MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Administered by:

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16th January 2026

Dear Board Members

Upcoming meeting of the Board
Wednesday 28th January 2026

Please find overleaf the agenda for the meeting of the Commissioners to be hosted at the Lamb & Flag, Welney PE14 9RB at 11.00am on Wednesday 28th January 2026, following the Finance meeting (10am).

Finance Committee meeting – 10.00am
Meeting of Commissioners – 11.00am
Lunch – 1pm

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

MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Wednesday 28th January 2026 – 11.00 to 14:00

Lamb & Flag, Welney PE14 9RB

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	Pages 3 - 10	Chair
	Gary Roberts presentation – EA Old Bedford	verbal	GR
4	Constitution & Membership • Attendance • Vacancies & appointments • Composition and amalgamations • Training	Pages 11 - 13	Clerk
5	Clerk's Report • Fens Reservoir	Verbal	Clerk
6	Environment Officer's Report & brief appraisal	Verbal	Sofi
7	Consulting Engineer's Reports, including: • Capital Programme & FCRM Grant-In-Aid	Pages 14 - 18	Clerk or Engineer
8	Health & Safety	Verbal	Chair
9	District Superintendent's Report inc maintenance works	Pages 19 - 21	DO
10	Governance • Internal Controls & Banking • Annual Return 2024/2025 • Auditors report 2024/2025 • Risk Assessment & insured values • Exercise of Public Rights	Pages 22 - 23 Pages 24 - 28 Pages 29 - 35	Clerk
11	Finance Report: looking back • Finance Officer's Review • Payments 2024/25 • Budget Monitoring & Highland Water Contributions from the Environment Agency	Page 36 Page 37	Clerk
12	Finance Report: looking forward • Finance Officer's summary • Fees, remuneration and subscriptions • Determination of Rating Values & Rate Arrears • Precept to the Environment Agency • Estimates for 2025/26 • Rate & Special Levy Requirements 2025/26	Pages 38 - 39 Page 40 Page 41	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.)

MANEA AND WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

At a Meeting of the Manea and Welney District Drainage Commissioners
Held at the Lamb and Flag, Welney on 28th May 2025.

PRESENT

J Heading (Chair)	R Gladwin
R Sears (Vice-Chair)	J Hawes
C Barnes	M Heading
N Cook	Ms A Morris
C Crofts (BCKLWN)	C Sears
M Fairey	

Mrs Ruth Martin (Lead Clerk) representing the Clerk was in attendance.

Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from P Hawes, C Marks (FDC) and V Walker.

The Chair advised that he would deviate from the published agenda, as he had arranged for the Commissioners to visit Manea Town Lots Sewage Treatment Works. Manea has expanded significantly since the Works were constructed, and there are difficulties in Manea at times of heavy rainfall and so he thought it useful for the Commissioners to observe this piece of critical infrastructure that has a significant impact on the Commissioners drains.

C.1050 Declarations of Interest

The Chair 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 Commissioner.

Mr C Crofts and Mr M Heading declared interests (as members of the Middle Level Board) in any matters concerning the Middle Level Commissioners

Mr C Crofts and Mr R Gladwin declared interests (as members of Upwell IDB) in any matters concerning Upwell IDB

C.1051 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

There were no matters arising and the Minutes of the Last Meeting were agreed.

RESOLVED

> That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Commissioners held on the 22nd January 2025 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

C.1052 Constitution & Membership

Vacancies and Elections

Mrs Martin advised that there are currently two vacancies on the Board, but the Chair added that he did not think it essential to appoint to the vacancies. Ms Morris added that she would like to see more younger

Commissioners and suggested that Will Gladwin be invited to join the Board. The Chair agreed to contact Mr W Gladwin to establish if he would consider the invitation. Mr R Sears agreed that it is a good idea to bring in younger members and the Chair added that he thought it vital to have a range of experience, enthusiasm, and youth to make an effective Board. Other observations from Commissioners were that they need to be mindful of future amalgamations, and that putting Boards together will help those around the table to suggest potential younger members. The Chair added he hoped that membership will be driven by the need to do the job properly, concluding that it important to have the right people on the Board.

Training

Mrs Martin advised that the updated version of the ADA Good Governance Guide has now been printed and copies were handed to Commissioners. She advised that it is not yet clear what supporting training material will follow, but that the original training videos are still available to view.

Commissioners were asked to complete the training matrix as circulated at the meeting, and to advise the office if any further training is undertaken.

C.1053 Clerk's Report

Mrs Martin asked that the Clerks Report be taken as read, asking for further consideration to be made of the following points.

a) Planning and Consenting Charging Model

The new planning and consenting charging model has been implemented and been in use since 1st April. Mrs Martin reported that it is planned to review the fees every year, and that the Clerk invites feedback.

b) Highland Water and IDB Precept

As reported a formal appeal was narrowly avoided after the shortfall in the Highland Water claims was met by the Anglian (Great Ouse) Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC). Following this the Clerk has written 'The Highland Water Conundrum' document which has been submitted to the Minister, Defra, the EA and our local authorities, and also circulated to all Board members.

The Chair added that the issue was not just about the payments, but the general principle around the claims. A large part of the District is a Highland Water area. He feels that in Fenland having a Highland Water area is outdated, and he has put this thoughts to ADA, Defra and the former Environment Minister. The Highland Water area is an area that traditionally in times of flood is the area above the floodline, but due to good management this land has not flooded in 400 years.

c) Salary Sacrifice Scheme

Mrs Martin reported that as a part of the Nest Pension provision, the Middle Level Commissioners are offering a Salary Sacrifice Scheme to their employees. Once this new provision is in place, the Middle Level will be able to offer the same provision to Boards they administer, and the Commissioners will be invited to offer this provision to their employee. The Chair said that he would like more detail before discussing this further and agreed to discuss this with the Middle Level Head of Finance.

d) Fens Reservoir

Mrs Martin gave a verbal update, advising that Burges Salmon have been appointed as the Legal Representative and an agreement for these services has been signed.

C.1054 Environment Officers' Report

Mrs Martin referred to the Environment Officer's Report, advising that the report would be taken as read. She reminded the Commissioners of the revised Environmental Services Package and the associated fee increase.

The Biodiversity Action Plan review was discussed, and the Commissioners resolved that the Chair will review and agree the refreshed report. Mrs Martin reminded the Commissioners of the advice included in the report, including the changes in the Hedgerow Regulations, and advised the Commissioners that the Ecology Team can now check if any works affecting trees may impact on bats. She reminded the Commissioners that any non-routine maintenance works will require a survey before works commence, and the Ecology Team have an environmental screening form that needs to be completed. It was requested that any bank slips should be reported as early as possible, as the slip will most likely displace any water voles that may have been present and so will not prevent any repair works being carried out. Alternatively leaving the slip and dealing with it later may give water voles chance to reestablish themselves and therefore prevent works being carried out. The Commissioners were referred to the 'Water Voles – Myth Busting' part of the report. The Commissioners are invited to send a representative to the attend a biodiversity training day, and the Chair advised he would also like one of the younger members of the Commissioners to also attend. Mr Barnes said that he would like to attend which was agreed by the Commissioners.

RESOLVED

That the Environment Report be approved.

That Mr Barnes be included in any training days.

C.1055 District Inspection

The meeting was paused in order for the Commissioners to visit the Anglian Water Treatment Plant at Manea Town Lots.

