NEEDHAM & LADDUS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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Administered by:

7th April 2026

Dear Board Members

Upcoming meeting of the Board
Tuesday 14th April 2026

Please find overleaf the agenda for the meeting of the Board to be hosted at the Crown Lodge, Outwell PE14 8SE at 7pm on Tuesday 14th April 2026.

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 Gemma 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

NEEDHAM & LADDUS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Tuesday 14th April 2026 – 7pm
Crown Lodge Hotel, Outwell PE14 8SE

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 - 15	Chair
4	Constitution & Membership	Pages 16 - 18	Clerk
5	Clerk's Report	Pages 19 - 24	Clerk
6	Environment Officer's Report	Page 25	Clerk
7	Chairman's Items	Verbal	Chair
8	Consulting Engineer's Reports, including:	Pages 26 - 33	Clerk or Engineer
9	Health & Safety	Pages 34 - 40	Chair
10	District Officer's Report	Verbal	DO
11	Governance • Accounts Return for 2024/2025 • Auditors report for 2024/2025	Pages 41 - 43 Pages 44 - 48	Clerk
12	Finance Report: looking back • Payments 2025 • Annual Accounts and Finance papers 2025/2026	Pages 49 - 50 Page 51 Pages 52 - 55	Clerk
13	Finance Report: looking forward • Estimates for 2026/2027 • Rate requirements for 2026/2027	Pages 56 Page 58 Page 59	Clerk
15	Date of Next Meeting - Tuesday 13th April 2027	Verbal	Chair
16	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.)

NEEDHAM AND LADDUS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Needham and Laddus IDB
Held at the Crown Lodge, Outwell on 15th April 2025.

PRESENT

James Martin (Chair)	Chris Robinson
Jonathan Fenn (Vice-Chair)	Colin Rose (KLWN)
Steven Calton	John Scott
Christopher Crofts (KLWN)	Michael Scott
Keith Harrison (KLWN)	Paul West
Peter Lankfer	

Mrs Ruth Martin representing the Clerk and Mr Morgan Lakey representing the consulting engineer were in attendance.

Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Mrs Ruth Martin to the Board.

Apologies for absence were received from Dale Boyce, Michael Fenn and Alan Giles.

B.423 Declarations of Interest

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

Jonathan Fenn declared an interest as an employee of Middle Level Commissioners.

Mr Rose and Mr Crofts declared interests (as councillors of The Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk) in matters relating to planning applications.

B.424 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

RESOLVED

> That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 16th April 2024 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.425 Constitution & Membership

Election

Mrs Martin reported that the term of office of the Members of the Board will expire on 31st October 2025. Mrs Martin advised Board members that they will receive an election notice during July or August and reminded them to ensure that this is returned as soon as possible and before 31st October 2025.

Attendance

The attendance of Board members was reviewed, and the Chairman agreed to make contact with Mr Tom Brown to ascertain if it was his intention to remain a Board member as he had not attended the previous four meetings.

Vacancies and Appointments

The resignation of Mr Andrew Lensen has been received by the Chairman, thus creating a vacancy on the Board. The Chairman advised the Board that Mr Joshua Martin had indicated his willingness to join the Board, and Mr Crofts, seconded by Mr Rose, proposed that Mr Joshua Martin be appointed.

Training

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

RESOLVED

That the Chairman contact Mr Tom Brown regarding his position on the Board.

That Mr Joshua Martin be appointed to the Board.

B.426 Clerk's Report

Mrs Martin advised that the Clerk's Report would be taken as read, asking for further consideration to be made of the following points.

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. The Board expressed their satisfaction with the model.

Highland Water and IDB Precept

Although this Board does not have a highland and therefore no highland water claims, Mrs Martin outlined the issues being faced by other Boards. After being advised that claims would not be paid in full, a formal appeal was narrowly avoided after the shortfall 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.

Mrs Martin advised that the IDB Precept had increased by 2% this year, and that the Clerk was considering whether an appeal should be lodged, and if this would have greater gravitas if this were on behalf of all the Boards that he administers. The Board agreed to delegate this decision to the Clerk acting with the Chair.

Resolution

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

MLC Services to IDBs

Mr West asked if there was any indication that MLC may withdraw their clerking and technical services provision for this Board, and if there was any need for this IDB to amalgamate with other boards that have pumped systems. Mrs Martin drew his attention to the final item on the agenda, Middle Level IDB Change, and the associated report, to be discussed later in the meeting. Mr Fenn advised that he thought that both may be possible but, in the future, and not at this time. Mr West voiced his concern that amalgamation with a pumped Board would have a significant impact on the rating, although Mrs Martin and Mr Fenn both advised that other Boards in a similar situation have differential rating which means that the pumped areas are rated differently to the gravity areas.

Mr Fenn went on to add that this board has strong membership and has amalgamated with Laddus in the past without issue. Therefore, he doesn't see the need to amalgamate in the next 5 years unless it is forced upon them. Mr Calton thought that local amalgamation would be a defensive measure, and the Chair asked if forced amalgamation could be held off. Mr Fenn thought that if the Board were diligent and open minded and showing good service to ratepayers then it would be possible, but if they were to struggle with membership then it would be more difficult. As the district is not pumped then it could be less of an issue compared to a pumped District Board. Mr J Scott thought that the Board may need to pump in future due to changes in the land, and the Chair concluded the discussion, summarising that the general consensus within the Board is that they would like to stay independent, noting that Churchfield and Plawfield IDB are the only other non-pumped Board in the area.

Fens Reservoir

Mrs Martin drew the Boards attention to the Clerks Report. She advised that although this Board are not directly impacted by the scheme, all IDBs that gravity outfall or pump into the Middle Level watercourses also have an interest. She advised that the Middle Level Commissioners will be working with Anglian Water over the coming months in their development of the Development Consent Order, and MLC need to secure specific delegation authority from the Board in readiness for this. Therefore, the Board are asked to approve that they act as one with the Commissioners and other impacted IDBs, and to provide the relevant authorisations for staff and consultants. The Board are also advised that the Fens Reservoir DCO may need to overwrite/disallow existing statutory powers held by the Board, and that decision making on this is delegated to the Clerk and Chairman/Vice Chairman.

Mr Fenn reported that it was unlikely that the scheme would have any real impact on this Board, and that they would be unlikely to see any real impact on the water levels, especially as the Middle Level Commissioners were bounded by the statutory responsibilities in relation to Navigation.

RESOLVED

> That the Board act as one with the Middle Level Commissioners and other impacted IDBs. Therefore, the Middle Level Commissioners staff, consultants and legal service provider are authorised to act on behalf of and represent the Board.
>
> Acknowledge that the Fens Reservoir DCO may need to overwrite/disallow existing statutory powers held by the Board and delegate the decision making on this to the Clerk, engaging with the Chairman/Vice Chairman as he sees fit.

