefit the MLC and the Board in dealing with increasing workloads.

Policies and processes are being reviewed and updated.

3. Strategic Issues

The Consulting Engineer has responded on the Board's behalf concerning the following.

3.1 **Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk**

Consultation to IDBs

Following a request a copy of the Board's GIS files have been issued.

Local Plan 2021-2040

The Council advised in February that the draft Local Plan has been found to be 'sound' which means that it meets the legal requirements as well as the policy tests which are set out in national planning policy. It marks the end of the examination process and means that the Plan can be formally adopted.

3.2 **Fenland District Council**

Fenland District Council Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report Consultation

This high level document is currently the subject of a consultation.

It is a statutory requirement for Local Planning Authorities to carry out an appraisal of the sustainability of their Local Plan. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is an iterative process which forms an integral to the plan making process and is used to appraise the social, environmental, and economic effects of the Local Plan.

It should provide a sound evidence base for the plan, form an integrated part of the plan preparation process and will help ensure that decisions are made that contribute to achieving sustainable development.

The SA Scoping Report is the first stage in the SA process. Through an assessment of the current situation in Fenland, the SA Scoping Report identifies which issues need to be addressed and identifies objectives to test the Plan and policies against. This assessment will help to establish the Issues, Vision and Objectives of the emerging Local Plan.

The document is primarily aimed at Historic England, Natural England and The Environment Agency but comments are welcome from any organisation or individual.

At the time of writing the document is being considered with the intention of issuing a response by the deadline.

3.3 **Cambridgeshire County Council**

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Flood and Water (C&P FloW) Partnership

In addition to the items discussed above, the following issues of interest to the Board have been raised:

a. Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Programme

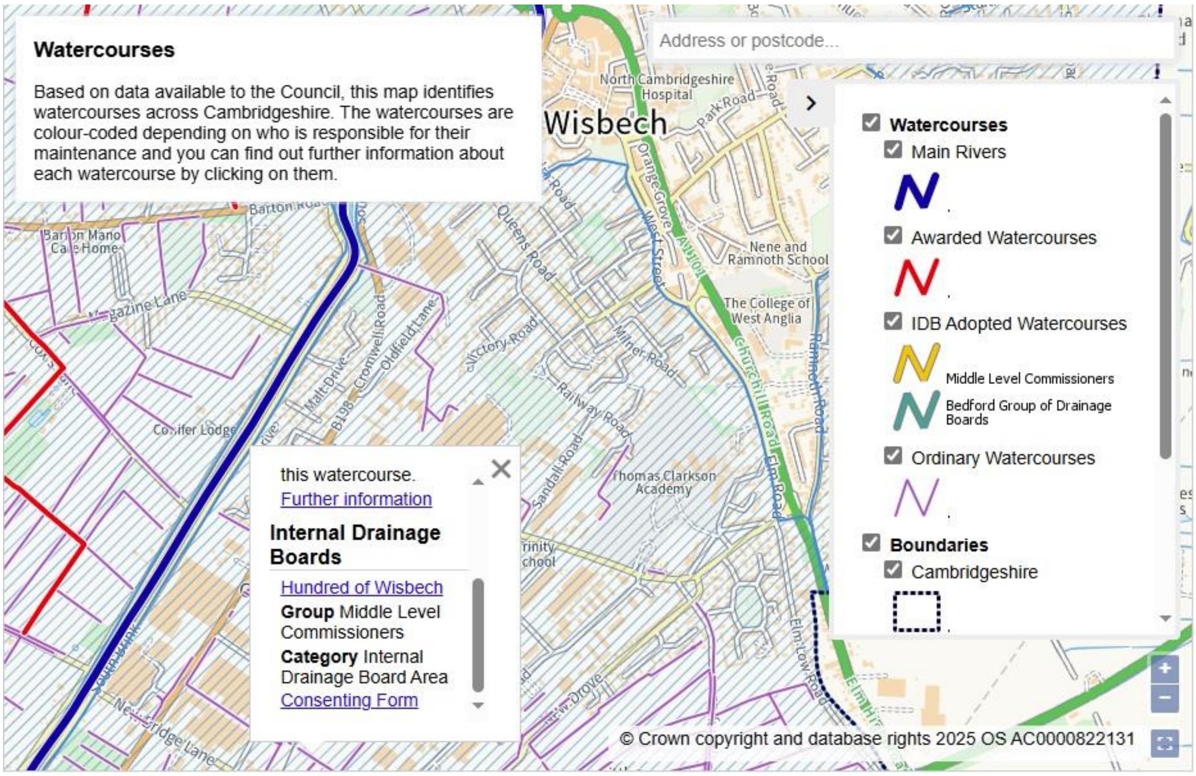
Given that a year has passed since the workshop and no meaningful correspondence or outcomes appear to have been received, the Commissioners requested an update on this programme. However, it is understood that these sites are included in the Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Strategy: 2024 Action Plan Review. See below.

b. Community Flood Action programme

Further copies of the Community Flood and Water newsletter have been issued. You can view previous editions and subscribe to receive the newsletter automatically at Community flood action programme | Cambridgeshire County Council.

c. Watercourse Mapping Tool

The Flood Risk team has published a Watercourse Mapping Tool - Watercourse management | Cambridgeshire County Council that can be used to identify location of, and responsibility for different, watercourses.



Extract from the CCC Watercourse Mapping Tool showing part of the Boards area

3.4 **Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Strategy (FRMS): 2024 Action Plan Review**

A plan review has been prepared to provide an update on the progress of actions listed in the Cambridgeshire FRMS, which was adopted in 2022, highlighting contributions, completed work and any risks or challenges.

The contents are currently being reviewed in detail, but it summarises that:

> *"Progress has already been made against 54 of the 58 actions with 6 actions now having been completed. There are several obstacles that impede progress in some areas, these are outlined below. Despite that and the persisting wet weather conditions, headway has been made across most actions and by multiple partners.*
>
> *The importance of clear communication remains in focus, whilst the impactful action led by community groups and local landowners continues to provide positive results.*
>
> *There is still some uncertainty from external factors that influence the work we do. In response to this we take an adaptive approach so we can be prepared for the changing circumstances."*

3.5 **Norfolk County Council**

Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan (NM&WLP)

The independent examination of the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan (NM&WLP) has now concluded, with the publication of the Planning Inspector's Report on 24th March. The proposed adoption of the NM&WLP will be considered at a meeting of the Full Council in May.

4. Capital Programme

4.1 In terms of FCRM Grant-in-Aid (FCRM GiA) a new FCERM grant in aid programme will start in 2026/27.

An initial bid for funding works arising from the Catchment Study will be captured in the new programme, to be refined once options have been appraised. However, it is uncertain what funding will be available.

The Board is advised to consider the need for future capital investment and how it will fund any works.

4.2 **Attenuation Area near Point 29 (Project Ref 346/23)**

This will be included as part of the Catchment Study.

4.3 **Flood Alleviation Investigation (Project Ref 346/25): Hundred of Wisbech IDB & Waldersey IDB**

Combined Catchment Flood Risk Study

The joint Catchment Study is continuing with close collaboration between the Engineer, the Board's Works Committee (User Group) and Royal Haskoning DHV. There was a delay to surveys being completed due to availability of surveyors. This has set back delivery of the study until autumn 2025.

