Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	7
Meeting:	**WARBOYS SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: CHIEF ENGINEER'S SUMMARY & CAPITAL PROGRAMME**
Date:	**Thursday 27th Nov 2025**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Nicola Oldfield**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Consider alternative sources of funding for any critical capital works and put a capital investment plan in place, to include:
   a. A plan to refurbish or replace (as needed) a minimum of 1 pump during summer of 2026 at the Board's cost; and
   b. A Pump Refurbishment/Replacement Plan for all pumps; and
   c. Instruct the Consulting Engineer accordingly.

B. Review the pumping station key dates and inform the Engineer if there are any discrepancies or additional detail to be added.

1. Enforcement & Compliance Overview

Our Enforcement and Compliance Officers Dave Coles and Tony Payne joined us on the 23rd June 2025 as a job share. They are currently investigating cases across 17 boards plus Middle Level Commissioners, including:

- 47 active enforcement cases,
- 23 surface water or surface water and foul discharges,
- 24 byelaw cases.

Cases already concluded:

- Eight cases in the last two months including trespass, unlicenced moorings, unauthorised structures and encroachment,
- Six major developments have been referred to Technical Services following enforcement action, as consent applications for outstanding discharge consents.

In September and October, they were successful in recovering more than £70,000 of historic outstanding drainage charges for three developments across two boards and the MLC.

2. IDB Recovery Fund T2B

Following the initial, unsuccessful bid for funding, the Environment Agency subsequently awarded funding for the 'Asset Resilience Pumps & Channels' package in June 2025. These works are due for completion by March 2026.

Works being delivered for this district include the following:

1) Weedscreen Cleaner Upgrade Works (CW Engineering) at Washways Pump Station due to be carried out during the winter months, dates to be confirmed.

2) Weedscreen Cleaner Upgrade Works (CW Engineering) at Pidley Pump Station due to be carried out during the winter months, dates to be confirmed.

3. Capital Programme

Development of the capital investment programmes continues with the identification of staff resources required to deliver an extensive, multi-million-pound programme of works across the whole of the Middle Level.

We will be refining the Board's capital programme and developing a pipeline of works based on asset condition and need. Projects require a certain amount of development before they can be an FCERM grant-in-aid application can be submitted. For future projects the Board should be aware that there may be some up-front costs associated with this. When we have further information and resources in place, we will discuss specific needs with the Board. This includes the pump refurbishment plan described in the Mechanical & Electrical Report.

The new FCERM grant in aid programme will start in 2026/27 and we are awaiting the new grant funding guidance before we submit new project proposals.

However, the grant-in-aid programme is oversubscribed for 2026/27 and there is no grant-in-aid indicative allocation for 2026/27.

The Board is advised to consider alternative sources of funding for any critical capital works and put a capital investment plan in place.

Author Name: Nicola Oldfield
Role: Chief Engineer

Appendix 1: List of planning applications since last report
Appendix 2: M&E Report