B.427 Environment Officers' Report

Mr Lakey referred to the Environment Officer's Report, advising that the report would be taken as read. He reminded the Board of the Revised Environmental Services Package and associated fee increase.

Mr Lakey advised that the Biodiversity Action Plan has developed over a number of years and there is a legal requirement that it is reviewed every 5 years. Every IDB has one, and it acknowledges protected species in the system and how to remain compliant. This year is the review year, and the Chairman has met with Abigail Leach, MLC Ecologist, to carry out this year's BAP Visit.

All Board members were asked if they notice any protected species in the Boards areas to please advise straight away, especially as some species attract grant which may be available to the Board. Flail and excavator drivers have also received some further training. The Chair advised that he thinks that the Board can work within the restrictions.

Mr Lakey thought that everything the Board is doing already is pretty good and the BAP has shown this. The high priority drains are more intensely managed, therefore meaning lower priority areas are less intensely managed. Any changes to management need documenting, but this does not mean that changes cannot be made.

Water vole surveys must be carried out for any spade in the ground works. It is requested that any bank slips are reported as soon as they are identified. A survey carried out as soon as possible after the slip may show that there were no water voles at that time. However, if it is left until harvest for example, voles may have recolonised which then affects when works can be done, so please report any slips as soon as possible.

RESOLVED

That the Environment Report be approved.

B.428 Chairman's Items

The Chairman advised that he had nothing particular to report. He said that as Board members, they just have to try to do their job, keeping the land drained whilst being compliant.

B.429 Consulting Engineers' Reports

The Board considered the reports of the Consulting Engineers, and taking the report as read Mrs Martin drew the Board's attention to some of the items contained within the Consulting Engineers' report.

Residential Development on land at 34 Isle Bridge Road, Outwell – Mr D Cuckow (MLC Ref Nos 203, 210, 309, 331, 358 & 361) & Welcombe Homes Ltd (MLC Ref No 369 & 433).

The Planning Engineer has asked for the Board's guidance on the issues identified within the report, asking if the Board wish to confirm with the Borough Council that the points raised have not been resolved and/or reminding the applicant of its responsibilities in respect of the Boards Byelaws. The Board asked the Planning Engineer to pursue this issue.

Re-development of the former Doug Clark Produce Ltd site to east of Fenway, Basin Road, Outwell (MLC Ref nos 319/PL/156, 190, 218, 221, 247, 268, 296 & 419)

Mr Lakey reported that some information has been received in relation to this application, but that the development is still very close to the Anglian Water main which may have a significant impact on the Boards system should it fail. The Board asked that the Planning Engineer continues to pursue this.

Standing Advice Note

Mrs Martin advised that the Middle Level Commissioners have published a 'standing advice note', effectively declaring that the Middle Level flood and drainage infrastructure is 'at capacity'. The Board have been asked to confirm whether it wishes to create, adopt and issue standing advice notes for its district and instruct the Consulting Engineer accordingly.
Mr Lakey advised that for the Board this means that they will accept greenfield run off rate and not unattenuated rates for any developments. As the Middle Level Commissioners' system that the Board gravitates to is at capacity, then this Board is at capacity by default.

Mr Fenn highlighted his concern about the culvert at Point 50, the aging concrete culvert which is 600mm in diameter and located below The Cottons. There is a lot of infill development in the area, giving concern as this is a low wet area and culvert is in a precarious condition. A grant bid application to replace the culvert was unsuccessful. The Board also has other structures within the system that restrict additional flows.

Current indications are that there will be no funding allocation within the current spending review period but there are no works currently identified in the Board's Capital Programme. The Chair acknowledged the importance of building funds just in case. The next review period is not yet known but likely to be 2027. Mr Lakey suggested that the Board could consider replacement of the culvert in future bids based on current criteria. Mr Fenn suggested that the Board could consider taking out a Public Works Loan in an emergency.

RESOLVED

> That the Board wishes to create, adopt and issue standing advice notes for its district and instruct the Consulting Engineer accordingly.

Operational Services Report

Mr Lakey reported that the last year went as normal with no great issues. He drew the Boards attention to the Operational Services Report, detailing works undertaken last year and the district inspection, advising that the drains are in good condition. Mr Lakey advised that one section was missed which will be included in this year's maintenance. He referred to Reach 42-43 downstream of Dodds Stile, as pictured in the report, and advised that this reach would get done this year. The Estimated Costs were as listed, and Nigel Harrison is available if the Board are happy to continue using him to carry out maintenance.

Some Board members reported issues with damage to Land Drain Markers, and Mr Lakey agreed to mention this to Nigel Harrison. It was established that as Mr Harrison works on an hourly basis, there is no form of contract in place that makes provision for the payment of damages although it was acknowledged that if the works were let on a fixed priced contract basis, the costs would be significantly higher than at present. Mr J Scott felt that the issue needed resolving as it is a serious issue, and the Chair asked Mr Lakey to discuss further with Mr Harrison, adding that the Board would rather see a good job done slower rather than quicker with damage.

RESOLVED

That Mr Lakey speak to Nigel Harrison regarding the damage to Land Drain Markers.

That the reports be approved.

B.430 Health & Safety

The Chairman referred to the report received from Cope Safety Management following their visit to the district, on the 12th February 2025. Martyn Isaacson from Middle Level Commissioners represented the Board.

An inspection of Point 2 was carried out, and the Chair reported that no accidents recorded. The Board expressed their satisfaction with the report.

Mr Fenn advised the Board of two overspills in the roadway to Deptford's Farm. The steps get overgrown, and maintenance of the vegetation over the steps is needed. He knows of a local contractor that would strim down the area 2 or 3 times a year for a small fee. Mr West agreed that this maintenance would make sense and Mr Lakey advised that improved maintenance of the area would provide better bank protection. The Board agreed for Mr Fenn to arrange the works.

B.431 District Officers Report

A verbal report was given by Mr J Fenn on behalf of the District Officer, Mr M Fenn, who was unable to attend the meeting.

Mr Fenn reported on the known issue in Common Road, Upwell where a bungalow hedge grows onto the roadway, subsequently pushing vehicles onto side of the drain. There is some concern that this may cause the drain to collapse and is being monitored.

Overall, the drains are in very good condition. Dodds Stile drain needs to be worked on if access can be obtained. Mr Lakey advised that the landowner has been amenable when carrying out works before, and Mr Fenn advised that the Board need to work with him to ensure we gain access. Mr Lakey suggested that they Board may have to look at an alternative approach.