The Commissioners were met by two employees from Anglian Water, who talked the Commissioners through the treatment process. They advised that the treatment works receive both gravity and pumped flows and had the capacity to receive a flow of 9.75l/s. There is an additional balancing tank so that flows can be balanced i.e. diurnal flow can be stored in order to be treated overnight when normal flows are reduced. Final effluent volumes are as permitted by the EA, and the water quality standards that are set have to be achieved all of the time. The outflows are also subject to independent monitoring of water quality.

Mr R Sears explained the sewerage system in the village, and that the older part of the village has a combined system which means it conveys foul and surface water sewage together. Before the time of mains water, the additional flows from the surface water were needed to assist the sewage flows, but this is no longer needed. However, this does mean that in times of heavy rainfall the combined sewage flows are too great for the treatment works to manage.
It was thought that the original treatment works were built in the 1960's, and Mr Crofts observed that the population of Manea had probably more than doubled since that time. Mr Cook talked about 100 houses that were being built with their own septic tanks. The Chair confirmed that consent applications come to him and he welcomes the development provided that the sewage can be dealt with. Mr Crofts added that the EA are statutory consultees, but Anglian Water are not.

The Anglian Water staff explained that at times of excessive flow, the receiving chamber will pump into the balance tanks, which then weirs into the storm tank, then to overflow. It was not clear at the time of the visit how often this happens, but this results in untreated sewage being discharged into the Commissioners' drains. If flows go straight to storm overflow, then this is an issue. It was asked if having more storage tanks would be a solution, but the AW staff thought that it would not, and the restriction is more to do with the EA discharge permits. The Commissioners were advised that normal processing takes around 15 hours from inlet to Final Effluent outlet. On a day-to-day basis the site copes without using the balance tanks or storm tank. The process was explained, with coarse solids being removed at the initial screening stage, then primary settlement before secondary settlement in the filter beds. Ammonia removal is then carried out after the primary and secondary settlement, which is a bacterial process and not a chemical one. Tertiary settlement is then carried out before discharge. Any sludge then goes to processing centres to be turned into fertilizer and other by products. The whole process has to work within the permits provided by the EA, and so only a certain amount of flow can go through the works and into the receiving watercourse. At this time, it is not clear if there are any capital works planned that would increase the capacity of the treatment plant. Everyone has a right to connect to the sewerage system.

The Chair thanked the Anglian Water employees for their time, and the Commissioners returned to the meeting venue to continue the meeting.

C.1056 Consulting Engineers' Reports

The Commissioners considered the report of the Consulting Engineer, and this was taken as read.

Cranbrook/Counter Drain (CCD) Flood Risk Management (FRM) Study

Mrs Martin drew the Commissioners attention to this item. The Chair voiced his concern that this study seems to have lost its momentum.

Manea Town Lots Water Recycling Centre (WRC)

The Chair expressed his disappointment with the appearance of the WRC and had observed in the past that during a serious storm event the site could easily be covered with 6" of water. He thought that it would be keep in a more tidy style, but he was glad that the Commissioners had visited. He reported that Cllr Marks is putting pressure on Anglian Water to make improvements to the whole system. Mr M Heading added that he was aware that some of the Station Road development would be flowing in the Wimblington direction and that developers are being told that the Manea WRC is at capacity. Sites will have private systems but if these are not suitably maintained it will result in sewage in the Commissioners drains.

Mr R Sears thought that the holding tanks must help, and that this must be a cheaper option for Anglian Water. The Chair was surprised that full treatment takes 15 hours, but increased flows will cause an overflow. He wanted to hear that if there is a National Planning Policy that it would make a difference. Mr Crofts said that this will make planning easier and that planning committees are seen as holding development up and the Government want to decrease the capacity of the committees and give more power to the planning officers. However, this is in a consultation period and has not yet been through Parliament.

The Chair observed that 258 houses are due to be built in Chatteris, and that the facilities to support this level of development are needed but they will not be constructed in time. Mr Crofts said that this is still open to consultation and urged Middle Level Commissioners to combine the Commissioners responses in their feedback to the consultation.

The Chair asked if the Planning Engineer would contact Anglian Water and have the Commissioners comments noted.

Planning Items

Mr Crofts advised that the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan has now been approved but explained the changes to the plan that were required by the Secretary of State in order to achieve this. He advised that if the council were not able to identify a 5-year land supply, any sustainable development on any land gains automatic approval provided that services are available to the site. Having an approved Local Plan means that some exception sites or windfall sites may not be developed.

The Chair asked if it was known what was being considered by the Council in relation to the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan (NM&WLP) and Mr Crofts advised that this has now been adopted, but it is not expected that the Commissioners district will be affected.

The Chair reminded the Commissioners of the Fenland District Council Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report Consultation, and the Commissioners considered the CCC Watercourse Mapping Tool.

Capital Improvement Programme

The Commissioners reviewed the Programme with the Chair noting that at present there is no GiA funding available to carry out the identified works.

Mechanical and Electrical Report

Mrs Martin drew the Commissioners attention to the report, advising that significant works have been identified within the report.

The Chair added that taking pumps out to examine them would cost at least £20k so they have tended to leave them alone when they are working well. Keeping the pumps in use helps with keeping the pumps operational. The system is in good order, and ecologically sound, and the management plan is the same as always, trying to cleanse at least 90% of the watercourses.

He felt rather upset that the observation that the Commissioners are only carrying out routine maintenance implies the Commissioners is not doing enough.

The Pump Hours were reviewed, and it was noted that the winter pumping was less than the previous year. The Chair reported that although a new electricity supplier had been sourced, they are still experiencing billing issues.

RESOLVED

> That the Planning Engineer continue to engage with Anglian Water and have the Commissioners comments noted.
>
> That the reports be approved.

C.1057 Health & Safety

The Chair referred to the report received from Cope Safety Management following their visit in February, reporting that no critical issues had been identified.

C.1058 District Superintendents Report

The Chair asked that the District Superintendents report be taken as read, and thanked the District Superintendent for providing another detailed and informative report.

No questions were raised by the Commissioners.

C.1059 Governance

Mrs Martin went through the Governance report and the various Resolutions that the Commissioners had been asked to make.

a) Policy Reviews

Mrs Martin referred to the revised Policy Statement which the Commissioners reviewed. The Chair advised that the Commissioners do have a Water Level Management Plan, and that he will provide a copy for inclusion in the Policy. Otherwise, the Policy Statement was approved.

RESOLVED

That the update and re-publication of the Policy Statement is approved.

b) Risk Management Strategy and Internal Controls

The Commissioners did not highlight any specific risks or issues not covered within the Commissioners Risk Management Strategy (published in 2024 and on the website), noted the system of financial Internal Controls (as published on website) and no additional controls were highlighted as required.

c) Exercise of Public Rights

The Clerk 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.

d) Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments.

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

RESOLVED

That there are no such events that would have an adverse financial impact on the Commissioners that would need to be included within the accounting statements for the financial year ended 31st March 2025.

e) DEFRA IDB1 Return

RESOLVED

Mrs Martin referred to the completed IDB1 form for 2023/2024 which the Commissioners noted and approved.

f) Annual Governance Statement

RESOLVED

The Commissioners approved that the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement on behalf of the Commissioners for the financial year ended 31st March 2025.