Appendix 1

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

MLC Ref.	*Council Ref*	*Applicant*	*Type of development*	*Location*
1328	F/YR25/0352/F	Mrs Carver	Change of use (Land to residence)	Honeysome Road, Chatteris
1329	F/YR25/0344/RM	Mr B Tozsu	Residence(New dwelling)	London Road, Chatteris
1330	25/00566/PIP	Mr David Hopkins	Residence (New dwelling)	Warboys Road, Pidley
1331	25/0925/PMBPA	Mr & Mrs Robinson	Change of use (Agricultural to 3 x dwellings)	Puddock Road, Warboys
1332	F/YR25/0394/O	Mr & Mrs Gates	Residential (4 x dwellings)	Clare Street, Chatteris
1333	25/00900/PIP	Mr & Mrs Robinson	Residdential (4 to 9 x dwellings)	Heath Road, Warboys
1334	F/YR25/0421/F	Mr A Pritchard	Residence (Extension)	The Hawthorns, Chatteris
1335	25/00958/FUL	J Rigby	Replacement building	Parkhall Road, Somersham
1336	25/00950/FUL	Mr & Mrs S Robinson	Conversion (Agricultural to dwelling)	Puddock Road, Warboys
1337	F/YR25/0470/F	Jody Rowell	Residential (Up to 9 x dwellings)	Doddington Road, Chatteris
1338	25/01157/PIP	Mr D Hopkins	Residential (Up to 8 x dwellings)	Warboys Road, Pidley
1339	25/01168/PIP	Mr D Hopkins	Residential (Up to 2 x dwellings)	Warboys Road, Pidley
1340	F/YR25/3078/COND	Minister Property Group	Residential (70 x dwellings)	West Street, Chatteris
1341	25/01195/FUL	Mr M Riggall	Residential (2 x dwellings)	Parkhall Road, Somersham
1342	F/YR25/3097/COND	Burmor Construction	Residential (Up to 50 x dwellings)	Fairbairn Way, Chatteris
1343	25/01278/OUT	Mr A Austin	Residential (2 x dwellings)	Fen Road, Pidley
1344	25/0179/FUL	Amplius Living	Residential (43 x dwellings)	Station Road, Warboys
1345	25/01468/HHFUL	Amandeep Dhaliwal	Residence (Extension)	Parkhill Road, Somersham
1346	F/YR25/0576/F	Mrs B Grimshaw	Residence (Extension)	Westbourne Road, Chatteris
1347	25/01441/PIP	Mr A Augstein	Residential (4 x dwellings)	Padgetts Lane, Fenton
1348	25/01482/AGDET	Mr T Noble	Agricultural	Warboys Bridleway 16 and Millers Way, Warboys
1349	F/YR25/0639/F	Campa Portfolio Ltd	Residence (New dwelling)	High Street, Chatteris
1350	F/YR25/3118/COND	Minister Property Group	Residential (70 x dwellings	West Street, Chatteris

1351	F/YR25/0632/F	Mr T Behagg	Residence (Extension)	London Road, Chatteris
1352	F/YR25/0626/F	Lindsay Butler	Residence (Extension)	Westbourne Road, Chatteris

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

MLC Ref	*Council Ref*	*Consent No*	*Applicant*	*Description of Works*	*Location*	*Date consent granted*
524, 528, 1036, 1040, 1066, 1177, 1246 & 1249		WSP/BC/88	Persimmon Homes	Construction of a headwall and guard rail	Fillenhams Way (Abbot Walk), Chatteris	16/07/2025

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*
521, 532, 544, 562, 563, 573, 786, 992 & 1240	18/00840/FUL, 22/02501/FUL & 23/02358/FUL	WSP/DC/83	Mr F Adams	Chatteris Road, Somersham	11/09/2025

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*
1312	F/YR25/0034/F	Option 1	Southampton Place, Chatteris	15/07/2025

Appendix 2

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**7**
Meeting:	**WARBOYS SOMERSHAM & PIDLEY IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL**
Date:	**Thursday 27th November 2025**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Dave Bantoft**

1. M&E key messages and advice

Other than the matters previously reported or described below, only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant at each of the stations is mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition. The stations and pumps are at an age where reliability is a concern and a plan should be put in place to overhaul or replace items as necessary to ensure ongoing reliability.

The Board is strongly advised to consider the development of an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement. The Board is asked to instruct the Consulting Engineer accordingly.

1.1 M&E Equipment Key Health Indicators

Over the past 2 years we have been compiling and verifying Pumping Station Key Date to allow easier identification of equipment age and the need for refurbishment to assist in developing an investment plan for asset refurbishment or replacement. The details below include any works already scheduled and funded to be completed this year. For example, the weedscreen cleaner overhauls at Washways and Pidley. To ensure reliability, resilience and longevity of the pumping equipment it needs to be refurbished or replaced at suitable intervals. We have experienced examples lately of pumps being left too long and failing, or when they are removed for overhaul the condition is very poor and the pump overall lifetime has been reduced significantly, which is not cost-effective use of the asset. The same is true for control panels, component failures often damage other components incurring costly repairs and machine downtime. Overall, it is more cost effective to run well maintained equipment.

The pictures below are of pump bolts that have been in situ for 20 years and have corroded to the point of failure as shown by the gap between the flanges. Although now rebuilt with stainless steel bolts they were not in the past. The pump tubes are also heavily corroded which reduces pump life considerably. Ideally pumps should be refurbished every 10 years because by the time they reach 15 to 20 years it is likely the corrosion will heavily impact their overall residual life.