The District Officer has fitted the Overspill Boards in on Main Drain prior to today's rain. Not all have been fitted, and it is thought that there is one left to fit. He is concerned that the people putting in the pipeline may have issues with the water table.

Mr Fenn referred to the culvert replacement works at the March Riverside Main Outfall. Tom Pollendine is looking at the outfall and installing rails, posts and signs, although Mr Fenn not sure if these are needed. It is proposed to use the £4k retention held of Fen Group to pay for the works. Chair asked if this was worth doing, as it is likely that farm machinery would damage these, creating an ongoing repair issue for the Board. He suggested that the Highways Department are happy that they are not required as they have not seen the need to install any barriers, then the Board are also happy they are not needed. The Board therefore do not wish for this work to be done and would like the retention to be paid back to the Fen Group.

It has been observed that a connection has been made to Boards drain on Reach 24, at the rear of the Laddus Farm, and it is possible that raw sewerage has been disposed but not certain. A new manhole cover can be seen against the drain, and it is assumed that this relates to one of the houses. The Chair stated that if this is done correctly and from a package treatment plant this should be 'clean' water. Mr Fenn agreed that this needs to be checked to ensure consent has been applied for.

Thanks were passed to District Officer for all of his work.

B.432 Governance

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

RESOLVED

Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 202…/202..

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

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

The Board noted the continued appointment of Whitings as Internal Auditor

Review of Internal Controls

Mrs Martin reported that the internal controls that the Middle Level Commissioners have in place in their services to the Board have now been summarised and are available on the Boards webpage.

RESOLVED

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

Approval of authorised officers for operational/regulatory roles

RESOLVED

The Board confirm that all employees and contractors of the Middle Level Commissioners are considered as duly authorised offices and therefore able to use the Board's powers and IDB Byelaws for their operational and regulatory roles on behalf of the Board.

The Board confirm that their Chairman, Vice Chairman, District Officer(s), pump attendants and employees (if applicable) are considered as duly authorised officers and therefore able to use the Board's powers and IDB Byelaws for their operational and regulatory roles on behalf of the Board.

Responsible Finance Officer

Following the retirement of Robert Hill, the MLC Treasurer and the appointment of Andrew Wool as the new MLC Head of Finance, the Board approved the relevant resolutions to manage the transition.

RESOLVED

The Board considered and approved the recommendations that:

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

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

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

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

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

Policy Reviews

Mrs Martin referred to the Boards Finance Regulations and Finance Code Policy which has been reviewed and updated by the clerk and responsible financial officer. The Board also reviewed the Complaints Procedure, Privacy Policy and Anti-Bribery policy, reviewed and approved the Boards Policy Statement, and approved the Data Protection Officer.

RESOLVED

That the update and re-publication of the Complaints Procedure and Privacy Policy is approved.

That the Board reviewed and approved the publication of an Anti-Bribery policy, and the Financial Regulations policy.

That the Board reviewed and approved the publication of the Boards Policy Statement.

That the MLC Lead Clerk, currently Ruth Martin, acts as the Board's Data Protection Officer and acknowledges that this role will be associated within the incumbent employee role of MLC Lead Clerk.

DEFRA IDB1 Return

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

Annual Governance Statement

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

Risk Management Strategy

The Board did not highlight any specific risks or issues not covered within the Board's Risk Management Strategy (published in 2024 and on the website), noted the system of financial Internal Controls (as published on website) and did not highlight the requirement for any additional controls.

Exercise of Public Rights

Mrs Martin referred to the publishing of the Notice of Public Rights and publication of unaudited Annual Return, Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and the Notice of Conclusion of the Audit and right to inspect the Annual Return.

Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments.

Mrs Martin reported that as part of the Annual Governance review the Board were required to consider if there were any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end that have a financial impact on the authority. 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 Board that would need to be included within the accounting statements for the financial year ended 31st March 2025.

Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

Mrs Martin reported that, as resolved at a previous meeting, the Board will continue with a limited assurance review and not take advantage of the audit exemption available for smaller public bodies with income and expenditure less than £25,000.

RESOLVED

> To continue with a limited assurance review as has been carried out in previous years.

B.433 Finance Report – Looking Back

Finance officer's review and key messages

The Board considered and noted the key finance messages of the Finance Officer, and the payments detailed for 2024, Annual Accounts and Finance Papers 2024/2025

The Board 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 Board for the financial year ended 31st March 2025.

B.434 Finance Report – Looking Forward

Finance officer's review and key messages

The Board considered and noted the key finance messages of the Responsible Finance Officer.

Fees, Remuneration & Subscriptions:

a) District Officer's Fee

The Board gave consideration to the District Officer's fee for 2025-2026. Mr J Fenn reported that Mr M Fenn had advised that he would be happy to continue as District Officer for the next 12 months. The Board agreed to increase the District Officers fees for 2025-2026.

RESOLVED

> That the Board agree that up to £2,100 be allowed for the District Officers fee for 2025/2026.

b) ADA subscription

Mrs Martin reported that ADA increased subscriptions by 6.5% for 2025, from £636 to £ 678. The Chair commented that membership of ADA is important and suggested that the Board accept the increase.

RESOLVED

> That the requested increased ADA subscription for 2025 be paid.
>
> That the Clerk be authorised to obtain a ticket for the Annual Conference of the Association for any Member who wishes to attend.

c) Precept

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 2025.

The precept for 2024 was £6,993.27.

RESOLVED

That the Precept is paid in full unless a decision to appeal against the Precept is made.

d) Determination of Annual Values for Rating purposes.

The Board considered the recommendation for the determination of annual value for rating purposes.

RESOLVED

i) That the determination recommended be adopted by the Board
ii) That the Clerk be empowered to serve notices and to take such other action as may be necessary to comply with statutory requirements.
iii) That the Chairman and the Clerk be empowered to authorise appropriate action on behalf of the Board in connection with any appeal against the determination.

e) Rate Arrears

RESOLVED

That the rate arrears amounting to £19.88 be written off.

Estimates & Rate Requirements for 2025/26.

The Board reviewed the proposed budget for 2025/2026.

Mr Crofts asked what the contribution received from the Hundred of Wisbech IDB related to. Mr Fenn explained that an area of land at the rear of The Stitch could not be drained into the Hundred of Wisbech IDB's system, and so it was agreed that this Board would accept the flow if a financial contribution was made. This agreement dates back many years.

Mrs Martin advised that when considering the rating estimates and the Agricultural Drainage Rates and Special Levy requirements for 2025/2026, the Board should note the comments made by the Responsible Finance Officer

As previously reported the budgets include the increase in drain works costs and also includes a £12,000 contribution to the Future Works Fund.