C.1060 Finance Report – Looking Back

Finance officer's review and key messages

The Commissioners considered and noted the key finance messages of the Finance Officer, and the payments detailed for 2024. The Commissioners noted the Storm Recovery Grant Fund bids and that the Commissioners received £40,310.07 for excess winter pumping costs. The Budget Comparison was noted.

The Chair commented that the Commissioners set the rate back in February, and thinks they have all things covered.

Mrs Martin advised that it is possible that further Storm Grant Recovery Funding may become available. The Chair thought that all pumping stations across the Middle Level Catchment could make use of £5m of funding for improvements but that this level of funding is unlikely. This is why the Commissioners have been building up funds for future expenses.

a) Payments for 2024

The Payments were reviewed, and the Commissioners accepted the Payments.

b) Annual Accounts and Finance Papers 2024/2025

Mrs Martin provided the Commissioners with updated figures as the incorrect figures had been included in the agenda. Mr Crofts advised that Councils see the bank account figures but do not fully understand what this funding is in place for.

The Commissioners considered and approved the Annual accounts and Finance Papers for the year ended 31st March 2025, as required in the Audit regulations.

RESOLVED

> That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Return, on behalf of the Commissioners for the financial year ended 31st March 2025.

C.1061 Finance Report – Looking Forward

Finance officer's review and key messages

The Commissioners considered and noted the key finance messages of the Responsible Finance Officer.
Ms Morris asked if the District Superintendents vehicle had been replaced. The Chair advised that it had been decided at the last meeting of the Commissioners to keep the vehicle for another year. It is suitable for use at present, although it may need replacing within the next few years. He thought that the Commissioners should consider replacing it with and electric vehicle, but would seek the District Superintendents thoughts on this. Ms Morris thought that if an electric vehicle were supplied, the Commissioners would need to consider where and how the vehicle is charged. The Chair suggested that they consider a hybrid electric vehicle instead.

Ms Morris asked about the level of interest the Commissioners accounts were achieving. Some discussion followed on the best place for funds to be held to get the best return. Mr Heading advised that the Commissioners need to be able to easily access the funds, and the Chair felt that they should trust the Responsible Finance Officer to gain the best return for the Commissioners.

Mr Fairey asked if the Finance Committee could have the past 12 months cash flow opening and closing balances for consideration at their next meeting. The Chair suggested that a quarterly report also be requested and agreed to discuss this with Mr Wool.

RESOLVED

> The Chair discuss with the Responsible Finance Officer (Mr Wool) provision of additional reports for the next Finance Committee meeting.

C.1062 Middle Level IDB Change

Mrs Martin referred to the Clerks Report relating to the Middle Level IDB Change and provided a precis of the report.

The Chair thought that the three boards not relying on MLC watercourse should combine, and that the remainder combine into one. Mr M Heading added that the Middle Level Board haven't taken a view, and it is up to IDBs. If they were to amalgamate into one Board, it would be the biggest IDB in the county and too big to operate effectively. The Chair thought that this would not be as severe as they thought, as they are all administered by MLC already.

Mr Fairey thought that if a landowner were asked which was more important to them, integrity and control or a lower rate, they would choose the rate. The Upwell IDB has a higher charge so their ratepayers pay more. Mr Heading advised that any amalgamated Board could make use of variable rates.

Mr Fairey agreed with the Chairs thoughts, and the Chair thought that the reason for change would be to make operations more effective, although this may not necessarily save money. A strong, effective management carrying out all Water Level Management functions would be most effective outcome.

Mr R Sears observed that getting people onto Boards is becoming more difficult, and Mr M Heading said that there are lots of people doing a lot of work free of charge. He did not thing that this would happen with bigger Boards. Nothing has been costed properly and no Board chairs are currently taking a salary. Mr R Sears thought that this may change. The Chair advised that North Level IDB runs equally as well as the Middle Level Commissioners and their Chair receives payments.

The Chair asked the Commissioners to send their responses to Mrs Martin, and the Chair will then form a response. He also asked Commissioners to indicate if they agreed with making a financial contribution toward the cost of developing the detailed design.

RESOLVED

> That Commissioners provide their feedback to Mrs Martin and the Chair by the end of June, including if they agree or disagree with making a contribution toward the cost.

C.1063 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

> That next Meeting of the Commissioners be held on 28th January 2026 at The Lamb & Flag, Welney.

C.1064 Any Other Business

With no other items being raised by the Commissioners, the meeting was closed at 1.10pm.

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	4
Meeting:	**MANEA & WELNEY DDC**	**Subject:**	**CONSTITUTION & MEMBERSHIP**
Date:	**Wednesday 28th January 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Polly Tombleson**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Note the current status of its membership and the role they each play as members serving the interests of the Board.
B. Review attendance records and identify any resolutions as necessary.
C. There is currently **1** vacancy
D. Reinforce the need for members to view all five 'Good Governance' videos.
E. 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		5
Actual	13	3 FDC, 1 KLWN	17	
Vacancies	1		1	

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

No	Name	Status (one of four categories)	Commentary
1	Christopher Barnes	Ratepayer	
2	Neil Cook	Co-opted member to vacancy - ratepayer	Oddfellows rep
3	Michael Fairey	Nominee of Ratepayer (M Crouch)	
4	Roger Gladwin	Ratepayer	
5	James Hawes	Nominee of Ratepayer (Westfield Farms)	
6	Peter Hawes	Ratepayer	
7	John Heading	Ratepayer	Chairman
8	Marc Heading	Ratepayer	
9	Alison Morris	Ratepayer	
10	Charles Sears	Ratepayer	
11	Robert Sears	Ratepayer	Vice-Chair
12	Verden Walker	Nominee of ratepayer (M Crouch)	
13	Will Gladwin	Nominee of Ratepayer (Barry Scott)	
14			

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

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

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

No	Name	Appointing Council	Commentary (one of three categories)
1	James Carney	(FDC)	Councillor

2	Christopher Crofts	(BCKLWN)	Councillor
3	Sidney Imafidon	(FDC)	Councillor
4	Charlie Marks	(FDC)	Councillor

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

2. Attendance

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

Elected Members

No	Name	28/5/2025	22/1/2025	13/6/2024	10/1/2024
1	Christopher Barnes	Present	Present	Apologies	Present
2	Neil Cook	Present	Present	Present	Present
3	Michael Fairey	Present	Present	Present	Present
4	Roger Gladwin	Present	Present	Present	Present
5	James Hawes	Present	Apologies	Apologies	Present
6	Peter Hawes	Apologies	Present	Present	Apologies
7	John Heading	Present	Present	Present	Present
8	Marc Heading	Present	Present	Apologies	Present
9	Alison Morris	Present	Apologies	Present	Present
10	Charles Sears	Present	Present	Present	Apologies
11	Robert Sears	Present	Present	Present	Present
12	Verden Walker	Apologies	Present	Apologies	Present
13	Will Gladwin	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
14					

Attendance at Chairs Meetings

No	Name	5/12/2025	6/12/2024	6/10/2023	13/12/2022
1	John Heading	Apologies	Present	apologies	attended

Appointed Members (current and previous)

No	Name (Council)	28/5/2025	22/1/2025	13/6/2024	10/1/2024
1	James Carney (FDC)		Apologies	Apologies	Present
2	Christopher Crofts (BCKLWN)	Present	Present	Present	Present
3	Sidney Imafidon (FDC)		Present	Present	Apologies
4	Charlie Marks (FDC)	Apologies	Present	Present	Present

3. Vacancies & appointments

(ADA Good Governance Guide - 3.8.3 – The Chair of your IDB should, withstanding exceptional circumstances, follow the principles within the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments 2016, which states that there is a strong presumption that no individual should serve more than two terms of three years or serve in any one post for more than ten years.)