Table 1: Key Health Indicators

			Pump		Weedscreen			
Station	**Built**	**Pump**	**Overhaul**	**Control Panel**	**Weedscreen Bars**	**WSC Gantry**	**WSC O/H**	**WSC Controls**
Acre Fen	1984	1984	2006	1984	1984	N/A	N/A	N/A
High Fen	1976	2021 (1) 2009 (2)	2021 (1) 2009 (2)	2020	2020	2020	2020	2020
Pidley	1940s	1979	2005 (1) 2007 (2)	2016	2003	2003	2025	2025
Puddock	1992	1992	2004 (1)	1992	1992	N/A	N/A	N/A
Washways	1975	1975	2016	2016	1998	1998	2025	2025
Westmoor	1962	1962	2007 (1) 2008 (2)	2011	2000	2016	2016	2016

The Key Health Indicators table above shows the critical area for concern and improvement is the pumps. The pumps range from 4 to 63 years old with last refurbishments ranging from 4 to 21 years ago. The Board is advised to develop and start a pump refurbishment/replacement plan for the 7 pumps that are overdue refurbishment. Having a plan in place and underway helps to secure further grant funding when it comes available, such as the recent IDB Recovery Fund.

The Board is advised that it should plan to refurbish or replace (as needed) a minimum of 1 pump during summer of 2026 at the Board's cost.

Submersible pumps such as those at Puddock and High Fen are often not cost effective to repair and lead time on new pumps can be upto a year. Standard pumps are normally cost effective to repair and lead times can be as short as 4 weeks or can be over a year if impellors are damaged and have to be reverse engineered. Costs can be in the range £30k to £100k depending on pump condition.

The Board is requested to confirm if it wants the Engineer to produce a Pump Refurbishment/Replacement Plan for all pumps for the subcommittee.

2. Minor Works

2.1 Puddock

As previously reported the pumps are now at an age when overhaul or replacement is needed. Initial inspection of the slacker shows that there may be a possibility of fitting a smaller modern unit to the existing headwall. This will be investigated further once the main drain is down to winter levels.

The recent drain works will improve water flow to the pumping station and reduce weedscreen blockages. This will greatly improve the operational efficiency of the station, allowing cleaner water flow, less differential across the screen and preventing the pump from hunting, which causes excess wear and increased energy costs.

2.2 **Westmoor**

Pump 2 has run well since the thrust bearing was replaced. The weedscreen hose drums are starting to corrode and would benefit from recoating. This should be included in next WSC overhaul as it is more cost effective to do it at that time.

2.3 **Acre Fen**

The Pump Cabinet is heavily corroded, and replacement should be considered. The control panel is from 1984 and the oldest of the WS&P control panels so should be replaced. This is likely to cost in the region of £12k.

2.4 **High Fen**

Routine inspections have identified that Pump 2 insulation resistance has been fluctuating over the last few years. This may be an indication of water ingress into the motor. Pump 2 has been set to duty and will continue to be monitored. If Pump 2 requires replacement the support frame will also need replacing as it is heavily corroded. Pump 2 discharge pipe is weeping which needs to be investigated to determine the repair required. Pumps of this type are often not viable to repair and replacements can be over 6 months lead time.

2.5 **Washways**

The weed screen cleaner at Washways will be overhauled this winter as part of the IDB Fund Tranche 2B - IDB Asset Resilience GiA package. This means it could be out of service for 10 to 14 days during the pumping season. This overhaul will include the surface clean modifications that had previously been discussed. This is one of the hardest working weed screen cleaners in the whole MLC catchment and it is likely that assistance will be required from Board members for screen cleaning during the works.

There is some pump vibration on Pump 1 which needs investigating and some remedial works on the trolley to ensure its reliability until it is replaced.

2.6 **Pidley**

The weed screen cleaner at Pidley will be overhauled this winter as part of the IDB Fund Tranche 2B - IDB Asset Resilience GiA package. This will mean it could be out of service for 10 to 14 days during pumping season. The overhaul will include the surface clean modifications that had previously been discussed. It is likely that assistance will be required from Board members for screen cleaning during the works.