The Chair asked if there was any indication on the cost of replacement of the culvert at The Cottons, and Mr Lakey advised that a quotation of £135,000 had been received. The Chair advised he felt it important consider an increase in the rate in order to start building funds for the culvert replacement. Mr Fenn advised that resilience funding had previously been applied for, but the project did not satisfy the criteria, with Mr Lakey advising that the works would have needed to have been completed by 31st March 2025.

The Chair advised the Board that a rate of 9.5p in the £ had been suggested by the budget forecast. Mr Crofts then formally proposed the rate with Mr Rose seconding the rate, and this was agreed unanimously by the Board.

Mr Fenn suggested that most Board would like to have a similar rate, and Mr Lakey advised the Board that their 'little and often' approach works well. He advised of a study a few years ago that calculated £1 spent 3 or 4 years ago would be giving £3.80's worth of value today. Mr Fenn said he thought the Board has been good with their open-minded approach to projects in the past and this has paid off.

The Chair asked that, with the ‘Case for Change’ document in mind along with the business decision already made by MLC to withdraw their consultancy services, if MLC would still be happy to support the Board if there is no amalgamation. Mr Fenn explained how the geographic and hydrological layout of the fens impacted on the decision to withdraw services.

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2025/2026. and were informed by Mrs Martin that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by special levy on local billing authorities would be respectively 41.71% and 58.29%.

RESOLVED

i) That the estimates be approved.

ii) That a total sum of £57,390 be raised by drainage rates and special levy and by way of a contribution from Hundred of Wisbech IDB.

iii) That the amounts comprised in the sum referred to in ii) above to be raised by drainage rates and to be met by special levy and contribution from Hundred of Wisbech IDB are £23,869 and £33,367 and £154 respectively.

iv) That a rate of 9.50p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.

v) That Special Levies of £28,706 be made and issued to the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk and £4,661 be made and issued to the Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.

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

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

B.435 Middle Level IDB Change

Mrs Martin referred to the Clerks Report relating the Middle Level IDB Change and advised that there have been several meetings of the Boards within the Middle Level with an initial meeting being held at Ramsey to ask for volunteers to join a steering group. A consultant has been engaged and an initial report written giving various scenarios for future Board amalgamations. There are many options explored including one large Middle Level Board, through to five or six smaller amalgamated Boards.

Mrs Martin reminded the Board that all should have received a digital copy of the report for them to read and consider, and that the Clerk is asking for feedback. The Board members were advised that they should respond to the questions via the Chairman by 4th July 2025 so that they have some time to think about the proposals and their answers.

Some discussions followed, with Mr Crofts raising his concern that the lack of knowledge should Boards continue to change is not being considered, and that it is detrimental to the Board for them to be controlled by engineers and officers and less from landowners and farmers. He felt that bigger

Boards would result in more full-time officials. The Chair thought that this would mean that Boards would need to be arranged differently but Mr Crofts still felt that local detail may be lost due to this.

The Chair responded that Boards rely on having people around the table and Mr Fenn added that it depended on landowners taking part. Subsequent discussion over landowners not wanting to engage with Boards followed, and it was acknowledged that Board members are volunteers, and they are being asked to be members of a local authority with the legal implications that this implies.

Mr Fenn suggested that the only similar Board to this one within the Middle Level catchment area is Churchfield and Plawfield IDB, and that an amalgamation with this Board seems like a natural fit. The Chair suggested that it could be prudent to start discussing this further and Mr Calton felt it was important to make a case for gravity boards to stick together.

Mrs Martin reminded the Board of the Clerks request for feedback and also asked the Board to consider providing a £300 contribution towards the cost of developing the detailed design. The Board agreed that the contribution be made.

RESOLVED

> That a £300 contribution be made by the Board towards the cost of developing the detailed design.

B.436 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

> That next Meeting of the Board be held on 14th April 2026 at 7pm at The Crown Lodge, Outwell.

B.437 Any Other Business

Mr Rose advised of the upcoming unitary authority and devolution proposals. The Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk are going for the 3rd option which will create an east and west strategic council. There will be no council elections this year.

With no other items raised the meeting was closed at 8.35pm.

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**		**4**
Meeting:	**NEEDHAM & LADDUS IDB**	**Subject:**	**CONSTITUTION & MEMBERSHIP**	
Date:	**Tuesday 14th April 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**		**Gemma Ashby**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Note the position regarding elections and consider the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments within its appointment of officials.
B. Note the current status of its membership and the role they each play as members serving the interests of the Board.
C. Review attendance records and identify any resolutions as necessary.
D. Outline the training undertaken in the last year as well as future needs or plan for training.

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	12	N/A		5
Actual	**11 (+1 non-voting)**	1 FDC, 4 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	Steve Calton	Nominee of Ratepayer (Martin & Sons)	
2	Jon Fenn	Nominee of Ratepayer (Martin & Sons)	Vice-Chair
3	Michael Fenn	Nominee of Ratepayer (Martin & Sons)	District Officer
4	Alan Giles	Ratepayer	
5	Peter Lankfer	Ratepayer	
6	James Martin	Ratepayer	Chair
7	Chris Robinson	Ratepayer	
8	John Scott	Nominee of Ratepayer (A G Scott & Son)	
9	Michael Scott	Nominee of Ratepayer (A G Scott & Son)	
10	Paul West	Nominee of Ratepayer (Laddus Farms)	
11	Josh Martin	Nominee of Ratepayer (Martin & Sons)	
12	Dale Boyce	Non-voting member	Non-voting member

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, e.g. major infrastructure, commerce, community groups, environmental interests.

No	Name	Appointing Council	Commentary (one of three categories)
1	Christopher Crofts	BCKLWN	Councillor
2	Julian Kirk	BCKLWN	Councillor
3	Colin Rose	BCKLWN	Councillor
4	Charlie Marks	FDC	Councillor
5	Keith Harrison	BCKLWN	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	15/04/2025	16/04/2024	18/10/2023	18/4/2023
1	Steve Calton	Present	Apologies	Present	Present
2	Jon Fenn	Present	Present	Present	Present
3	Michael Fenn	Apologies	Apologies	Present	Present
4	Alan Giles	Apologies	Present		Present
5	Peter Lankfer	Present	Present	N/A	Present
6	James Martin	Present	Present	Apologies	Present
7	Chris Robinson	Present	Present	Apologies	
8	John Scott	Present	Present	Apologies	
9	Michael Scott	Present	Present	Apologies	Apologies
10	Paul West	Present	Present		Present
11	Josh Martin	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
12	Dale Boyce (non-Voting)	Apologies	Present	Present	Present
13					

Attendance at Chairs Meetings

No	Name	5/12/2025	6/12/2024	6/10/2023	13/12/2022
1	James Martin	Present	Present	Apologies	Present

Appointed Members (current and previous)

No	Name (Council)	15/04/2025	16/04/2024	18/10/2023	18/4/2023
	Brian Carr (BCKLWN)	N/A	Present	N/A	N/A
2	Christopher Crofts (BCKLWN)	Present	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
3	Julian Kirk (BCKLWN		Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
4	Colin Rose (BCKLWN	Present	Apologies	Present	Apologies
5	Charlie Marks (FDC)			Apologies	

3. Elections, vacancies & appointments

3.1 In appointing the Chairman and Vice Chairman, the Board is expected to follow the principles within the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, there is a strong presumption that no individual should serve in any one post for more than ten years. The tenure of the current Chairman is 27.9 years, and the tenure of the current Vice Chairman is 27.9 years.