(If there are any changes in Chair or Vice-Chair, the Bank mandates will be changed to match the current Chair or Vice-chair)

3.1 Appointment of Chairman – (Present Chairman – John Heading)

3.2 Appointment of Vice-Chair – (Present Vie-Chair – Robert Sears)

3.3 To appoint the Finance Committee – (Present Committee – Cllr C Crofts, R Gladwin, J Heading, Ms A Morris, R Sears)

3.4 There is currently only 1 vacancy.

4. Composition and amalgamations

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

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

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

5. Training

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

5.2 To date 1 of 17 Board Members have reported viewing all five videos.
To date 4 of 17 Board Members have reported viewing 2 of the 5 videos.
To date 1 of 17 Board Members has reported viewing 3 of the 5 videos.

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

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

Author Name: Polly Tombleson
Role: Senior Business Support Officer

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	7
Meeting:	**MANEA & WELNEY DDC (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: CHIEF ENGINEER'S SUMMARY & CAPITAL PROGRAMME**
Date:	**Wednesday 28th January 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Nicola Oldfield**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. **Authorise the Chairman and Vice Chairman to take decisions on enforcement action on behalf of the Board with advice form MLC.**
B. **Consider the development of an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement. The Board is asked to instruct the Consulting Engineer accordingly.**

1. Enforcement & Compliance Overview

Our Enforcement and Compliance Officers Dave Coles and Tony Payne joined us on the 23 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.

It is recommended that the Board authorise the Chairman and Vice Chairman to take decisions on enforcement action on behalf of the Board, having taken advice from MLC Officers. They will engage other Board Members as they see appropriate and determine whether a Special Meeting of the Board is needed on a risk and complexity basis.

Author Name: Nicola Oldfield
Role: Chief Engineer

Appendix 1: Applications responded to since last meeting
Appendix 2: M&E Report

Appendix 1

There have been 11 planning applications responded to since the last meeting.

There have been 1 infiltration device applications have been acknowledged since the last report.

There have been 2 Byelaw Consent applications (to discharge to a watercourse) application processed since the last meeting.

There has been no planning, Byelaw Consent (to undertake works in and around watercourses) applications processed since the last meeting.

Appendix 2

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**7**
Meeting:	**MANEA & WELNEY DDC (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL**
Date:	**Wednesday 28th January 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Dave Bantoft**

1. M&E key messages and advice

Other than the matters described below or previously reported, 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, pumps and control panels 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. 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.



Key Health Indicators

Station	Built	Pump	Pump Overhaul	Controls	Weedscreen Bars	WSC	WSC Overhaul	Controls
Glenhouse	1948/ 1997	1997	1997	1997	1997	1997	2021	1997
Purls Bridge	1978	1999 (1) 1986 (2)	2016 (1) 1986 (2)	1978	2008	2008	2008	2008

The Key Health Indicators table above shows the critical area for concern and improvement is the pumps. The pumps range from 28 to 39 years old with last refurbishments ranging from 9 to 28 years ago. The Board is advised to develop and start a pump refurbishment/replacement plan for the 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.

Submersible pumps are often not cost effective to repair and lead time on new pumps can be up to 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.

1.2 **Electricity Readings**

Andy Maddams supplies regular monthly meter readings and pump hours which are greatly appreciated and allow efficient verification of electricity bills.

1.3 **Purls Bridge**

The insulation resistance of pump 1 has improved and has been around 200M ohm at last inspections. Bedford Pumps have advised that a replacement of this type would be in the range of £70k to £100k.

Pump 2 had a slight wobble and will need to be monitored closely, this does sometimes happen will a build up of debris on the impellor, which can clear itself. It was fine at the last inspection. It may also be a sign of a pump issue that will need to be rectified if it continues. There is no record of a pump overhaul since its fitting in 1986. An overhaul of this type of pump is likely to be in the region of £50k.

The electrical control panels are at an age where reliability is a concern and plans should be put in place for their replacement. They are likely to cost in the region of £20k to £30k.

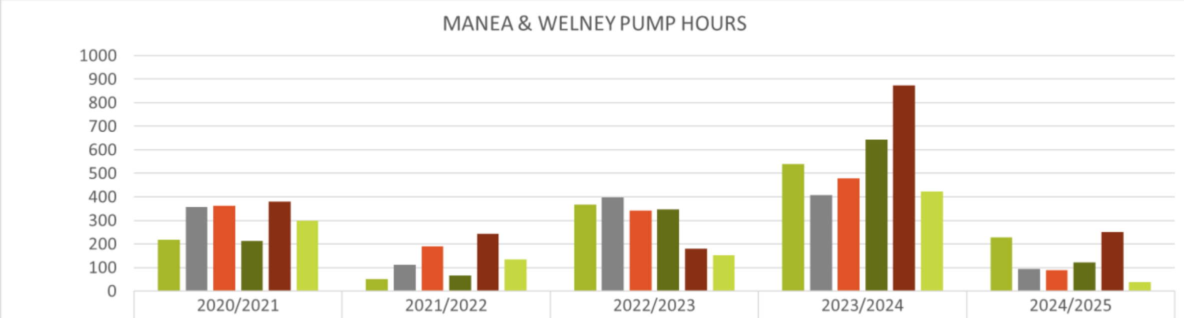
Since the last board meeting routine inspections have been carried out at Purls Bridge Pump Station on 18th June 25, 26th September 25 and 24th November 25. The most recent inspection confirmed the following recommendations/remarks:

1) Siphon Heater Failed.
2) Pump 2 Motor Heater not powered.
3) Recommend replacement electrical panels due to the age and deterioration of the equipment
4) Pump 2 has a little bit of a wobble when running.

1.4 **Glenhouse**

No routine inspections carried out by MLC at Glenhouse since last board report.

2. Pumping summary



	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
GH PUMP 1	219	50	367	538	228
GH PUMP 2	356	112	398	407	94
GH PUMP 3	363	191	342	479	88
GH PUMP 4	213	66	346	643	122
PB PUMP 1	379	244	180	872	250
PB PUMP 2	298	135	152	424	38

3. Inspections

3.1 HSB Engineering annual inspection for insurance at Purls Bridge was carried out during September 2025. Glenhouse Inspection date to be confirmed as WSC out of commission in September 2025.

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

Glenhouse	06-Nov-2025	06-Nov-2030
Purls Bridge	06-Nov-2025	06-Nov-2030

4. 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

Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners Superintendents Report January 2026

2025 will be remembered as a dry year.

By June I had only recorded 155.5mm of rainfall and that had only increased to 330.5mm by the end of October. I was beginning to think we would be in for a drier year than 2015, which had totaled only 484.5mm. November made amends with 118.5mm and the contribution from December of 55.5mm allowed the year to scrape past into second driest place with 504.5mm.

The rolling five-year average has now dropped from 719.25mm to 632mm and the overall average of twelve years 692.75mm.

With the dry weather an early end to pumping was inevitable, and the pumps were switched off at Purls Bridge on March 7th, and at Glen House on March 11th. With an expected arrival of the 360 on September 15th, I allowed natural loss to draw the levels down, only needed to pump to the maintenance level on September 4th at Glen House and September 23rd at Purls Bridge. Once the level was down it was maintained purely by the lack of significant rainfall.