Author Name: Nicola Oldfield
Role: Chief Engineer

Appendix 1: List of planning applications since last report

Appendix 1

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

MLC Ref.	*Council Ref.*	*Applicant*	*Type of Development*	*Location*
1752	F/YR24/0724/F	Fenmarc Produce Ltd	Change of use of land to additional car park	Gosmoor Lane, Elm
1753	F/YR24/0718/F	Mrs Gibbs	Residence (Extension)	Hillburn Road, Wisbech
1754	Enquiry	Client of PDC Engineering	IDB Asset information request	Enterprise Way, Wisbech
1755	F/YR24/0729/F	The Secretary of State for Education	Education (2 modular buildings)	Corporation Road, Wisbech
1756	Enquiry	Paul Walker	Access	Halfpenny Lane, Wisbech
1757	F/YR24/0793/F	Finense Paving & Civil Engineering Ltd	Residential (9 dwellings)	Aberfield Well End, Friday Bridge
1758	F/YR24/0843/F	Fenmarc Produce Ltd	Commercial (4 x extension to existing building)	Gosmoor Lane, Elm
1759	F/YR24/0835/O	Mr R Crofts	Residential (5 dwellings)	Gosmoor Lane, Elm
1760	F/YR24/0857/F	Department for Education	Education (Secondary school)	Corporation Road, Wisbech
1761	F/YR24/0826/F	Mr M A Khan	Residence (New dwelling)	Elm Low Road, Wisbech
1762	24/01914/F	Motor Fuel Group	Commercial (Extension)	Elm High Road, Emneth
1763	F/YR24/0921/F	Mr Alex Mason	Residence (Extension)	The Stitch, Friday Bridge
1764	F/YR24/0924/F	Westview Developments Peterborough Ltd	Commercial (3 industrial units)	Sandall Road, Wisbech
1765	F/YR24/0934/F	Mr J McMullen	Residence (Extension)	Fridaybridge Road, Elm
1766	Post-App	Nestle Purina Petcare Ltd	Surface water drainage	Cromwell Road, Wisbech
1767	F/YR25/0003/F	Mr T Forster	Conversion (Barn to dwelling)	South Brink, Wisbech
1768	F/YR25/0026/CERTP	Mr T Dumitru	Residence (Outbuilding)	Begdale Road, Elm
1769	F/YR25/0028/CERTP	Mr M A Khan	Residence (Extension)	Elm Low Road, Wisbech
1770	Enquiry	Client of Coloini & Lane	Access Strip	Cromwell Road, Wisbech
1771	F/YR25/0097/F	The Secretary of State for education	Education (Temporary modular building)	Corporation Road, Wisbech
1772	F/YR25/0128/RM	Mr A Clarke	Residential (4 x dwellings)	Atkinsons Lane, Elm
1773	F/YR25/0146/F	Cobra Engineering Ltd	Portacabin	Redmoor Lane, Wisbech
1774	F/YR25/0230/F	Mr I Rawson	Residence (Extension)	The Stitch, Friday Bridge
1775	F/YR25/0339/F	Mr S Necker	Residential (2 x dwellings)	Wales Bank, Elm
1776	25/00692/F	Motor Fuel Group	Commercial (Extension & removal of car wash)	Elm High Road, Emneth

1777	F/YR25/0363/F	Fenmarc Produce Ltd	Commercial (Extension retrospective)	Gosmoor Lane, Elm

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

MLC Ref	***Council Ref***	***Consent No***	***Applicant***	***Description of Works***	***Location***	***Date consent granted***
1333, 1369, 1370, 1600 & 1636	F/YR23/3153/COND	HW/BC/154	D Brown Builders	Ditch realignment works	Gosmoor Lane, Elm	20/11/2024
1333, 1369, 1370, 1600 & 1636	F/YR23/3153/COND	HW/BC/155	D Brown Builders	Encroachment of footway and headwall within IDB easement	Gosmoor Lane, Elm	20/11/2024
1333, 1369, 1370, 1600 & 1636	F/YR23/3153/COND	HW/BC/156	D Brown Builders	Piping and filling of ditches	Gosmoor Lane, Elm	20/11/2024
1333, 1369, 1370, 1600 & 1636	F/YR23/3153/COND	HW/BC/157	D Brown Builders	Piping and filing of ditches along 60-63	Gosmoor Lane, Elm	20/11/2024
346/1	F/YR23/0952/F	HW/BC/158	Cobra Engineering (UK) Ltd	Improvement of carpark drainage and a new 150mm diameter outfall in a District Watercourse	District watercourse between Points 8 & 9 in Redmoor Drain	15/11/2024
1766		HW/BC/159	Nestle Purina UK Manufacturing	Retention of existing discharge pipe and installation of new enlarged pipe	Point 67 (Coal Wharf Road)	13/05/2025

The following applications for Byelaw Consent (to discharge to a watercourse) have been granted since the last meeting:

MLC Ref	***Council Ref***	***Consent No***	***Applicant***	***Location***	***Date consent granted***
1333, 1369, 1370, 1600 & 1636	F/YR23/3153/COND	HW/DC/26	D Brown Builders	Gosmoor Lane, Elm	20/11/2024
1087, 1563 & 1567	F/YR20/0701/F	HW/DC/27	Mr A Castle	Halfpenny Lane, Elm	13/05/2025

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

MLC Ref	***Council Ref***	***Option 1 (Self-certification) or Option 2 (Checking Form)***	***Location***	***Date acknowledged***
1456 & 1654	F/YR22/0646/F	Option 2 (Checking Form)	Fridaybridge Road, Elm	10/01/2025

HEALTH AND SAFETY /ENVIRONMENT REPORT BY N.BUTTRESS

WITH REGARDS TO HEALTH AND SAFETY.

MOST OF OUR WARNING SIGNS REMAIN IN SITUE HOWEVER THE ONES AT POINT 55 ARE CONTINUOSLY VANDALISEDEITHER DAMGED AND THROWN IN THE DRAIN ORREMOVED WITHOUT TRACE. OTHERWISE NOTHING TO REPORT EXCEPT THE FOLLOWING ITEM.

BACK IN 2018 CORONER ADVISED THE BOARDS THROUGH THE MIDDLE LEVEL ON HEALTH AND SAFETY ,OUR BOARD FELT THEY WEREJUST USING A GENRIC APPROACH AND DECIDED TO EMPLOY THE NFU WHOGAVE US OUR FIRST REPORT IN 2019 TO BE FOLLOED BY MYSELF AND REVEIWED ON AVERAGE BY THEM EVERY 3 YEARS.THIS HAS WORKED WELL AND WE HAD ANOTHER NFU REVIEW IN 2023 IN THE MEANTIME THE MIDDLE LEVEL NOW USE COPES FOR OTHER BOARDS WHICHNI BELIEVE THEY ARE VERY PLEASED WITH. THE WATER MANAGEMENT ALLIANCE ALSO USE COPES. OUR BOARD OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS IS GOING THROUGH A LOT OF CHANGES IN ADMINISTRATION AND POTENTIAL AMALGAMATION WITH WALDERSEY WHO ALSO USE COPES .IFEEL A PROFESIONAL REVIEW IS NEEDED AND WOULD LIKE TO USE COPES.HAVING SPOKEN TO THE MIDDLE LEVEL AND WATER MANAGEMENT ALLIANCE IF YOU AGREE WE CANSTART NOW WHEREBY THE WATER MANAGEMENT ALLIANCE WOULD SEND THERE INVICE TO THE MIDDLE LEVEL UNTIL NEXT APRIL.WTH RGARDS TO COSTS THERE WOULD BE AN INITIAL ONE OFF HALF DAY VISIT AT £450 WITH A REPORT .WE WOULD BE ON A ONE YEAR ROLLING CONTRACT. I ENVISAGE BEING IN POSSESSION OF MORE FINANCIAL DETAIOL AT THE MEETING.

WITH REGARDS TO ENVIRONMENT SOFI LLOYD AND I ARE DUE A REVIEW MEETING SHORTLY THE MAIN ISSUE WE HAVE IS STILL THE POLLUTION WHICH EMERGES FROM POINT 52 CULMINATING WITH SOME OF THE WORST EFFECTS AT POINT 53.THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY AND ANGLIAN WATER MONITOR THE SITUATION BUT THERE DOES NOT SEEM TO BE AN END IN SIGHT.

MY HOURS FOR APPROVAL INCLUDING DISTRICT OFFICER WORK ARE 47.ANY QUESTIONS ON ANY OF THE ABOVE I WILL ENDEAVOR TO ANSWER AT THE MEETING.

District Officer report for June 9 meeting 2025.

With a very dry winter, there hasn't been so much focus on the drain network, all of which has handled the low rainfall with ease.

We've had meetings with North Level and WMA about future services., resulting in The EGM of the February 20 voting to accept the proposal to move the Hundred of Wisbech to the Water Management Alliance.

MVV, Nestlé Purina and Lamb Weston have all required site meetings and engineering skills to modify drains and drainage to meet site improvements.

The modelling of the district continues, albeit behind schedule, and we've had regular meetings with Haskoning and EDI Surveys and have helped with access to companies within the industrial area of Wisbech.

We've also had an onsite meeting with Hexa Consulting, the team involved with the new school on the Thomas Clarkson site.

Discussions continue with Waldersea regarding the merger of the two boards.

HAC are keeping the drains well maintained with regular cutting, and desilting in some areas. At long last we've been able maintain the drain at SB Components, and thanks to Cllr. Miscandlon for finding us the contacts.

For more details on any of the above issues, please ask Fred or Neil.

Freds Hours for approval 24 hours up to and including the 27th may.

Fred Leach.

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	10
Meeting:	**HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**GOVERNANCE**
Date:	**Monday 9th June 2025**	**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 Financial Regulations Policy
C. Review and approve the updated Policy Statement.
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. 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.
F. To review and approve the publishing of Exercise of Public Rights
G. Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments
H. To note and approve the submission of the IDB1 return made on its behalf to Defra.
I. To review and approve the submission of their Annual Governance Statement for 2025 and authorising the Chairman and Clerk to sign the statement.