4. Nomination of District Officer

4.1 To consider and approve the nomination of a new District officer following the retirement of Michael Fenn

5. Composition and amalgamations

5.1 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). See 'The IDB governance future within the Middle Level of the Fen' within the Clerk's Report.

5.2 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.

6. Training

6.1 IDBs are expected by Defra to support relevant externally accredited training and/or professional development of its Board Members, officers and employees (if appropriate). It is therefore recommended that the Board identifies and budgets for any such requirements.

6.2 In addition, IDBs are expected by Defra to provide in-house training and/or professional development opportunities for its Board Members, officers and employees (if appropriate).

6.3 Topics that Defra suggest are i) Governance ii) Ethics iii) Finance iv) Environment v) Health, safety & welfare and vi) Communications & engagement.

6.4 The Board are asked to outline the training undertaken in the last year as well as future needs or plan for training. 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.

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

Author Name: Gemma Ashby
Role: Senior Business Support Officer

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**5**
Meeting:	**NEEDHAM & LADDUS IDB**	**Subject:**	**CLERK'S REPORT**
Date:	**Tuesday 14th April 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Paul Burrows**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Note the content of the report and feedback on items as appropriate.
B. The Board is asked to delegate the approval and publication of new and/or updated policies to the Clerk.
C. Ensure their District Officers keep records to enable completion of Questions 26 & 27 within the IDB1 Annual Report to Defra.

1. MLC Overview

Delivery has been the primary focus within 2025/26. We were successful in securing approximately £4.5m of grant for several IDB Fund (Tranche 2b) submissions and the administration and delivery of these commitments has been a primary focus, particularly for staff in M&E, Operations, Environment & Ecology and Finance, meaning some 'business as usual' activity has been impacted.

This fund, coming with fewer constraints than FCRM grant-in-aid, has enabled us to think and invest differently. We are starting to change gear in terms of our business model and philosophy to become more commercially minded within the boundaries of a not-for-profit public authority. At St Germans Pumping Station for example, we now are starting to gear our infrastructure, turning our assets from feeling like a financial burden into engines that drive our business more efficiently. Whilst there remains work to do within our improvement and modernisation journey, our organisational foundations are now in a much healthier position to build from, albeit our base staff capacity and capability are a constraint to what needs to be, and could be, achieved. We will need to identify and nurture partnerships not only with traditional partners but with the innovators within our local agricultural and the development sectors.

It is also clear that MLC and the IDBs need to reduce our collective reliance on government grant in aid funding and highland water payments. Whilst we remain focussed on influencing and informing policy shifts, MLC and IDB assets are of the age that we cannot avoid the scale of capital works ahead of us that will cost hundreds of millions of pounds to develop and deliver. Collectively we have a significant gap in both capacity and capability, alongside a dependence on Fens 2100+ driving a case for change in how our assets are invested in.

Thanks to the support of the Middle Level Board, we now have greater capability to press our regulatory teeth and turn the significant development pressures we face within our catchment into a risk management and financial opportunity rather than seeing it negatively. A further increase in staff capacity has been approved to better cater for the workload, increase cost recovery to further reduce costs to ratepayers. Fees from developers are also a critical source of funding to develop and deliver the capital works on the MLC and/or IDB infrastructure that serves and benefits developments.

2. MLC Services to IDBs

As previously reported, we have made the business decision to focus our clerking and technical services offer to IDBs within the Middle Level where there is water management connectivity with the Middle Level Commissioners' catchment.

Given that our focus in 2025/26 has been on establishing and strengthening our Planning, Compliance & Enforcement Service for MLC/IDBs, IDB Fund Delivery for MLC/IDBs and enabling the transfer of seven IDBs outside of the Middle Level to new service providers, the Service Guide and associated fee structure will continue to be developed during 2026 with a view to being ready to implement for 2027/28.

3. Policy Reviews

There are several new policies that need to be developed and published over the course of the next year, along with updates to existing policies. Given the nature of our catchment and our services to administered IDBs, most policies need to be consistent rather than bespoke for each IDB. Any policy also needs to come into effect at the same time across MLC and/or all relevant IDBs.

Planned new policies include:

- IT Policy
- Artificial Intelligence Policy
- Approach to CDM Regulations 2015 and the Procurement Act 2023
- Compliance & Enforcement Policy (primarily to support our regulation of consent compliance, unconsented works and associated enforcement)

The Board is asked to delegate the approval and publication of new and/or updated policies to the Clerk.

4. Waste Exemptions

Defra and the Environment Agency introduced waste exemptions in circa 2008/09 and there is a suite of exemptions available to IDBs (including D1 exemption which allows for depositing waste from dredging inland waters). We followed Environment Agency advice at the time and have one suite of exemptions that covers the MLC and all our administered IDB operations.

This approach now requires improvement and mitigation to de-risk operations for IDBs and MLC individually and collectively. Following discussion with MLC and IDB Chairs, over the next 12-months we aim to move to MLC and each administered IDB having their own suite of waste exemptions and associated implementation controls. There will also likely be a need for associated training materials for IDBs and their District Officers.

We will likely require external resources/services to deliver this improvement and the cost associated with the work will be divided equally.

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

IDBs and Board members had the opportunity to discuss and provide feedback on the outline design in Q1 of 2025/26. Members of the 'Case for Change' working group met in September 2025 to review the feedback on the Outline Design and agree next steps. The consensus is that people need something more specific to debate. We also, unsurprisingly, have people on either extreme of the spectrum between staying as we are and not seeing any need for change, and those that feel radical change is long overdue. Most are somewhere in-between.

A proposal has been conceived that the working group supports moving to 'Detailed Design'. This proposal is to move from the current 25 IDBs to 7 IDBs, in phases, over the next 15 years. The proposal aims to balance:

1 Hydrological common sense and logical alignment.
2 The Outline Design feedback.
3 Respective readiness for and need for change.
4 Likely trigger points for change.