The slacker was cracked open on May 1st to May 27th to maintain the summer level. I reopened it on May 30th as the level began to drop quite quickly and left it running until the river level dropped below the slacker sill on June 30th. River levels were lower than might be expected for most of the summer, after a good early start, and the EA were constantly playing catch up. The slacker was reopened on July 7th to July 14th, when the level fell too low again and on the 17th the EA ordered a closure. I was allowed to reopen on July 23rd and with sometimes a minimal flow into the District, keep the slacker open until ordered to close again on August 29th. The river had dropped below the sill some days before that date, and as I was content to allow the water to gently ebb away, it caused no further problems.

Mowing began on March 31st, and along with reed cutting later in the season, tractor work continued almost continuously until December 15th.

The 360 arrived as planned on September 15th, this year a 13m machine replaced the older, usual 10m one. The bigger machine and our regular driver made for a quicker journey through the parts of the District that required the attention of the machine. A length of drain between the railway and the RSPB cattle pens was reprofiled, and in the task, we also removed a troublesome pipe between the Oddfellows land and Bearts Farm. This will allow much better flows of water into the District drain from a large part of Station Road and Wisbech Road in Manea, as well as improved storm relief for the AW treatment works in Bearts Wood. The 360 work was completed on October 22nd.

Total distances maintained this year were as follows,

Flailed 33,800m (this includes drains that we maintain by agreement with other parties)
Reed Basket cutting 24,950m
360 Slubbing 25,600m.

The policy of 'little and often' combined with my preparation work prior to the 360 visiting reduces the time, and cost, of the 360 works and leaves the District water courses in good order for the following winter.

The machinery at both pumping stations has remained generally reliable. On September 9th the weedscreen cleaner at Glen House failed, with the grab stuck at the bottom of the screen about halfway along. Trying to recover the grab by pendant control was not possible and so there was no option but to call the MLC electrician for assistance. The failure was a simple one, a blown fuse on the three-phase system. Unfortunately, this had a knock-on effect of allowing the grab to over travel the level switches and causing the nylon gears in the contra rotational gearbox to strip. The grab was recovered after a fresh fuse was installed, and the gearbox removed for repair. On the 26th the refurbished gearbox was installed, the height switch adjusted and the cleaner has been no more trouble. I always make a point of using this weedscreen cleaner when there is no threat of windy conditions as experience has shown that excessive twisting of the grab under such situations causes problems with the hydraulic lines getting stretched, leading to premature failure.

Following a regular periodic inspection at Purls Bridge, a timer relay was replaced on Number 2 pump, as it had not been reliable in coming into duty.

The John Deere/Herder combination has again proved to be a reliable and efficient machine and is an ideal set up for the majority of non 360 work carried out in the District. Other than the usual servicing and replacement of wearing parts, the flail head, reed basket and slubbing bucket have all been reliable and efficient tools. As it approaches 4000 hours, the tractor continues to average fuel consumption of 10l/hour.

The Citroen Berlingo finally passed 50,000 miles in November, and apart from the usual, and somewhat expected trouble with punctures and suspension wear, it required two unscheduled visits to the garage. The gear shift linkage failed, leaving the van stuck in 3rd gear, which was slightly annoying, and a leak developed in the clutch fluid reservoir. Both of these issues were quickly resolved by LWVS at Welney. I strongly believe in keeping good relations with a local company and receiving prompt service as a result. As a side advantage, it benefits me when one of the family cars requires garage attention!

With the District in good order, wildlife abounds. There are the usual sightings of wildfowl making the most of the relatively undisturbed water courses for roosting in the winter and breeding in the spring. Good stocks of fish are to be seen; basking shoals of Roach and Rudd always enjoy the rush of water from the slacker during hot weather. Several Pike were landed in the autumn, two being over 10lb, and all in excellent physical condition. Young Pike have seen near the extreme ends of the water courses, which is also encouraging.

There have been no sightings, or evidence, of Mink. Otters have been seen hunting around Glen House, but I believe they still prefer the Delph and only cross the two rivers on an occasional basis.

Reed bed dwelling birds are in abundance, proof that the policy of swapping sides for maintenance every three to four years is ecologically sound. There has been an increase in the number of Little and Cattle Egrets following the flail mower and, most especially, the reed basket. The Cattle Egrets are so bold they seem to almost be tempted to ride on the end of the basket. Great White Egrets have also put in an appearance, and it is quite impressive to look along the drain and see all three Egret species and Heron as well.

2026 has already started well from a sighting perspective, with a Glossy Ibis making use of the District Drain on Colony Farm.

As usual it has been a pleasure to work with our Chairman in the last year, and I look forward to a busy, productive and successful 2026

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	10
Meeting:	**MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS**	**Subject:**	**GOVERNANCE**
Date:	**Wednesday 28th January 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Paul Burrows**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Consider and approve the Annual Return 2024/2025
B. Consider and approve the Auditors Report for 2024/2025
C. Note the continued appointment of Whitings as Internal Auditor.
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. Exercise of Public Rights
G. Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments

1. Annual Return & Auditors Report 2024/2025

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/Commissioners to consider:

- the comments of the auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2025. (Appendix 1)
- the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended 31st March 2025. (Appendix 2)

1.3 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).

1.4 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 Assessment and Insured Values

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

3.2 The Board are asked to consider and approve their insured sums:

MANEA & WELNEY DDC
INSURED VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS

PUMPING STATIONS

	As At 1st April 2026	
PURLS BRIDGE PUMPING STATION	903,257.00	
GLEN HOUSE PUMPING STATION	1,842,150.00	
OLD GLENHOUSE PUMPING STATION	363,630.00	
WELCHES DAM	6,060.00	
	3,115,097.00	Index linked

4. Exercise of Public Rights

4.1 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.

4.2 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.

4.3 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.

4.4 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.

5. Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments:

5.1 The clerk to report.

Author Name: Paul Burrows
Role: Clerk

Appendix 1 Annual Return 2024/2025
Appendix 2 Audit Report 2024/2025

Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners

Notice of conclusion of the audit

Annual Governance & Accountability Return for the year ended 31st March 2025

Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014
Section 16 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015 /234)

1 The Audit of accounts for the Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners for the year ended 31st March 2025 has been completed and the accounts have been published.

2 The Annual Governance & Accountability Return including the auditor's certificate and opinion is available for inspection and copying by any local government elector of the area of Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners

The Clerk
Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners
85 Whittlesey Road
March
Cambridgeshire
PE15 0AH

between the hours of 9.00am and 4.00pm on Mondays to Fridays (excluding public holidays), when any local elector may make copies of the Annual Return.

3 Copies will be provided to any local elector on payment of £2.40 for each copy of the Annual Return

Announcement made by: P Burrows - Clerk to the Commissioners

Date of Announcement: 22nd September 2025

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. *(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")*			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations *(during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).*	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR *(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).*	✓		

O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable
			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

15/05/2025 30/05/2025 03/06/2025

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

WHITINGS LLP

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit [signature] – WHITINGS LLP

Date 03/06/2025

***If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).**

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

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

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

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

28/05/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

C.1059

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

Chair John E Heading.