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 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.

2.3 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.

2.4 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 Management

3.1 The Board are asked to consider and approve their Risk Management Strategy.

4. Policy Reviews

We have an ongoing review and update of policies. Within this we are also improving our management of Freedom of Information requests. The update to the Privacy Policy has identified some area of Data Protection that require further attention. It is timely to schedule a Data Audit, which will help to identify any further areas that require updating. Additional staff and Board/IDB training will be a likely result, along with some other strengthening of procedures across the business.

The Board are asked to note the update and re-publication of their Complaints Procedure and Privacy Policy.

The Board are asked to review and approve the publication of the updated Financial Regulations policy (Appendix 1).

The Board are asked to review and approve their updated Policy Statement (Appendix 2).

5. IDB1

5.1 **Defra Reporting**

All IDBs are required to report annually to Defra via an Annual Report called an IDB1 form. These reports are copied to the Environment Agency and to the relevant District Councils.

In September 2024 an updated form has been issued to cover the 2023/24 returns and is due for submission by 28 February 2025.

There are new or enhanced questions within the form which indicate increasing expectations on IDBs of government.

In summary:

- Breakdown with financial reporting of electricity and fuel cost
- Reporting on biodiversity enhancement expenditure alongside conservation
- Value of drainage rate debt
- Detail of any Public Sector Cooperation Agreements
- Whether a specific Board Member is focussed on ensuring that health and safety is considered within board decision making.
- Significant new reporting expectations in terms of public engagement, including media engagement, public meetings and public events.

5.2 To note and support the IDB1 return submitted on their behalf for the year 2023/24 is included as Appendix 3.

6. Annual Governance Statement:

6.1 To review and approve the submission of their Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25 and authorising the Chairman and Clerk to sign the statement. (Appendix 4)

7. Exercise of Public Rights

7.1 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.

7.2 In order to warrant a positive response to this assertation 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.

7.3 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.

7.4 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.

8. Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments:

8.1 The clerk to report.

Author Name: Paul Burrows
Role: Clerk

Appendix 1	**Financial Regulations Policy**
Appendix 2	**Policy Statement**
Appendix 3	**IDB1**
Appendix 4	**Annual Governance Statement**

Appendix 1

Hundred of Wisbech IDB

Administered by:

middle level commissioners

Governance
Financial Regulations 2025 – 2035

References in this Code to ‘’the Clerk’’ shall be a reference to such officers of the Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) 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.

A SUMMARY

1. These Financial Regulations should be read in conjunction with the Board’s, Standing Orders, Regulations as to proceedings, Schedule of Reserved Matters and Scheme of Delegations to ensure that its resources are properly managed, accounted for and controlled.

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 these Regulations.

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 without the approval of the Clerk. The Head of Finance (Treasurer) to the Middle Level Commissioners shall be the Board’s Responsible Financial Officer, as defined in and for the purposes of the Accounts and Audit Regulations. The MLC finance team will support the Head of Finance in providing this function.

5. The Clerk shall advise the Board and carry out the Boards instructions in 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 compliance with the requirements 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 (and any subsequent requirements) applicable at the time of preparation.

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. All employees and members have a responsibility for health and safety, compliance with policies and legislation, 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.

9. All members and employees shall familiarise themselves with and observe the Schedule of Reserved Matters, the Scheme of Delegations and these Regulations.

10. Failure to comply with any aspect of these Regulations 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.

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/she is so authorised by the Board and is allocated funds for the purpose of 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 of preparing and managing where applicable 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 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 and/or Responsible Finance Officer and/or 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.

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

4. The Clerk shall ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place for alerting the Chairman immediately should a Local Authority fail to make their Special Levy payment at the agreed time, or where Drainage Rates are outstanding following reminder. The Clerk and Chairman will agree a course of action and whether a special meeting of the Board is required.

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/she 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/she has organised for the Board during the reporting period and the cost of such work.

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

9. In considering its financial health, estimates, rates and investment strategy, the Board will consider as a minimum:
   I. Whether it has sufficient General Fund Reserves to cater for above average annual expenditure due to, for example, excessive pumping or urgent works.
   II. Whether it is utilising and planning for use of any Development Charges account appropriately for future capital works.
   III. Whether it has sufficient Asset Improvement/Future Works budget taking account of its asset base, asset age/reliability, capital programme requirements and likely grant eligibility.
   IV. Its financial ability to secure and pay off a suitable value Public Works Loan to bridge any gap between its Asset Improvement/Future Works budget and likely value of works.

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 agreed 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 sought
<= £5,000	No quotations/tenders required
> £5,000 and <= £10,000	Obtain 1 written quotation
> £10,000	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 agreed 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, the Bribery Act 2010 and the Modern Slavery Act 2015 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 into 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 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 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, online access 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 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 BORROWINGS 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 with major Banks and/or 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. In an emergency there may be an exception.

4. No borrowings 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.

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 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.

H FUNDING APPLICATIONS

1. Ideally any grant or third-party funding opportunities will be reviewed, supported and approved by the Board, however bidding windows normally constrain the ability to enact this meaning Boards potentially missing out on funding. Therefore, the Clerk and/or Chairman shall be empowered to bid for grant and/or other third-party funding on behalf of the Board. This includes being able to determine and accept any risk exposure.

I 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 appropriately.

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.

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

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

J EMPLOYING/MANAGING STAFF

1. The Chairman shall be responsible to the Board for all matters regarding any employees, including employment policies, procedures, terms and conditions. The Chairman acts as the employee’s line manager. This includes taking capability and disciplinary action against Board employees having followed due process.

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

3. The Chairman 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.

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, unless delegation has been approved by the Board.

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.

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 (of legitimate bids from reputable sources)

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. The Board are required to review and where necessary take appropriate action.

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 REGULATIONS

1. The Board and Clerk reserves the right to make reasonable changes to these Regulations at any time in future.

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

Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board

Administered by:

middle level commissioners

Governance

Policy Statement on Water Level and Flood Risk Management

1 Issued

1.1 This policy is issued and has been adopted by the Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board.

1.2 The policy was last reviewed and republished in June 2025 and will be reviewed at least every five years.

2 Introduction

Purpose

2.1 This policy statement has been prepared by the Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board to provide a public statement of the Boards' approach to its management of water levels and flood risk within their District (the District). The Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board are constituted by order of Parliament operating under the terms of the Land Drainage Act 1991 and is designated as a flood risk and coastal erosion 'Risk Management Authority' (RMA) under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

2.2 The Board serves the local community by managing water levels in ordinary watercourses and other water infrastructures within the District to mitigate against the risks from flooding and drought. In delivering its functions the Board will meet its environmental obligations and commitments and seek opportunities to enhance the environment. The Board recognises their responsibility for good governance, local accountability and financial security, achieving value for money from all its activities. As an independent public body the Board are committed to the pursuit of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

2.3 It should be noted that although this document refers to 'flood and coastal erosion risk management' (FCERM) the District is not affected by coastal erosion.

Background

2.4 The Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has policy responsibility for flood and coastal erosion risk management in England. The Environment Agency is responsible for taking a strategic overview of the management of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion. Lead Local Flood Authorities (unitary authorities or county councils) are responsible for developing, maintaining and applying a strategy for local flood risk management in their areas. Delivery is the responsibility of a number of flood risk and coastal erosion "Risk Management Authorities" (RMA), which includes the Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board.

2.5 This Policy Statement sets out the Board's approach to meeting the national policy aims and objectives in this area, as stated in the *National flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy for England 2020* (the National Strategy); the statement will be revised to reflect future revisions of the National Strategy. It summaries what plans the Board have in place to manage water levels and reduce flood risk, whilst protecting and enhancing the environment, and ensuring good governance and local accountability. Copies of this Policy Statement are available from the Board's office at Middle Level Offices, 85 Whittlesey Road, March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 0AH. Digital copies can be downloaded from the Middle Level Commissioners website: www.middlelevel.gov.uk.

3. Governance and local accountability

3.1 The Board will ensure that its policies and procedures enable effective representation of and accountability to drainage rate payers and the occupiers of non-agricultural land within the district, including elections in line with the requirements of the Land Drainage Act 1991, and timely engagement with charging authorities to fill vacancies in seats allocated to appointed members.

3.2 Board members must take decisions objectively in their best interest and uphold the ethical standards expected of public officeholders. Board members must adhere to the Board's Members Code of Conduct, including the seven principles of public life (Nolan Principles). The Board will make sure that there is suitable training in place for board members and staff, including on financial and environmental matters as appropriate.

3.3 Board members must declare financial and other interests relevant to their function with the Board. Board members will recuse themselves as appropriate where conflicts of interest may occur in relation to procurement, contract management and decision making.