This proposal aims to provide:

1 An option for detailed design and subsequent debate.
2 The ability to phase change and make it more bite sized.
3 Time for IDBs to make steps to align 'standards' ahead of amalgamation.
4 A meaningful change that will enable improvements and efficiency within MLC & IDB working.
5 A middle ground between the 'go big' and 'stay small' views.
6 A platform for further and quicker change should it be needed or if the Fens Reservoir enables.

We aim to have the Detailed Design undertaken by April 2026 so we can have an IDB Chairs session on it ahead of consultation through Autumn 2026. Depending upon response and agreement, Boards would be asked to approve any final proposal (particularly any Boards amalgamating in any Phase 1) at their 2027 AGMs.

6. Data Provision

We are receiving an increasing number of data requests from a variety of sources. These can be complex and time consuming to service, sometimes for projects or purposes with little to no direct benefit to the Commissioners and our administered IDBs (where we act as their data controller).

To better protect our interests, we have developed and are now using a formal data sharing agreement with third parties. We will introduce a cost recovery approach to servicing such requests.

7. Electricity

The 12-month group (MLC and IDBs) contract with EDF Energy ceased on 30th September 2025. This contract was facilitated by brokers GEAB.

A sub-committee of MLC Board Members and IDB Chairmen reviewed options alongside MLC staff. We are now in contact with British Gas and are self-managing this within the Finance team for the 12-months to 30th September 2026.

8. Defra Flood Funding Policy (Capital Works)

Following consultation earlier in the year, Defra has finalised its new funding policy and responded to the consultation. We provided and published a comprehensive response.

This policy is for capital flood grant and goes live from 1st April 2026. At the time of writing (February 2026) the guidance associated with implementing the new policy is yet to be finalised and published. Given existing financial commitments within the Environment Agency's investment programme, there will likely be a transition period of a couple of years before the full programme reflects the new policy.

FCERM funding and prioritisation policy

Funding eligibility

For existing projects and assets: 100% of costs for refurbishing existing assets.

For new or improved projects and assets: 100% for the first £3 million, and 90% for costs above £3 million, giving a crucial boost to schemes.

Prioritisation by value for money

Subject to meeting the strategic objectives, all projects are prioritised within the FCERM programme by their benefit-to-cost ratios, with additional funding contributions boosting a project's prioritisation.

Strategic objectives

Reduce flooding and coastal erosion risk and deliver environmental outcomes while reducing those risks.

Guaranteed share of investment for deprived areas and in natural flood management.

Use Defra FCERM funding to unlock additional contributions from public, private and charitable sources.

Key points for MLC and IDBs:

a) Refurbishment is a significant fix on an asset that can't be addressed by routine maintenance alone. Further guidance is expected on this aspect.
b) When applying for Defra FCERM funding for refurbishment of existing assets, asset owners will need to demonstrate that they have undertaken whole life asset management and routine maintenance.
c) As partnership contributions increase, the amount of Defra FCERM funding needed decreases, leading to higher project prioritisation. The more significant the partnership contribution, the larger the likelihood of boosting prioritisation.
d) The '2012' rule has been removed meaning new development can be included within benefit assessments. We will commission an economic and benefits refresh across the Middle Level to update our base information.
e) The need to demonstrate a reduction in flood risk band as a result of works has been removed.
f) Defra acknowledges concerns from other risk management authorities that they are at a disadvantage compared to the Environment Agency. The policy states that all risk management authorities should have equal access to FCERM funding.

9. IDB Funding & Costs Research

A joint Defra and MHCLG IDB funding and costs research project is now underway. It is being led by ICF, a consultancy with expertise in economic and financial analysis, particularly in evaluating the costs and benefits of environmental and regulatory policies in the water and land use sector. Supporting ICF is Logika, a consultancy specialising in flood risk management, drainage, and sustainable development and valuable experience from the water sector. The project is scheduled to conclude by July 2026.

The overarching goal of the project is to conduct a comprehensive review of IDBs' operations, focusing on financial efficiency and value for money, with the aim of assessing whether changes are needed to ensure the long-term sustainability of IDBs. The research is structured around three core objectives:

1. Funding and Financial Review: To analyse IDB funding mechanisms, operational costs and financial pressures over the past decade and explore future funding options.
2. Benefit Evaluation: To assess the economic and social value of IDBs' work, both locally and nationally.
3. Data Modernisation: To explore how the annual IDB1 Form can be improved and modernised for better data collection and reporting.

The project will include:

- an evidence review,
- analysis of financial information and IDB1 reports,
- interviews with selected IDBs and stakeholders,
- an IDB survey to identify any gaps in the data, and
- case studies.

We have been in touch with the consultants leading the work and provided them with information to get them started and provided them with the information we have to hand for their data requests. W also hosted a case study visit in January 2026. Given we collectively represent c25% of the IDB sector nationally, we will, in one way shape or form, inform their results and associated recommendations for change. Whilst this research is an opportunity to highlight and influence much needed policy change for collective benefit, there is equally the likelihood that it will draw out some uncomfortable truths.

In September 2025 we also hosted the Local Delivery & Rural Floods Policy Team from Defra. We took them on a whistlestop tour from Stanground Lock through the Middle Level to St Germans Pumping Station and used the time and the backdrop to discuss and showcase our system and breadth of water management operations.

We highlighted the 'big ticket' areas of efficiency we are driving at the MLC, including how we are using the governments 'IDB Fund' wisely. We discussed the strengths and successes in how we work across the Middle Level but also the areas of policy and associated financing that are constraining our collective ability to plan and be as efficient and as effective as possible in a world that's changing, due largely to factors beyond our control.

10. IDB 1 (Annual Reporting to Defra)

There is another step-change in reporting expectations on us all both in terms of financial and non-financial information we provide annually to Defra within the 2024/25 IDB1. This will take additional time to pull together and is an indication as to the increased expectations Government has on the sector in terms of governance and responsibilities.

Whilst MLC can derive most of the financial and non-financial information on behalf of our administered IDBs, there are an increasing number of questions where we require information from the Boards directly. Including, for IDBs that do not use the MLC for their operational services their District Officer will need to keep records of the length (in kilometres) of i) the length of watercourse maintained by the Board in the financial year and ii) the cumulative length of works on maintained watercourses (Questions 26 & 27 in the form).

If no answers are received from Boards, then questions will be left blank within returned forms.

11. IDB Precept

Section 139(1) of the Water Resources Act 1991 (WRA 1991) empowers the Environment Agency to require a contribution from Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) each year towards its operational costs. The mechanism for collecting the contribution is for the Environment Agency to issue a precept to the relevant IDBs requiring payment of the amount due.