Clerk RMarain

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

	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	446,897	445,888	*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	224,408	238,847	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	19,373	68,312	*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	40,855	44,086	*Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.*
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	203,935	166,649	*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	445,888	542,312	*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	529,376	575,633	*The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March –* ***To agree with bank reconciliation.***
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	2,611,078	2,611,078	*The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.*
10. Total borrowings	0	0	*The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).*

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

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 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

AWool

Date 13.05.2025

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

28/05/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

C1060

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

John 2 Harding

Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2024/25

In respect of **Manea and Welney District Drainage Commissioners – DB0046**

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2024/25

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

None

3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature PKF Littlejohn LLP Date 15/09/2025

Whitings
Chartered Accountants LLP
Fenland House, 15B Hostmoor Avenue
March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 0AX
t: 01354 652304
e: march@whitingsllp.co.uk
w: whitingsllp.co.uk

BB/MM053
30 June 2025

Messrs. P Burrows, A Wool and S Ablett
Middle Level Offices
85 Whittlesey Road
March
Cambs.
PE15 0AH

Dear Messrs. P Burrows, A Wool, and S Ablett,

MLC administered Internal Drainage Boards - Internal Audit 2024-2025

Having completed the internal audit work for the various Internal Drainage Boards administered by the Middle Level Commissioners officers for the year ended 31 March 2025, we are pleased to provide you with the following recommendations to be considered for implementation. We have included some general points and some points which are related to specific boards.

General points

1. **Employee Benefits**

   As of 6 April 2025, HMRC has implemented a significant change in the tax treatment of double cab pickups. These vehicles are now generally classified as cars rather than vans for Benefit-in-Kind (BIK) purposes, unless they are primarily suited for the conveyance of goods.

   As a result, BIK charges will now be based on CO_2 emissions, which could lead to higher tax liabilities for employees and increased Class 1A National Insurance contributions for employers. However, vehicles that were purchased, leased, or ordered before 6 April 2025 may continue to be treated as vans until the earlier of disposal, lease expiry, or 5 April 2029.

   We recommend that businesses review their fleet policies and carefully consider the tax implications when acquiring new vehicles.

   In relation to other employee benefits, we note that, where applicable, these are being correctly recognised as Benefit-in-Kind and disclosed on form P11D. We encourage employers to regularly review the valuation of such benefits to ensure they accurately reflect what the employee receives—particularly in cases where living accommodation or similar provisions are offered.

Client comment:

This was considered and new double cab pickups ordered before 6th April 2025. This will be reviewed again before 5th April 2029.

An audit of Benefits-in-Kind declared and P11D's has been arranged for October.

2. Provisions

We are pleased to note that, in the main; provisions recognised within the accounts of applicable boards are being monitored and written back as required. There are still isolated cases where provisions are "brought forward and carried forward" that relate in excess of the standard life of debt, being 6 years. Whilst we are satisfied there is reasonable rationale for their retention we would question whether payments could be reinforced if the life of debt has been exceeded, with the exception of amounts recognised in respect of development contributions. We would encourage continued review of provisions brought forward from prior years, especially those exceeding the standard life of debt, writing these off as appropriate, with board approval as appropriate.

Client comment:

As part of the year end accounting procedures, provisions/balances are looked at on an individual basis and decisions made on relevance as to retain or to write back.

3. Surplus Funds –

In previous years we have communicated the importance of investing cash assets that are not required to fund operational needs, to combat the erosion of these liquid assets through inflation. We are pleased to see that the organisation have taken heed of this advice and made a number of deposits with Barclays, in addition to discussing the potential pooling of cash resources with IDB's under their administration to gain access to higher rates of interest. Although inflation has now eased to 3.4% as of May 2025, it remains essential to continue reinvesting and actively managing these assets to preserve and grow their value over time.

Client comment:

We are currently making treasury deposits for individual Boards within the mandated authority given by each authority but need to manage this with specific cashflow requirements while also making consideration to having balances available for potential event situations requiring immediate cash. We will be monitoring additional staff time required to manage this while discussing matters further with our bankers.

4. **Rental of Land**

It was previously noted that some IDB's were renting out land to tenants at lower than market rate and that this should be reviewed to ensure value for money principles were being applied.

We are happy to note that some IDB's have increased the rental values of land to market rates, although there are still some IDB's where the rental value is significantly below market value and we advise that the market values are increased for these boards to ensure value for money principles are applied going forwards.

<u>*Client comment:*</u>

Boards which have land holding for rent generally review rents in accordance with tenancy agreements and use local land agents for guidance. Several Boards have small holdings of land which are let at reasonable rates with a view to keep the land tidy and in good order therefore they are not necessarily commercially viable. Several Boards have slamp land, which cannot be considered the same as general agricultural land for rental purposes. All Boards look to get the best rents available, but these are relevant to the size and type of land being let.

5. **Bank Transfers**

We are satisfied with the accuracy of bank and cash balances and have successfully reconciled these to the underlying accounting records. We note that transfers between bank accounts are being recorded as movement per-month in the accounting records, on enquiry this was due to time constraints experienced within the finance department during the financial year. Whilst we are satisfied that reconciliations have been carried out manually correctly, we would recommend that all bank movements are fully reflected in the postings to the accounting software of the board.

<u>*Client comment:*</u>

Concerning audit point 3 - surplus funds, to maximise returns within the mandated authority with Barclays we are required to operate linked accounts, with receipts/payments being made from the standard current account. This account has a fixed balance which is adjusted following receipts/payments to it - surplus balances above the fixed limit transferred to the Business Premium account, deficit balances below the fixed amount transferred from the Business Premium account to the current account. These transfers are adjusted through the accounting software in relation to the statement frequency, with both accounts being fully reconciled - a credit in one account being matched with a debit in the other. Current staff resources do not allow for additional time to be spent transferring individual values, the net transfer for the statement being made - as we are doing this for around 28 accounts this currently provides the best value for money to the boards.

6. Bank reconciliation and verification

We are pleased to note that bank reconciliations have been conducted on a monthly basis throughout the year. However, we observed that verification was not completed for the first two months of the year across all Boards.

We acknowledge that this period coincides with a particularly demanding time for the staff from financial department, who are focused on preparing year-end financial reports for submission ahead of the 1st July 2025 deadline for external audit.

Nonetheless, we would like to emphasise that timely and documented verification of bank reconciliations is a fundamental internal control. It plays a critical role in ensuring the accuracy and integrity of financial records. We therefore recommend that verification be consistently performed and evidenced on a monthly basis, including during peak reporting periods.

Client comment:

Control accounts and bank reconciliations are carried out for the quarter to 30th June every year and we do not have the capacity to complete these monthly at that time. Accounts are still be prepared in this time and adjustments made, therefore closing/opening balances have not been confirmed.

7. Website Publication

We are pleased to note that, for several years, a substantial amount of information has been made publicly available and is generally kept up to date, with links directing users to the most current versions. However, we have occasionally observed inaccuracies—such as links pointing to outdated or incorrect documents. For example, a link may reference the Capital Improvement Programme for the 2023/24 financial year instead of the current 2024/25 version. We also note that the most relevant version of this document is available within the published meeting minutes.

Nonetheless, we would like to take this opportunity to emphasise the importance of ensuring that all published information is accurate and up to date.

Client comment:

Every effort is made to update the relevant pages of all authorities in an efficient and timely manner and in accordance with the regulations.

Your comment is noted, and procedures are being amended concerning this for the future.

8. Fees for the service of District Officers and Pump Attendants

We have noted that not all boards are approving payment rates for the services rendered by District Officers and/or Pumping Attendant during the board meetings, instead approval is confirmed as a percentage increase, generally being in line with the Middle Level Commissioners award.