4. Delivering the National Strategy's policy aim and objectives

Aim

4.1 The overall aim of the National Strategy is to ensure the risk of flooding and coastal erosion is properly managed by using the full range of options in a co-ordinated way. The Strategy states that communities, individuals, voluntary groups and private and public sector organisations will work together to manage the risk to people and their property, facilitate decision-making and action at the appropriate level, and achieve environmental, social and economic benefits, consistent with the principles of sustainable development.

Objectives

4.2 The 2011 Strategy sets out five objectives in pursuance of the overall aim as follows.

- understand the risks of flooding and coastal erosion, working together to put in place long term sustainable plans to manage these risks and making sure that other plans take account of them;
- avoid inappropriate development in areas of flood and coastal erosion risk and being careful to manage land elsewhere to avoid increasing risks;
- build, maintain and improve flood and coastal erosion management infrastructure and systems to reduce the likelihood of harm to people and damage to the economy, environment and society as well as achieving wider environmental benefits;
- increase public awareness of the risk that remains and engaging with people at risk to encourage them to take action to manage the risks that they face and to make their property mor resilient; and
- improving the detection, forecasting and issue of warnings of flooding, co-ordinating a rapid response to flood emergencies and promoting faster recovery from flooding.

4.3 The Board supports the national aim and objectives for the management of flood risk and water levels and the Board's policy and approach will be consistent with them.

5. Flood risk and water level management in the Board's District

5.1 The District has been determined to derive benefit, or avoid danger, as a result of drainage operations. As such the whole of the District is at some risk from flooding, but that risk is managed wherever it is practically, environmentally and financially viable[1].

5.2 The Board makes decisions regarding flood risk within the District taking into account the following:
- assets in place considering design standard and life;
- Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authority flood risk strategies, plans and maps; and
- other information such as the history of flooding and land use impacts.

5.3 The following outlines the key details of the District:

- Total area of the drainage district: 1419 ha
- Catchment area draining to and including the District: 1419 ha
- Area of Agricultural Land: 974 ha
- Area of other (non-agricultural) land: 445 ha

5.4 Assets for which the Board have operational responsibility:

- Water Level Control Structures: 3 No
- Watercourses (maintained): 31 km
- Raised embankments: 0 km
- Reservoirs: 0 ha
- Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS): 0 no
- Pumping Stations: 0 no

5.5 Assets within or adjacent to the District that are maintained by the Environment Agency:

- Main Rivers: 4 km
- Raised embankments/flood walls: 4 km
- Pumping Stations: 0 no

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[1] It should be noted that the Land Drainage Act 1991 provides the Board with statutory powers to carry out works of maintenance and improvement for land drainage and flood defence purposes, rather than imposing a duty on the Board to carry out such works.

6. Building, maintaining and improving flood and coastal erosion risk management systems

6.1 Through the operation, maintenance and improvement of watercourses and other water control assets within the District, the Board seeks to achieve a general standard of water level management that enables navigation, the drainage and irrigation of agricultural land, reduces flood risk to developed areas, and sustains environmental features throughout the District.

6.2 The Board monitors and reviews the condition of its watercourses and other assets, particularly those designated as critical, over-spilling from which could affect people and property. Consistent with the resultant needs established, a routine maintenance programme is in place to ensure that the condition of the assets is commensurate with the standards required. The programme is reviewed periodically by the Board to ensure it is delivering the appropriate condition.

6.3 Where standards are not at the desired level, improvement works will be sought where they are considered to be practical and financially viable by the Board. Where improvement works meet the criteria set by Defra, financial support will be sought from the Government's Flood and Coastal Resilience Partnership Funding. Where appropriate works will be undertaken in partnership with other Risk Management Authorities and take opportunities to work with natural processes.

6.4 Work for and by the Board will be carried out in accordance with best practice and to deliver best value for money taking due regard of local flood risk management requirements and strategies, opportunities for partnership working, environmental obligations and guidance available from Defra, the Environment Agency and other organisations.

6.5 The Board's powers to carry out water level and flood risk management works are permissive (i.e. the Board are not obliged to carry out works) and their resources are limited. The Board's policy is therefore to designate what they consider to be the most important watercourses in the District as "District Drains" and prioritise their resources to the appropriate maintenance and, where necessary, improvement of such channels and associated structures. The watercourses and structures so designated will change over time as necessary but the current designated watercourses and structures are shown on the plan attached to this Statement.

6.6 Other watercourses usually are the responsibility of other bodies or the adjoining owners. The Board will only take action in respect of these latter watercourses where resources are available and where it is in all the circumstances appropriate for the Board to becomes involved, bearing in mind the powers available to other persons or bodies.

6.7 The Board have a supervisory duty, under section 1(2)(d) of the Land Drainage Act 1991 over all matters relating to the drainage of land in their District and will, under this duty where appropriate advise others regarding the undertaking of works when it is not appropriate for the Board to exercise its own powers.

6.8 The Board will also seek to ensure, where possible that assets managed by other risk Management Authorities, which also reduce flood risk to the District, are maintained at a satisfactory standard and may enter into a Public Sector Co-operation Agreement with another Risk Management Authority to achieve better value for money when carrying out work to reduce flood risk.

7. Regulation of activities – avoiding inappropriate development and land management

7.1 The Board will take appropriate steps to help riparian owners understand their responsibilities for maintenance, byelaw compliance and environmental regulations.

7.2 The Board will regulate as necessary, using available legislative powers and byelaws, the activity of others to ensure their actions within, alongside, and otherwise impacting its drainage system do not increase flood risk, prevent the efficient working of drainage systems, or adversely impact the environment.

7.3 The potential impact on flood risk from future development both within the District and the wider catchment draining into the District, is fully recognised by the Board. The Board will take an active role in the assessment of local plans, major development and, individual (planning) applications, to prevent inappropriate development and land use to ensure that flood risk is not increased. This will include, where appropriate, providing pre-application advice and checking of flood risk assessments.

7.4 Where appropriate the Board will seek contributions from developers to cover the cost of consultations and advice and for both immediate and longer term works necessary to mitigate against any resultant increase in flood risk. Such contributions will be recorded in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and associated technical guidance.

7.5 The Board will where appropriate designate structures or features affecting flood risk using Section 30 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

8. Communication and transparency

8.1 The Board will publicise the local risks from flooding, the reasons for managing water levels within the District and articulate the efforts being undertaken by the Board to manage water levels and flood risk as well as the steps the local community and land managers can take to assist in its management.

8.2 The Board will be open and transparent in its actions and decisions. The Board will comply with the requirements set out in the relevant Local Government transparency code.

8.3 The Board will provide an overview of the objectives and costs of its water level management operations by publishing on its website:-

- A record of the watercourses it periodically maintains;
- A statement of the types of general maintenance activities it routinely undertakes and why;
- Its Annual Report to Defra (IDB1 Form); and
- Approved Board minutes and papers.

8.4 The Board will seek views and respond to enquiries from the local general public in this regard and work with local partners to build a culture within which watercourses are seen as vital to managing flood risk, and enhancing habitat and amenity. Every effort will be made to dissuade abuse of watercourses.

8.5 The Board invite any comments regarding the condition of its system, which could assist with the management of water levels.

9. Working together

9.1 The Board will co-operate and share information with other relevant authorities in the exercise of their flood and coastal erosion flood risk management function. The Board will contribute to strategies, plans and consultations relevant to its catchment and functions.

9.2 The Board will assist the Environment Agency wherever possible in its provision of adequate and cost effective flood warning systems, and assist Risk Management Authorities where necessary during flood emergencies. The Board will participate as necessary in exercises to develop and test emergency response procedures.

9.3 The Board have provided the Environment Agency and other local Risk Management Authorities with information on the major flood defence assets for which they are responsible. The information is available from the Environment Agency.

9.4 The Board will seek to work with all relevant local organisations, in carrying out its flood and coastal erosion risk management functions and environmental obligations.

10. Environmental Measures

10.1 The Board have nature conservation duties under the Land Drainage Act 1991, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017, the Eels (England and Wales) Regulations 2009 and Amendments 2011, the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975, the Environment Act 2021, and as a competent authority under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The Board will fulfil these in a positive way.

10.1.1 Further to the requirements of the Environment Act 2021, the Board will review their Water Level Management Plans and Biodiversity Action Plans with reference to the local nature recovery strategy and relevant species conservation or protected site strategy for their areas.