There is a statutory duty to spend IDB precept revenue “only in the carrying out of the Environment Agency’s flood and coastal erosion risk management functions… in or for the benefit of the flood risk management region in which [the precept] is raised”.

The amount of the contribution should be what the Environment Agency considers to be ‘fair’ and the legislation places a duty upon the Environment Agency to provide to the IDB a statement which provides detail of the purposes of which the contribution demanded by precept will be applied and the basis of the calculation of the contribution.

The Environment Agency, via the Anglian (Great Ouse) Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC) has committed to improve the clarity and transparency of how and where IDB Precept is spent along with the associated calculation. The existing approach is rooted in discussions and agreements that have been lost in time with changing corporate knowledge; therefore, it is likely to take a few years of incremental improvement to get to a clearer position.

Author Name: Paul Burrows
Role: Clerk

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	6
Meeting:	**NEEDHAM & LADDUS IDB**	**Subject:**	**ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT**
Date:	**Tuesday 14th April 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Sofi Lloyd**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. **Provide for the review and acceptance of the new Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) outside and following the Board meeting, on behalf of the Board, by the Chair and/or Vice Chair and/or another representative**
B. Set a budget for biodiversity spend for the next year (£100 min)
C. Note that Key Environmental Compliance Indicators (KCIs), as below, have been launched this year to assess and report the environmental compliance of the IDB in a consistent way. This will help to ensure that any areas of environmental risk are flagged promptly, and the environmental achievements of the Board are recognised and published.
D. Note that a review of the IDBs Environmental and waste permits is required and will be planned with the Chair and VC in the coming months.

Review of Key Environmental Compliance Indicators (KCIs)

Key:	**Not Achieved / Information Not Available**	**Partly complete / A date has been set for completion (provide date and resource)**	**Complete**
Name of Board Environmental Representative:		**Morgan Lakey**	
KCI:	**Description of KCI:**	**Status:**	**Comments:**
1.	A current channel categorisation map & reasoning is available		Categorisation done. Digital map to be prepared.
2.	Standard Operating Procedures audit has been undertaken and works considered compliant		ML will undertake during ops in 2026
3.	The previous year's maintenance record is available for review and to inform the following year's works planning.	**In progress**	2026 will be first year to collect data
4.	A channel maintenance plan (flail mowing and desilting) has been prepared for Board review and approval.	**Reactive**	System is inspected after harvest and areas in need of desilting are identified. Flail mowing is done wherever access is possible around cropping and to the waters' edge on the desilting working side.
5.	All non-routine works undertaken in the previous year were screened for environmental impacts and opportunities using the ESR process		Yes. Culvert replacement was screened.
6.	The Biodiversity Action Plan has been reviewed and objectives for the previous year have been met and following objectives set	**In progress**	23rd April booked for BAP review
7.	Proposed biodiversity budget is set and defined	**In progress**	Will set at 2026 meeting & report
8.	At least one Board Representative has attended at least one biodiversity training / information event in the year and reported relevant details to the board	**n/a**	This is the first year. Attendance at the MLC Bio Day is offered and contractors will be offered training
9.	There has been no net loss of open watercourse (via culverting or other) in the district in the previous year	**n/a**	Reminded Board of Policy and will be reviewed next year for first time
10.	A current map of badger setts in the district is available and licensable works around them was undertaken compliantly and in line with licence conditions	**In progress**	In progress. **ML** will continue mapping.

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	8
Meeting:	**NEEDHAM & LADDUS IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: CHIEF ENGINEER'S SUMMARY & CAPITAL PROGRAMME**
Date:	**Tuesday 14th April 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. **The Board to confirm if it wishes to consider submitting projects for inclusion in the FCERM Investment Programme (from July 2026)**

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.

2. Summary of Key Planning Issues

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

3. Technical Services Overview

A new Senior Planning & Consenting Officer, Emma Ryder, joined the team at the beginning of March. She had been working for us on a consultancy basis since November last year and she has extensive experience in flood risk, economics and sustainable drainage. Emma is the first appointment in an ongoing recruitment campaign to better manage the increased planning and consenting workload resulting from new development across the Middle Level.

4. IDB Recovery Fund T2B

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

Works being delivered for this district include culvert enlargement works.

5. Capital Programme

New FCERM grant funding guidance

The Government published new FCERM funding guidance on 3 March 2026.

To be eligible for funding a project must deliver strategic objectives and government policy. Governments' objectives most relevant to IDBs include:

- value for money (Net Present Value)
- reducing flood risk
- focusing on deprived areas
- prioritising projects with contributions from others (this would include funding provide by IDBs themselves)
- a percentage investment in Natural Flood Management (NFM) across the programme

Project types that are eligible for grant funding include:

- refurbishing or replacing existing assets
- building new assets
- NFM projects
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)

<u>Asset Refurbishment Projects</u>

Asset refurbishment is a significant renewal to one or more components in an existing asset that is not covered by routine maintenance.

It includes work to mitigate for the loss of asset performance. This covers issues that asset maintenance cannot manage and that would be significant and permanent if not fixed.

It does not include asset replacement projects where an existing asset at the end of its life is replaced with another like for like asset which sustains the standard of service.

Under the 2025 FCERM funding policy existing FCERM assets are eligible for 100% of funding for refurbishment.

<u>New or Improved Asset Projects</u>

Projects that are not refurbishment are eligible for 100% for the first £3 million, and 90% for costs above £3 million.

These include:

- projects replacing existing assets with a like for like replacement

- projects building new or improved assets
- projects with combined asset interventions

Projects cannot be artificially split into smaller components to fall below the £3 million fully funded threshold.

<u>Applying for funding</u>

It should be noted that there will be more projects that are eligible for investment than funding available. Projects will need to be prioritised to meet government targets and achieve best value for money.

Therefore, it is recommended that should the Board wish to apply for FCERM grant funding, they. This is similar to the funding rules that were in place prior to 2011 when IDBs only received 45% of project costs.

Should the Board wish to submit a new project to be considered for funding, the first step is to collate relevant cost and benefit data to submit to the Environment Agency from 1 July 2026. This requires collating costs and benefits and other relevant data required by the EA in order to determine a project's eligibility and prioritise the programme. The Consulting Engineer can provide resources to do this, and this will be recharged to the Board.

If a project already appears on the FCERM investment programme with an allocation for future years, an application for grant funding approval/business case will need to be submitted. The Consulting Engineer can provide resources to do this.

<u>Timescales</u>

The Consulting Engineer currently has limited resources to develop and deliver projects, although recruitment is currently in progress to address this. The likely timescales for project delivery are:

- submit for funding consideration July 2026 onwards
- prepare and submit applications for subsequent funding approval
- delivery 2027/28 onwards if grant is allocated

The Consulting Engineer will prioritise workload based primarily on Key Health Indicators.