We appreciate that the board is approving the payment lists, where the amount is specified. However, we would suggest to include the amount to the discussion during the meeting and confirm the approved sum in the minutes as per prior years.

Client comment:

District officer/pump attendants are contracted services, and the boards are approving an amount for the provision of these services, however, the point is noted and the actual amount payable discussed at the meeting should be recorded in the minutes.

Specific Points

Waldersey IDB and Hundred of Wisbech IDB – Joint Pumping Arrangement

As in previous years it is noted that there is a discrepancy between debtor held in Waldersey IDB and the creditor held in Hundred of Wisbech IDB.

Waldersey IDB – Debtor	£37,696.50
Hundred of Wisbech IDB - Creditor	£40,000.00
Difference	**£2,303.50**

We are pleased to note that this difference is insignificant for the current year. The difference arises due to the accounts of Hundred of Wisbech IDB being completed before Waldersey IDB, leading to a provision being required in the former's books in the absence of more accurate information being available. The difference is adjusted in the following year's Accounts for Hundred of Wisbech.

We have also noted that the closing debtors balance in Waldersey IDB and the closing creditors balance in Hundred of Wisbech IDB were overstated in the previous financial year by £38,700.30. This discrepancy arose because the Boards were not aware that a grant recovery would be available later in the year to offset excess pumping costs incurred during the 2023/24 financial year. This issue only came to light following the completion of the audit for that year.

We can confirm that the overstated amounts have been correctly adjusted during the current financial year in both Waldersey IDB and Hundred of Wisbech IDB.

We note that there have been discussions to potentially amalgamate the two boards, this would eradicate the anomaly. However, in the absence of this, we suggest that meetings and account preparation periods be brought into line, if possible, to eradicate this issue.

Client comment:

These costs relate to the contribution for the costs of the shared pumping facility and at the time of production of the year end accounting statements discussions were taking place concerning potential changes to the contribution because of changes in land use. A new proposal had been put forward which was broadly approved by both Boards.

There are no current plans to change meeting dates so as one set of accounts is finalised before the other there is likely to remain creditor/debtor position in both sets of accounts although now that all older balances have been cleared, any in-year balance should be cleared, generally a year in arrears.

At the 2024 meetings for both Boards amalgamation was discussed and both Boards approved to enter discussions concerning a potential amalgamation between the Boards. It is unlikely that any amalgamation will be completed by 31st March 2026 at which time both Boards are moving to the Water Management Alliance.

Waldersey IDB

We have noted that the Board owns two parcels of land, located at Green Drove and Crooked Bank. We understand that the Green Drove land has been professionally revalued and is situated near the pumping station. However, the Crooked Bank land, which is located next to the former pumping station, has not been revalued. Based on our discussions during the course of the audit, it would appear that the Board currently has no plans to undertake a revaluation of this land.

Both parcels of land should be revalued and recorded in the Board's fixed asset register to ensure these assets are properly reflected in the financial records of the Board.

Client comment:

Clerking and administration of Waldersey IDB is being transferred to the Water Management Alliance in 2026. Board approval would be required to action this request. We would advise the board to approve for a valuation exercise to take place at their next Board meeting which is in June 2026.

Manea & Welney IDB

During our review, it was noted that the Debtors Report showed a significant unallocated amount of £1,625,843.45. We understand that this is an isolated incident related to software issue that has subsequently been rectified and hasn't affected the accuracy of the financial statements prepared.

Client comment:

Your comment is noted.

Upwell IDB

We observed that the new hire purchase agreement applies the straight-line interest allocation method. We have recommended adopting the effective interest method, which more accurately reflects the cost of borrowing over the life of the agreement and is in line with UK accounting standards.

Based on our discussions during the course of the audit, we understand that this recommendation will be implemented in the accounts for the next financial year. The impact on the current financial statements is not considered material.

Client comment:

Your comment is noted.

We take this opportunity to thank your staff involved in our audit for their assistance and cooperation in achieving substantial completion by the stated target deadlines. We trust that the engagement team have not caused significant disruption during the execution of their procedures.

Yours sincerely,

Whitings LLP

Whitings LLP

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	11
Meeting:	**MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING BACK**
Date:	**Wednesday 28th January 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Andrew Wool/Sam Ablett**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Note the Budgeting review.
B. Highland Water Contributions from the Environment Agency.
C. Consider and approve the payments detailed within Appendix 1.

Finance Officer's review and key messages

Forecast for Income/Expenditure against Budget
For 2025/2026 the estimated expenditure for the Board was £258,238 and a rate of 54.00p was set to raise this through agricultural drainage rates and special levy.

The current forecast for income/expenditure to 31st March 2026 shows that expenditure is likely to be in line with the budget against which rates were set.

There will be a full reconciliation of balances at the financial year end.

1. Budgeting

1.1 For 2025/2026 the estimated expenditure for the Board was £258,238 and a rate of 54.00p was set to raise this through agricultural drainage rates and special levy.
The current forecast for income/expenditure to 31st March 2026 shows that expenditure is likely to be in line with the budget against which rates were set.

However, members are advised that these figures are estimating pumping costs to be in-line with the budget proposal against which the rates have been set and should therefore also consider the significant financial implications major storm events can have on drainage Board budgets.

2. Highland Water Contributions

2.1 Under Section 57 of Land Drainage Act 1991 the Board can make a claim for funding to the Environment Agency for the additional costs of the onward management of water from the district's highland. It is at the Environment Agency's discretion if they pay the contribution, and it is accounted for within the local team's annual maintenance budget.

2.2 When completing the budget proposal claims were estimated against the likely out-turn for 2024/2025 and the budgeted expenditure for 2025/2026. The highland water claim included within the rating estimates was £650. The final submitted claim amounted to £1,358.09 (£1,154.44 representing 80% of the Boards' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2025/26 plus £203.64 representing the balance of claim for the financial year 2024/25).

3. Payments for 2025

3.1 Payments are detailed within Appendix 1

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

Appendix 1 Payments for 2024/25

Appendix 1

MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Payments 2025/2026 (1st April 2025 - 31st December 2025)