10.2 Much of the Board's watercourse maintenance work constitutes vegetation control and desilting and is often a vital and routine requirement. Whilst inevitably some short-term impacts will arise, this management is often essential to maintain the distinct assemblage of aquatic habitat and species present in the District. Such work will be carried out in a way that manages the potential risks to the environment. The Board have access to environmental expertise from their Ecology and Environmental Services Manager and have a Biodiversity Action Plan, developed according to ADA and Natural England guidelines, which indicate the way in which their functions can be carried out in a way appropriate to the environment and how the environment can be enhanced. The Board maintain only a small proportion of the total watercourse length in the District, the significant majority being the responsibility of the adjoining land owners or of other bodies.

10.3 When carrying out work, be it maintenance or improvement, and consistent with the need to maintain satisfactory flood protection standards, the Board will aim to:-

- Avoid any unnecessary or long term damage to agricultural interests and to natural habitats and species;

- Carry out the monitoring of any gains and losses of biodiversity and report annually to the Environment Agency; and

- Take appropriate opportunities to achieve multiple environmental outcomes and work with natural processes, wherever possible, including the enhancement of habitats and water bodies within the District.

10.4 The District encompasses no sites of national and international biological or geological interest.

10.5 The Board has no Water Level Management Plan.

10.6 The Board will play its full role in sustaining the Water Level Management Plans prepared for SSSIs to maintain, or bring sites into, favourable condition, in conjunction with Natural England and other interested parties and review the plans in accordance with guidance.

Internal drainage boards in England

Annual Report for the year ended

31 March 2024

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

The Law – the following annual report is provided in accordance with Paragraph 4 of Schedule 2 to the Land Drainage Act 1991.

No later than 28 February 2025 a copy must be provided to:

- Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Division, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs via flood.reports@defra.gov.uk
- Asset Management and Engineering, Environment Agency via idbfund@environment-agency.gov.uk
- The Chief Executives of:
  - all local authorities that pay special levies to the Board;
  - all County Councils or London Boroughs within which the Board is situated.

Please complete the form electronically, and please answer **ALL QUESTIONS.**

Please round all cash figures down to nearest whole £.

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Section A – Financial information

Preliminary information on special levies issued by the Board for 2024-25

Special levies information for financial year 2024-25	
Name of local authority	**£**
1. FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL	269,203
2. KINGS LYNN & WEST NORFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL	1,578
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
Total	270,781

Section A – Financial information (continued)

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31 March 2024

All internal drainage boards must ensure that the Income and Expenditure information provided below is consistent with the Board's annual accounting statements which have been prepared in accordance with proper practices found in *Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – A Practitioners' Guide to proper practices to be applied in the preparation of statutory annual accounts and governance statements March 2023*[1]

	Notes	Year ending 31 March 2024 £
INCOME		
A. Drainage Rates		10,439
B. Special Levies		204,823
C. Higher Land Water Contributions from the Environment Agency		
D. Contributions received from developers/other beneficiaries		1,485
E. Government Grants (includes capital grants from EA and levy contributions)		11,705
F. PSCAs overall total Breakdown: from EA from other RMAs		
G. Loans		
H. Rechargeable Works		
I. Interest and Investment Income		22,742
J. Rents and Acknowledgements		
K. Other Income Write back of provisions Consents		 50 200
Total income		**251,444**
EXPENDITURE		
L. New Works and Improvement Works		141,510
M. Total precept to the Environment Agency		17,780
N. Watercourse maintenance		53,778
O. Pumping Stations, Sluices and Water level control structures		102,701
P. Administration		21,500
Q. PSCAs		

[1] https://saaa.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/PractitionersGuide 2023.pdf

R. Rechargeable Works		
S. Finance Charges		74,628
T. Biodiversity enhancement and conservation – overall total Breakdown: General, across the whole region SSSI specific, where relevant	 371	371
U. Other Expenditure Insurance		194
Electricity costs – overall total Breakdown (if possible): Standing charge (per annum) Unit charge (per annum)		
Fuel (petrol and diesel costs) – overall total Breakdown: Pumping stations Fleet and plant machinery		
Total expenditure		**412,462**
EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS		
V. Profits/(losses) arising from the disposal of fixed assets		
Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		**(161,018)**
W. Developers Funds income not applied in year		101,075
X. Grant income not applied in year		

Value of drainage rates outstanding at year end?

5.717 %
£ 596.83

Value of special levies outstanding at year end?

0 %
£ 0

Notes:

K. Include all other Income, such as absorption account surpluses (for example plant and labour absorption accounts). Please include sub-total of all other income in the first row and then a breakdown in separate rows below.

L. State the gross cost of undertaking minor capital works that have not been capitalised and the annual depreciation charges of all major schemes that have been capitalised. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with delivery of the schemes.

M. State the total precept demanded for the year as properly issued by the Environment Agency, in accordance with section 141 of the Water Resources Act 1991. Providing that the precept has been properly issued as before stated it should always be included here, even when the Board has appealed against the amount of contribution, in accordance with section 140 of the Water Resources Act 1991. Where the Board knows with certainty the outcome of any such appeal, it should also include the appropriate accrual/prepayment.

N. State all costs associated with the maintenance of watercourses, meaning work associated with open channels, pipelines, culverts, bridges, etc. Plant, vehicle and labour charges should include a fair proportion of the overheads such as depot/workshop costs, employment on-costs, insurances and depreciation, etc. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with delivery of the maintenance programme. Please do not include electricity or fuel costs as these are captured separately.

O. State all costs associated with maintaining and operating the pumping stations, sluices and water level control structures. Plant, vehicle and labour charges should include a fair proportion of the overheads such as depot/workshop costs, employment on-costs, insurances and depreciation, etc. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with maintaining and operating the pumping stations, sluices and water level control structures. Please do not include electricity or fuel costs as these are captured separately.

P. Include the cost of non-technical staff only, office accommodation, annual depreciation of office equipment that has been capitalised, minor office equipment that has not been capitalised, postages, telecoms', stationery, printing, advertising, auditing of accounts, general insurances and all other costs associated with supporting the organisation. Please note that this does not include support costs, which are directly associated with the delivery of front line services. Please do not include electricity or fuel costs as these are captured separately.

Q. State all costs associated with the PSCA.

R. State all costs associated with undertaking work for third parties. Plant, vehicle and labour charges should include a fair proportion of the overheads such as depot/workshop costs, employment on-costs, insurances and depreciation, etc. You should also include a fair proportion of the support costs directly associated with undertaking the rechargeable work.

S. Include the cost of servicing any borrowing, in terms of bank/loan/hire purchase Interest payable.

T. State all costs associated with undertaking works – capital or maintenance – that are likely intended to help enhance and/or conserve biodiversity. These costs are likely to be incurred in implementing actions set out in an IDB's Biodiversity Action Plan or other conservation actions. If possible, you should identify the overall costs and break them down into two groups: general across the whole IDB area, and SSSI specific areas (in implementing actions set out in SSSI Water Level Management Plans or SSSI River Restoration Plans). Please do not include electricity or fuel costs as these are captured separately.

U. Include all other expenditure, such as a provision for bad/doubtful debts, write-offs, and absorption account deficits (for example plant and labour absorption accounts). Please include sub-total of all other expenditure in the first row and then a breakdown in separate rows below.

V. For the disposal of assets, state the difference between any proceeds from the sale/disposal of the asset and the cost of the asset less accumulated depreciation.

W. Total balance of developer fund year end.

X. Unspent grant at year end.

Section B – IDB Reporting

Please answer **ALL QUESTIONS**. We will assume a negative response for any that are not answered.

Policy Delivery Statement

Boards are required to produce a publicly available policy statement setting out their plans for delivering the Government's policy aims and objectives. It is recommended that these statements be published on Boards' websites where they have them and reviewed every three years.

1. Is an up to date statement in place and copy (or weblink) provided to Defra, and EA? .... Yes ☒ No ☐

2. What year was your statement last updated?.. 2019

Biodiversity

3. Please indicate whether your Board has a Biodiversity Action Plan ....Yes ☒ No ☐

4. If "yes" is the Biodiversity Action Plan available on your website? ....Yes ☒ No ☐

5. What year was your Biodiversity Action Plan last updated?.............................. 2022

6. Have you reported progress on BAP implementation on your website?.................................Yes ☐ No ☒

7. When was biodiversity last discussed at a Board meeting (date)?...................................... 10/06/2024

8. Do you have a biosecurity process?...Yes ☒ No ☐

SSSI water level management plans

9. Are you responsible for any SSSI water level management plans?.......................................Yes ☐ No ☒

If so, please complete the following table:

Name	Partners	Date of last review	Date of last update

10. Do you contribute towards any SSSI water level management plans?................................Yes ☐ No ☒

If so, please complete the following table:

Name	Partners	Date of last review	Date of last update

11. Area of SSSI with IDB responsible for water level management plan/s.. | 0 hectares

12. Area of SSSI with IDB contribution towards water level management plan/s.. | 0 hectares

13. Area of SSSI where IDB water level management activities are contributing to recovering or favourable condition?.. | 00 hectares

14. Area of SSSI where IDB water level management actions are needed to achieve recovering or favourable condition?.. | 0 hectares

Access to environmental expertise

Does your IDB have access to environmental expertise? If so please tick all those options below through which environmental expertise is regularly provided to your IDB:

15. Appropriately skilled Board Members (e.g. Board member from an Environmental Body/Authority) ☐

16. Co-opted members ☐

17. Directly employed staff ☐

18. Contracted persons or consultants ☒

19. Environmental Partners/NGOs ☐

20. Other ☐

If so, please list:

Public sector cooperation agreements (PSCAs)

21. How many active PSCAs are you working on? | 0

22. Which risk management authorities are you working with on a PSCA?

Environment Agency	
Lead local flood authority	
Local authority (not a lead local flood authority)	
Internal drainage board	
Water company	
Other	

If other, please list:

23. Please indicate the type of work being undertaken.

Routine maintenance	
Asset operation and monitoring	
Asset repairs	
Support during flood incident	
Support during flood recovery	
Other	

If other, please list:

Asset Management

What system/database does your Board use to manage the assets it is responsible for?