Pump 1 has some noise which needs to be monitored and investigated.

3. Inspections

3.1 HSB Engineering annual inspections for insurance were carried out on 4th September 2025 at Westmoor, High Fen, Pidley & Washways. All weedscreen cleaners passed inspections with no advisories.

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

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

4. Pumping Station Key Dates

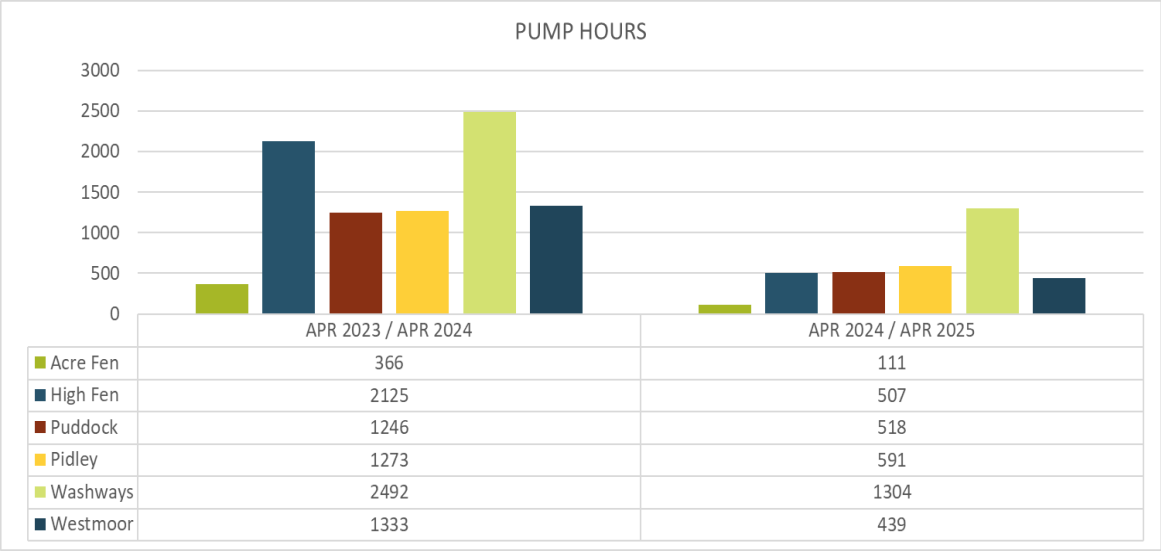
4.1 The key dates are an important reference and will feed into the Key Health Indicators and Investment Plan.

The Board is asked to review the pumping station key dates below, if there are any discrepancies or you can add any details, please inform the Engineer.

5.

					Weedscreen			
Station	**Built**	**Pump**	**Pump Overhaul**	**Control Panel**	**Weedscreen Bars**	**WSC Gantry**	**WSC O/H**	**WSC Controls**
Acre Fen	1984	1984	2006	1984	1984	N/A	N/A	N/A
High Fen	1976	2021 (1) 2009 (2)	2021 (1) 2009 (2)	2020	2020	2020	2020	2020
Pidley	1940s	1979	2005 (1) 2007 (2)	2016	2003	2003	2025	2025
Puddock	1992	1992	2004 (1)	1992	1992	N/A	N/A	N/A
Washways	1975	1975	2016	2016	1998	1998	2025	2025
Westmoor	1962	1962	2007 (1) 2008 (2)	2011	2000	2016	2016	2016

Pump Hours



6 Water level Management

The pumping stations have summer and winter pump level references based on historic values which serve as very good reference points. I would actively encourage pump attendants to vary these to suit their current catchment conditions. For example, running pump start and stop levels at intermediate settings above the base winter settings during times of high Soil Moisture Deficit and then reducing towards winter level setpoints as the SMD reduces or if there is heavy rainfall forecast. This needs to be balanced with ensuring the pump has a good operating range so it is never short cycling (hunting). This can also be used to ensure maximum benefit of the lower night electricity rate.

Ultimately this takes more operator time but will produce more efficient running and reduce costs. We can advise on this if needed and show some good and bad examples to help with setting and monitoring your pumps.

Author Name: Dave Bantoft
Role: M&E Engineer