Bank charges	3.00
Information Commissioners - Data Protection Registration renewal	52.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery, travelling, health & safety contract and storm recovery - tranche 1 claim	10,472.32
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	938.90
Middle Level Commissioners - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	340.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Road tax for AU15 XHB	335.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of hour meter and frame (Account from RS Components)	55.85
Anglia Farmers - Road diesel	65.09
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	295.51
Middle Level Commissioners - Board ID cards x 2	14.74
Middle Level Commissioners - Court fees	0.50
Ratatak - Pest control (April - June 2025)	90.40
Wave - Metered water supply	30.34
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	15.53
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Purls Bridge Pumping Station	8,534.02
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Glenhouse Pumping Station	1,187.41
Environment Agency - Precept	41,554.93
Ratatak - AF Rat boxes	192.00
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Purls Bridge Pumping Station	718.56
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Glenhouse Pumping Station	246.63
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	16.01
Mr Willis - Rates refund	103.68
Anglia Farmers - Road diesel	61.02
N L Hydraulics - Hydraulic hose and spiral hose guard	302.62
Ben Burgess Coates - 3,750 hour service of John Deere Tractor - AO20 NWL	1,028.01
LW Vehicle Services Limited - Supply and fit new gear cables	311.21
Ruth Martin - Expenses in connection with Board meeting (Account from Lamb & Flag)	310.25
LW Vehicle Services Limited - Supply, fit and balance tyre	86.92
Anglia Farmers - Road diesel, sand cement mortar and card fee	32.92
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Purls Bridge Pumping Station	618.76
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Glenhouse Pumping Station	129.43
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	16.11
Bank charges	6.00
FJS Services Ltd - 27 x 400g Lithium grease gun cartrdiges and broom	96.94
Ratatak - Pest control (July - September 2025)	94.01
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	16.11
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Purls Bridge Pumping Station	609.41
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Glenhouse Pumping Station	66.12
Wave - Metered water supply	26.78
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	295.51
Anglia Farmers - Road diesel	64.40
Anglia Farmers - Card fee	1.21
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	16.11
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Purls Bridge Pumping Station	563.48
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Glenhouse Pumping Station	195.36
LW Vehicle Services Limited - Supply and fit new reservoir and brake fluid	209.86
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Purls Bridge Pumping Station	557.81
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Glenhouse Pumping Station	171.28
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	16.11
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	880.20
IMServ - Half hourly electricity data collection charge to 22 October 2026	201.22
Anglia Farmers - Road diesel	71.62
IMServ - Electricity meter annual maintenance contract to 22nd October 2026	79.22
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit fee (2024-2025 accounts)	1,008.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges and Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2024-2025 accounts)	10,468.37
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	117.91
Ratatak - Pest control (October - December 2025)	94.01
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	6,377.15
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of death in service insurance	176.34
Wave - Metered water supply	39.62
Fen Group - Drain maintenance	5,138.40
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Purls Bridge Pumping Station	561.44
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Glenhouse Pumping Station	138.11
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	16.11
Anglia Farmers -3,001 litres of gas oil and road diesel	2,382.47
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to automatic weedscreen cleaner at Glenhouse pumping station	958.54
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	308.71
Mastenbroek Environmental Ltd - 4 pressure arms, locknuts, rivets, 8 toothed knives and 4 cases of screws	489.98
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of bearing (Account from RS Components)	28.88
Environment Agency - Precept	41,554.92
Fen Group - Drain maintenance	6,796.80
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	170.40
Cambridgeshire County Council - Annual rent (Right of access)	180.00
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	16.11
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Purls Bridge Pumping Station	587.97
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Glenhouse Pumping Station	258.28
British Gas - Electricity charges Glenhouse Pumping Station	78.98
Anglia Farmers - Road diesel	57.08
British Gas - Purls Bridge Pumping Station	716.53
Anglia Farmers - Road diesel	71.66
Vodafone - Mobile telephone charges	16.11
EDF Energy - Electricity charges Glenhouse Pumping Station	8.05
British Gas - Electricity charges Glenhouse Pumping Station	173.80
British Gas - Electricity charges Purls Bridge Pumping Station	1,229.31
District labour	30,213.93
NEST Pension Contributions	5,787.83
	188,620.23

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	12
Meeting:	**MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING FORWARD**
Date:	**Wednesday 28th January 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Andew Wool/Sam Ablett**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Consider the Finance Officer's summary
B. Fees, remuneration and subscriptions
C. Review & approve Determination of land for rating purposes & Rate arrears (Confidential papers)
D. Note the Precept to the Environment Agency
E. Review & Approve Rating Estimates for 2025/2026
F. Consider & approve the Agricultural Drainage Rates and Special Levy requirements for 2026/2027

Finance Officer's summary and key messages

When considering the rate for 2026/2027 members should also consider likely future capital investment requirements at the pumping stations.

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 2026 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 2025/26 rates). Members should therefore consider if they think the provision is reasonable when setting the rate.

The estimated expenditure for the year is £258,238, equivalent to a rate of 54.00p, the rate for 2025/2026 being 54.00p.

1. Fees, Remunerations and Subscriptions

1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Finance Committee for the District Superintendents wages, pension contributions and future labour requirements.

1.2 Subscription to the Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA) to increase by 5% for 2026 therefore the annual fee will be £811.00

1.3 The Board is also asked to consider and reaffirm its contribution estimated to be £150 towards the Board Member role representing local IDBs within Water Resources East (WRE).

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.

The Anglian (Great Ouse) Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC) determined that the Precept will increase by 2% for 2026.

The precept for 2025 was £83,09.85

3. Estimates for 2025/26

3.1 The estimated budget for 2025/26 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 2026/27

4.1 Appendix 2 details the rate requirement that needs to be set and approved by the Board 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.

4.3 Standard provisions have been included.

There will be a new electricity supply contract in place from October 2026 and there are currently no indicators as to possible unit rates for this time. A general inflationary increase has been included.

There has been no indicator for possible insurance costs, and a general inflationary increase has been included.

The Boards policy to include sums for the pump overhaul programme and plant replacements has been included. For future a view will need to be taken on the Commissioners tractor/flail mower replacement.

These budget provisions indicate a rate requirement for 2026/2027 of 54.00p, the rate set for 2025/2026 being 54.00p.

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

Appendix 1 Estimates for 2026/27
Appendix 2 Rate Requirements for 2026/27

Appendix 1

MANEA & WELNEY DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Rating Estimates 2026/2027

	Approved Estimates 2025/2026	Actual To 30/11/2025	Probable Actual 2025/2026	Estimated 2026/2027	Estimated 2027/2028	Estimated 2028/2029
1 CHANNEL MAINTENANCE	20,000	9,946	20,000	20,500	21,000	21,500
2 LABOUR	48,500	32,442	48,500	51,750	51,500	52,000
3 REPAIRS AND RENEWALS	12,000	4,119	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Pump overhaul	15,000	-	15,000	7,000	15,000	15,000
4 FUEL	45,000	13,230	45,000	45,000	46,000	47,000
5 RATES, INSURANCES & TELEPHONES	6,500	6,492	6,492	7,100	7,250	7,500
6 ADMINISTRATION	19,700	7,717	20,250	21,250	22,000	22,750
7 TECHNICAL SERVICES	3,000	876	2,750	3,000	3,000	3,000
8 E. A. PRECEPT	83,110	83,110	83,110	84,772	86,467	88,197
9 PLANT REPLACEMENT	10,000	-	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
	262,810	157,931	**263,103**	**262,372**	274,217	278,947
INCOME	**4,572**	3,930	**5,680**	**4,134**	4,000	4,000
Net Expenditure	**258,238**	154,002	**257,423**	**258,238**	270,217	274,947
Rate Requirement	**0.5400**			**0.5400**	0.5643	0.5742
Increase on previous year budget				0.00%	**4.50%**	**1.75%**

Appendix 2

Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners

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 2026/2027 is: -

a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 71.40%

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

Fenland District Council -	18.28%
Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk –	10.32%

28.60%

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £3,419.

In 2026/2027 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levy would raise £4,788.

Estimated revenue cash balance in hand on 31st March 2026 - £354,000

The estimated net expenditure for the Commissioners Revenue and Capital Programmes in 2026/2027 is £258,238 and equivalent to: -

a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 54.00p and

b) a Special levy on Fenland District Council of £47,258
a Special levy on Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk of £26,684

In 2025/2026 a rate of 54.00p in the £ was set, together with Special levies of £47,258 on Fenland District Council and £26,684 on Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk to raise £258,238.

The Commissioners should consider the future level of balances required when setting the rate for 2026/2027.

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Commissioners

January 2026