24. ADIS ☐

25. Paper Records ☐

26. Other Electronic System ☒

If so, please list:

Excel

27. Has your Board continued to undertake visual inspections and update asset databases on an annual basis?..........Yes ☒ No ☐

28. What is the cumulative total of identified watercourse that the Board periodically maintains?

30.9 kilometres

29. How many pumping stations does the Board operate?

0 pumping stations

30. How many pumps does the Board operate?

electric	
diesel	
renewable energy pumps (e.g. directly powered by wind, solar, hydro, etc)	
temporary / mobile pumps	
other type of pumps	

31. If other, please list:

32. What is the cumulative design capacity of the Board's pumping station(s) (enter zero if no stations are operated)?

0 cm3/sec

Health and Safety

33. Does the Board have a current Health and Safety policy in place? Yes ☒ No ☐

34. Does the Board have a Board Member focused on ensuring that Health and Safety is considered when board decisions are made? Yes ☒ No ☐

35. Does the Board have a responsible officer for Health and Safety? Yes ☒ No ☐

36. Have there been any reportable incidents in the past year? Yes ☐ No ☒

If so, please summarise in the box below:

Guidance and Best Practice

37. Has your IDB adopted a formal Scheme of Delegation? Yes ☒ No ☐

Has your IDB provided, or accessed via a third party, training for board members in the last year in any of the following areas?

38. Governance ☒

39. Finance ☒

40. Environment ☒

41. Health, safety and welfare ☐

42. Communications and engagement ☐

43. Other ☐

If so, please specify:

44. Is your Board's website information current for this financial year? (Board membership, audited accounts, programmes of works, WLMPS, etc).. Yes ☒ No ☐

45. Has your IDB adopted computerised accounting and rating systems?........................ Yes ☒ No ☐

46. Has your board published all minutes of meetings on the website?..........................Yes ☒ No ☐

47. Does the Board publish information on its website on its approach to maintenance works and provide contact details to allow for and encourage public engagement?..........................Yes ☒ No ☐

48. When planning maintenance and capital works are environmental impacts taken into account and wherever possible best practice applied?..........................Yes ☒ No ☐

Has your Board adopted the following governance documents:

49. Standing Orders .... Yes ☒ No ☐

50. Have the Standing Orders been approved by Ministers .... Yes ☒ No ☐

51. Byelaws .... Yes ☒ No ☐

If you have Byelaws, have:

52. you adopted the 2021 model byelaws.........................Yes ☒ No ☐

53. Or have you adopted the 2012 model byelaws.........................Yes ☐ No ☒

54. the byelaws been approved by Ministers.........................Yes ☒ No ☐

55. Code of Conduct for Board Members.........................Yes ☒ No ☐

56. Financial Regulations.........................Yes ☒ No ☐

57. Register of Member's Interests.........................Yes ☒ No ☐

58. Anti-fraud and corruption policy.........................Yes ☒ No ☐

Board membership and attendance

59. How many Board members (in total – elected and appointed) do you have on your IDB?	27
60. Seats available to appointed members under the Land Drainage Act 1991.	15
61. Number of elected members on the board at year end.	12
62. Number of appointed members on the board at year end.	15
63. Mean average number of elected members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year.	9

64. Mean average number of appointed members in attendance at each board meeting over the last financial year.	10

65. Have you held elections (with or without a vote) within the last three years?........................Yes ☒ No ☐

66. If you have held elections, did they comply with the requirements specified by the Secretary of State under Regulation 28 of the Land Drainage (Election of Drainage Boards) Regulations 1938?...........Yes ☒ No ☐

Complaints procedure

67. Is the procedure for a member of the public to make a complaint about the IDB accessible from the front page of its website?..Yes ☒ No ☐

68. Number of complaints received in the financial year?	0
69. Number of complaints outstanding in the financial year?	0
70. Number of complaints referred to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman?	0
71. Number of complaints upheld by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman?	0

Public Engagement

Set out what your Board has done in this financial year to engage with the public (tick relevant box(es) below):

Published:

72. your completed IDB1 Form ☒

73. press release/s ☐

74. newsletter/s ☐

75. notice/s ☒

76. public consultation ☐

77. updated your IDB website ☒

Media engagement with:

78. national and/or local media e.g. TV, radio, etc ☐

79. national and/or local media e.g. newspaper, magazine, etc ☐

80. trade media ☐

81. social media ☐

Public meetings:

82. Held public meeting/s ☐

83. Attended meetings e.g. Parish Council, local interest group, local flood group, etc ☐

Public events:

84. attended show/event/s e.g. county shows, fairs, etc ☐

85. attended trade event e.g. Flood and Coast, Flood and Water Live, etc ☒

86. hosted IDB open day ☐

Section B: NOTES

Guidance and Best Practice

Has your Board published **all** minutes of meetings on the website? In answering this question, this should apply to all the main Board meetings held in the year and any appropriate meetings the Board has held with external stakeholders.

Board membership and attendance

When referring to **elected members** of the Board, this relates to the number of landowners/drainage rate payers that are elected to the Board.

When referring to **appointed members** of the Board, this relates to the number of members appointed by the local authorities to represent the local council taxpayers.

When referring to mean average number of elected and appointed members in attendance at meetings at each board meeting – **this should be expressed as a number of attendees** and not as a percentage attendance.

With regard to elections, under Schedule 1 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, elected members should hold office for three years, at which point a further election is held. When elections are held, they should comply with the requirements under Regulation 28 of the Land Drainage (Election of Drainage Boards) Regulations 1938 – to advertise and notify local stakeholders accordingly.

Section C – Declaration

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

I confirm that the information provided in sections A-C or with this form is correct.

Signature	S. Ablett
Date	18/02/2025
Name in BLOCK LETTERS	MISS SAMANTHA ABLETT
Designation	ASSISTANT TREASURER
Email address	sam.ablett@middlelevel.gov.uk

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, 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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Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	11
Meeting:	**HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING BACK**
Date:	**Monday 9th June 2025**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Andrew Wool/Sam Ablett**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Note the Budgeting review within Appendix 1.
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 2024/2025 the Board had estimated expenditure for the year of £318,213 which gave a rate requirement of 10.20p. It was approved by the Board to allocate all Interest to the General fund and not split it across other funds and to remove the reinstatement of Balances from the budget estimates and revisit next year. Therefore £33,621 was removed from the estimates and a rate of 9.122p was set to raise £284,592 in agricultural drainage rates and special levies.

A budget monitoring exercise was carried out for the winter board meeting, and this was reviewed in November 2024 based on figures to September 2024 which at that point gave an indicative that expenditure would be in line with the revised budget.

Actual net expenditure for the year was £137,208 lower than the budget set. The main areas of the underspend were Drainworks which was £43,530 under budget. The other significant underspend related to the Joint Plant Maintenance with Waldersey IDB which was £109,708 under budget. Following the setting of the rates for 2024/2025 details concerning the Storm recovery Grant were released and claims had to be submitted within an incredibly tight timeframe. A claim was submitted for excess winter pumping costs (Tranche 1) which was successful and was paid. This led to a credit in respect of the charge accounted for in the previous year. Also, an indication of actual costs for 2024/25 indicates a lower than budgeted outturn following a relatively average year for pumping volumes.

The South Brink joint pumping station maintenance provisions includes for a full overhaul of the automatic weed-screen cleaning equipment (estimated and £25,000) and it was proposed that the Boards share of these costs are funded from the joint pumping station replacement fund. However, these works which were completed in the year were 100% funded by the Storm Recovery Grant – Tranche 2b fund and therefore no contribution is necessary. In addition, the Joint Flood Alleviation Study is now underway and these costs are also fully grant aided.

As agreed at last years board meeting all Interest is now allocated to the General Fund. As a result of changes to the Boards banking arrangements additional interest has been earned. £26,354 interest has been allocated to the Boards General Fund account.

Over-all, there was an increase in the Boards General Fund of £137,208 to a balance of £396,482 at 31st March 2025. This is now more than a current average year's expenditure in-hand.

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

1. Budgeting

1.1 The budget comparison of the forecast out-turn and the actual out-turn for the financial year ending 31st March 2025 appendix 1.

2. Payments for 2025

2.1 Payments are detailed within Appendix 3

3. Annual Accounts and Finance papers 2024/2025:

3.1 Annual Return 2024/2025:

To consider the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2025 and the completion of Section 2 of the Annual Return as required in the Audit Regulations. Appendix 3

Author Name: Andrew Wool/Sam Ablett
Role: Responsible Finance Officer/Assistant Treasurer

Appendix 1	**Budget Review**
Appendix 2	**Payments for 2024/25**
Appendix 3	**Annual Accounts & Finance Papers 2024/25**

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET MONITORING 2024/2025

		Approved budget 2024/2025 £	Actual to 30th Sept. 2024 £	Forecast to 31st March 2025 £
1	Rates, Insurances and telephones	1,600	1,700	1,700
2	Drainworks (incl District Officer's fee & expenses and Environmental measures	83,500	19,434 [A]	83,500 [B]
3	Joint Plant Maintenance (with Waldersey IDB)	110,000 [C/D]	55,000 [C/D]	110,000 [C/D/E]
4	Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	23,250	10,507	24,850
5	Planning Applications	9,000	1,741	9,000
6	Environment Agency Precept	17,780	8,890	17,780
7	Loan Charges	74,628	37,314	74,628
8	Reinstatement of balances Year *1 of 3*	0	0	0
9	Studies and Surveys	250,000 [F]	13,170 [F]	120,000 [F]
10	Improvement Works - (per programme)	26,000 [G]	7,710 [Gi]	27,700 [Gii]
		595,758	155,465	469,158
	Improvement works - Funding	270,000 [H]	13,170 [H]	140,000 [H]
	LESS Rents, Deposit Accounts interest etc	24,916	11,882	25,000
	General Fund - Use of balances	16,250 [I]	0	16,250 [I]
	annual value - 3,119,734	284,592	130,414	**287,908**

GENERAL FUND			
Opening balance	259,135	259,135	259,135
rates raised (2023/24 6.90p)	284,581	147,920	284,581
net expenditure	284,592	130,414	287,908
Balances	0	0	0
Close balance	259,124	276,641	255,808

Remarks

A -	Includes:-	
	Contractors charges	13,355
	Slubbing/culvert replace/drainworks	4,472
	Spoil disposal	0
		17,827
B -	Includes provision for:	
	Contractors charges	32,500
	Proposed slubbing programme (year 3/5)	25,000
	additional work/Fuel changeover/surcharge	14,000
	Spoil disposal	6,000
		77,500
C -	Provision based on new calculation	
D -	Includes for new electricty contract -	
E -	Includes for weedscreen cleaner overhaul (gross £25k)	
F -	Joint Flood Alleviation Study	
G -	Channel improvement works - 87-14	20,000
	Health & Safety improvements (structures)	6,000
Gii	Health & Safety improvements (structures)	7,710
Gii	Channel improvement works - 87-14	20,000
	Health & Safety improvements (structures)	7,710
H -	Funding (Improvement programme)	
I -	Use of pumping station replacement fund - South Brink p/s w/s/c overhaul	16,250

NOTE STORM RECOVERY FUNDING RECEIVED

Appendix 2

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Payments 2024/2025 (1st April 2024 - 31st March 2025)

Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Meeting with the Chairman, planning and development applications)	4,112.40
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery and traveling	11,141.82
Waldersey IDB - Joint pumping costs - South Brink pumping station 2023-2024	75,000.00
Needham & Laddus IDB - Contribution in lieu of drainage rates (Drainage of land through Needham Bank)	146.00
Environment Agency - Precept	8,890.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution in lieu of drainage rates (Drainage of land through Needham Bank)	651.24
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	24,866.38
Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd - Quarterly maintenance work, manufacture and installation of steps at scout hut and main outfall	19,611.24
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2024	1,170.00
Water Resources East (WRE) Ltd - Contribution to operating costs 2024-2025	180.00
Mr N Buttress - District Officers fees from November 2023 to 10th June 2024	1,875.00
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	12,447.77
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply Hundred of Wisbech and Waldersey IDB catchment study data (Account from Royal Haskoning)	6,840.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2023-2024 accounts)	1,662.00
Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd - Quarterly maintenance work, rubbish removal from drains, emergency call out to remove weed, supply of 20 litres of Roundup Biactive, supply of pipe and joiners, together with other drain maintenance	14,237.64
W Norman & Sons Ltd - District Officers fees from October 2023 to May 2024	1,005.00
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit Fee (2023-2024 accounts)	1,260.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, attendance at meetings, planning & development applications)	5,472.60
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages and telephone charges	11,046.70
Environment Agency - Precept	8,890.00
Mr N Buttress - District Officers fees to 14th November 2024	930.00
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	24,866.38
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	1,011.31
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Meeting with and provision of information to North Level IDB regarding handover of clerkship, planning & development applications)	8,949.86
Middle Level Commissioners - Catchment study - CCTV survey (Account from Royal Haskoning)	5,580.00
Fen Group - Release of retention in connection with culvert replacement at Oldfield Lane	6,835.81
W Norman & Sons Ltd - District Officers fees to October 2024	330.00
Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd - Quarterly maintenance work, rubbish clearance from drain and slubbing	10,666.44
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	12,447.77
Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution - Conservation officer	584.50
Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd - Quarterly maintenance work to 28th February 2025	9,615.24
Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution towards retirement gift	100.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, attendance at meeting, planning & development applications)	3,470.53
Mike Day - District Officers fees for 2024-2025	2,000.00
The Crown Lodge Hotel - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	
	297,893.63

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

Appendix 3

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2025
GENERAL FUND

2025			
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year		
	Precept		17,780.00
	Rates, Insurances, Telephone	1,700.01	
	Drainworks	39,969.90	
	Administration charge, Audit fee,		
	Printing, Stationery, Advertising etc	23,254.28	
	Fees (Planning Applications)	8,403.74	
	Joint Pumping Account-		
	Payments due to Waldersey IDB	40,000.00	113,327.93
	Loan Charges - Principal	51,484.04	
	Interest	23,144.26	74,628.30
	Improvement Works:-		
	District Wide Flood Alleviation Study	117,231.25	
	Health & Safety Works	7,710.00	124,941.25
	Balance carried forward		396,482.04
			727,159.52

2024			
Apr-01	Balance brought forward		259,135.16
2025			
Mar-31	Rate income & Special levies	284,731.24	
	Less Irrecoverables	-	284,731.24
	Interest on Deposit Accounts		25,854.28
	Consents and byelaws		500.00
	Write Back of Provisions		39,707.59
	Grant-in-aid		
	- District Wide Flood Alleviation Study		117,231.25
			727,159.52

BALANCE SHEET

Capital Section

Liabilities		
Revaluation Reserve	(1,014,511.41)	
Public Works Loan Board -		
Loan outstanding	1,259,011.41	244,500.00

Assets		
Joint Pumping Station Scheme	239,500.00	
Land at Point 29 (attenuation lagoon)	5,000.00	244,500.00

Revenue Section

General Fund Account		396,482.04
Capital Improvement scheme fund (Loan)		367,644.09
Development Charges Account		32,015.71
Joint Pumping Station Replacement Fund		184,069.79
Sundry Creditors		157,126.83
Contributions Holding Account		78,927.48
Asset Replacement Fund		136,752.86
Capital Realisation Account		54,976.73
		1,652,495.53

Ratepayers' Account - Arrears		5,941.62
Sundry Debtors Account		566.27
Value added Tax		4,627.95
Grant-in-aid		128,936.00
Balance in hand -		
Barclays Current Account	99,764.65	
Barclays Business premium Account	1,162,800.51	
National Savings Account	5,358.53	1,267,923.69
		1,652,495.53

Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board

Treasurers Account 2024/2025

1st April 2024			31st March 2025	
Balance brought forward		1,193,707.12	Payments made during the year	297,893.63
31st March 2025				
Receipts during the year				
Clerk's collection account	337,892.58			
Interest on deposit accounts	28,859.09	366,751.67		
Write back of old outstanding cheques		0.00		
			Balance carried forward	1,262,565.16
		1,560,458.79		**1,560,458.79**

National Savings - Treasurers Account 2024/2025

1st April 2024		31st March 2025	
Balance brought forward	5,299.60	Payments made during the year	0.00
31st March 2025			
Interest on deposit accounts	58.93	Balance carried forward	5,358.53
	5,358.53		**5,358.53**

Summary of Bank Reconciliations as at 31st March 2024

Barclays Bank PLc

Current Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2025		99,749.23
Less unpresented cheques		0.00
Add outstanding lodgements	31/03/2025 Rates	15.42
Balance per Trial Balance		**99,764.65**

Cash balances as at 31st March 2025

Barclays Bank PLc

Current Account	**99,764.65**
Business Premium Account	**1,162,800.51**
Treasury Deposit	**0.00**

National Savings

Investment Account per passbook	**5,358.53**
Total reconciled cash balances per accounts	**1,267,923.69**

Hundred of Wisbech IDB
Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return

Financial year ended 31st March 2025

				Per Annual Return
Line 1	**Balances brought forward**			
	General Fund	259,135.16		
	Development charges account	31,940.51		
	Pumping station replacement fund	184,069.79		
	Asset replacement fund	504,396.95		
	Contributions holding account	69,134.23		
	Future works account	54,976.73		
			1,103,653.37	**1,103,653**
Line 2	**Rates and Special Levies**			
	Agricultural rates	13,800.24		
	Special Levies	270,781.00		
	Penalty	0.00		
	Costs	150.00		
	Write-off	0.00		
			284,731.24	**284,731**
Line 3	**Total other receipts**			
	Interest			
	General fund	25,854.28		
	Development charges account	0.00		
	Joint pumping account	0.00		
	Consent applications	500.00		
	Private works	0.00		
	Discharge contributions	9,868.45		
	Over provision in previous year - Joint pumping	39,707.59		
	Grant in Aid	117,231.25		
			193,161.57	**193,162**
Line 4	**Staff costs**			
	Wages/salaries	0.00		
	National insurance contributions	0.00		
	Pension costs	0.00		
	Travelling expenses	0.00		
			0.00	**0**
Line 5	**Loan repayments**			
	PWLB - Principal	51,484.04		
	PWLB - Interest	23,144.26		
			74,628.30	**74,628**

Hundred of Wisbech IDB
Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return

Financial year ended 31st March 2025

				Per Annual Return
Line 6	**All other payments**			
	Precept	17,780.00		
	Rates, insurances, telephones	1,700.01		
	Repairs and renewals	0.00		
	Fuel - Expenditure in year	0.00		
	Drainworks	39,969.90		
	Administration	23,254.28		
	Fees	8,403.74		
	Development charges fees	0.00		
	Improvement works	124,941.25		
	Joint pumping	40,000.00		
	Under provision in previous year - Joint pumping	0.00		
			256,049.18	**256,049**
Line 7	**Balances carried forward**			
	General Fund	396,482.04		
	Development charges account	32,015.71		
	Pumping station replacement fund	184,069.79		
	Asset replacement fund	504,396.95		
	Contributions holding account	78,927.48		
	Future works	54,976.73		
			1,250,868.70	**1,250,869**

Reconciliation
Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6 1,250,868.70

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	*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	1,264,671	1,103,653	*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	215,262	284,731	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	36,183	193,162	*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	0	0	*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	74,628	74,628	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	337,835	256,049	*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	1,103,653	1,250,869	*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	1,199,007	1,267,924	*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	244,500	244,500	*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	1,310,495	1,259,011	*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 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

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

[signature]

Date 30/05/2025

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

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	12
Meeting:	**HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING FORWARD**
Date:	**Monday 9th June 2025**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Andrew Wool/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 2025/2026
E. Consider & approve the Agricultural Drainage Rates and Special Levy requirements for 2025/2026

Finance Officer's summary and key messages

For the rating estimates for 2025/2026 standard provisions have been made for general expenditure with specific items included where known.

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 2025 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 (5% increase on 2024/25 rates). Members should therefore consider if they think the provision is reasonable when setting the rate.

Estimates for drain maintenance works have been assessed at the previous year's budgeted level with a full programme of works in place. The Joint Flood Alleviation Study is now underway, and these costs are fully grant aided.

In accordance with the principle approved at last year's meeting that the Board should hold a year's expenditure in hand the budget proposal includes for the recovery of balances depleted during winter 2023/2024 pumping. It is proposed to recover balances to this level over a three-year period.

When considering the rate for 2024/2025 members should also consider likely future capital investment requirements which will be identified through the district wide flood alleviation study.

1. Fees, Remunerations and Subscriptions

1.1 Subscription to the Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA) will increase by 6.5%, from £975 to £1039 (+ vat) for 2025.

2.2 To consider the District Officers Fee for 2025/2026

2. Precept to the Environment Agency

2.1 Internal Drainage Boards are required to pay a Precept (IDB Precept) to the Environment Agency for their expenses managing water passing into main rivers. Predominantly, the Precept funds additional maintenance downstream of and/or benefitting IDB districts.

2.3 The precept for 2024/2025 was £17,780.

3. Estimates for 2025/26

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 2025/26**

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: Andrew Wool/Sam Ablett
Role: Responsible Finance Officer/Assistant Treasurer

Appendix 1 Estimates for 2025/26
Appendix 2 Rate Requirements for 2025/26

Appendix 1

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

RATE BUDGET 2025/2026

		Approved Budget 2024/2025 £	Actual to 31st March 2025 £	Proposed Budget 2025/2026 £
1	Rates, Insurances and telephones	1,600	1,700	1,800
2	Drainworks (incl District Officer's fee & expenses and Environmental measures	83,500	39,970 [A]	95,000 [B]
3	Joint Plant Maintenance (with Waldersey IDB)	110,000 [C/D/E]	292 [C/D]	50,000 [C/D]
4	Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	23,250	23,254	25,650
5	Planning Applications	9,000	8,404	9,500
6	Environment Agency Precept	17,780	17,780	17,780
7	Loan Charges	74,628	74,628	74,628
8	Reinstatement of balances Year *1 of 3*	0	0	0
9	Studies and Surveys	250,000 [F]	117,231 [F]	87,160 [F]
10	Improvement Works - (per programme)	26,000 [G]	7,710 [Gi]	0
		595,758	290,970	361,518
	Improvement works - Funding	270,000 [H]	117,231 [H]	87,160 [H]
	LESS Rents, Deposit Accounts interest etc	24,916	26,354	20,000
	General Fund - Use of balances	16,250 [I]	0	20,378 [J]
	Annual value - 3,119,734	284,592	147,384	**233,980**

GENERAL FUND			
Opening Balance	259,135	259,135	396,482
Rates Raised (2024/25 9.122p)	284,592	284,731	233,980
Net Expenditure	284,592	147,384	233,980
Balances	13,621	-	(20,378)
Closing Balance	272,756	396,482	376,104

Rate Set - 2024/2025 9.122 p

Rate required 7.50 p

Remarks

A -	Includes:-	
	Contractors charges	34,728
	District Officer Fees	4,658
B -	Includes provision for:	
	Contractors charges	38,400
	Proposed slubbing programme	30,000
	Additional Work/Fuel Changeover/Surcharge	14,000
	Spoil disposal	5,000
C -	Provision Based on New Calculation	
D -	Includes for New Electricty Contract	
E -	Includes for Weedscreen Cleaner Overhaul (Gross £25k)	
F -	Joint Flood Alleviation Study	
G -	Channel improvement works - 87-14	20,000
	Health & Safety Improvements (Structures)	6,000
Gi	Health & Safety Improvements (Structures)	7,710
H -	Funding (Improvement programme)	
I -	Use of pumping station replacement fund - South Brink P/S WSC Overhaul	16,250
J -	Use of General Fund	20,378

Appendix 2

Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board

Rate and levy requirements

UNDER SECTION 37 OF THE LAND DRAINAGE ACT 1991, THE APPROPRIATE PROPORTIONS IN WHICH THE NET EXPENDITURE OF THE COMMISSIONERS MUST BE BORNE FOR 2025/2026 IS:-

a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 4.85%

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

Fenland District Council –	94.60%
Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk –	0.55%
	95.15%

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £1,513.

In 2025/2026 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levy would raise £31,120.

Revenue balance in hand on 31st March 2025 - £259,135

The estimated net expenditure of £318,213 in 2024/2025 is equivalent to:-

a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 7.50p

b) a Special levy on Fenland District Council of £221,336 and

c) a Special levy on Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk of £1,298

In 2024/2025 a rate of 9.122p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £269,203 on Fenland District Council and £1,578 on Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk.

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Board

June 2025