The Board is asked to confirm if it wishes to:

- **progress this project in future years**
- **secure future grant-in aid**
- **contribute towards funding the project, and**
- **to instruct the Consulting Engineer accordingly.**

Author Name: Nicola Oldfield
Role: Chief Engineer

Appendix 1: List of applications since last meeting
Appendix 2: Anglian Water Strategic Pipeline Alliance
Appendix 3: Operational Services Report

Appendix 1

There have been 14 planning applications responded to since the last meeting.

The have been 4 applications for Byelaw Consent (to undertake works in and around watercourses) granted since the last meeting

There have been 3 infiltration device applications granted since the last meeting.

There have been no Byelaw Consent (to discharge to a watercourse) granted since the last meeting.

Appendix 2

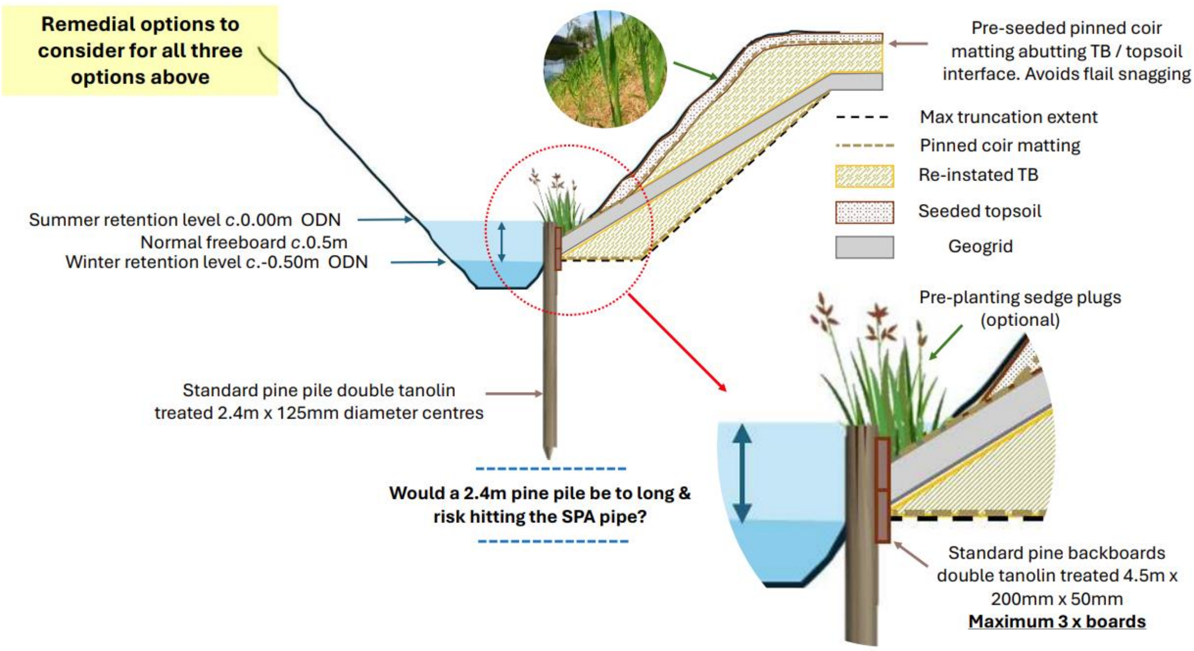
Grantham to Bexwell potable water supply Pipeline in the Needham Field/Molls Drove/Bramble Lane area – Anglian Water Services Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 380, 385 & 397)

Anglian Water (AW) Strategic Pipeline Alliance (SPA):

In spring 2025, ecologists on behalf of Anglian Water began a rigorous regime to clear vegetation from riparian and Board drains to deter water vole populations along the easement route. A subcontractor using heavy plant was also engaged in scraping vegetation from bank batters to do the same. However, while this work was supervised by ecologists, there were several instances of plant being operated heavy handedly, resulting in 0.25-1m of bank batter being removed. This action was noticed by the Chairman and reported to MLC who conducted a thorough investigation.

As this action was against the agreed water vole eviction licensing conditions AW had secured with Natural England, several on-site meetings ensued over the dry summer accompanied by the Chair and Vice Chair to determine the cause and come up with a remedial strategy for AW to restore these watercourses to a fit state once pipe laying works were completed.

Surface geology is Terrington Beds, consisting of former reclaimed saltmarsh, which is notoriously difficult to work with when dry and particularly so when wet, whereby it becomes 'running silt'. After fervent discussion and meetings, a proposed solution has provisionally been agreed which an AW contractor under close supervision will hopefully remedy in summer 2026. This involves using piles [avoiding the new pipe] and back boards in conjunction with soil covered pre-seeded coir matting to stem erosion as per below:



Appendix 3

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	8
Meeting:	**NEEDHAM & LADDUS IDB**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: OPERATIONAL SERVICES**
Date:	**Tuesday 14th April 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Morgan Lakey**

1. Weed Control & Drain Maintenance

1.1 The weed control and drain maintenance strategy generally accorded with the programme approved by the Chair and Vice-chair at the last annual summer inspection.

Following a successful bid for funding from the Government Tranche 2 scheme, the 600mm culvert at Point 50, was replaced with a twin-wall plastic 1200mm pipe and new concrete bagged headwalls. This will improve the water conveyance for the upstream drains that receive water from the ever-growing Outwell village. Also preventing water being held up and future confidence in the integrity of the vitally important culvert within the Board's system.

Point 50, road crossing & numerous services exposed during works

A joint inspection of the District was undertaken pre-harvest last year with the Board's Chair and Vice-Chair. The inspection revealed that although some drains contained growths of filamentous algae (Cott) and sporadic stands of emergent and submerged aquatic vegetation, the majority were found to be in a satisfactory condition. Works programmes were also discussed, and it was agreed for an herbicide application and additional contracted weed raking to be undertaken where deemed necessary.

Please refer to the plan on the following page indicating the reaches where machine cleansing was deemed necessary to retain the Board's drains in a satisfactory condition.

A recent inspection of the Board's drains revealed the majority are in a good condition and being maintained to a high standard. Due to last year's successful herbicide and programmed machine cleansing works, there is little sign of vegetation growth. Sporadic patches of filamentous algae (Cott) are evident in some of the Laddus Drove drains and a second inspection will be carried out post-harvest and any required works included in the ensuing years maintenance programme.

As the Board's annual meeting falls during the early part of the growing season, a second District inspection will be required during the summer months to accurately identify additional maintenance requirements, and the weed basket works within the Laddus Drove area. A provisional sum, based on previous years' expenditure, has been allocated within the Board's estimated costs, for works that are likely to be required.

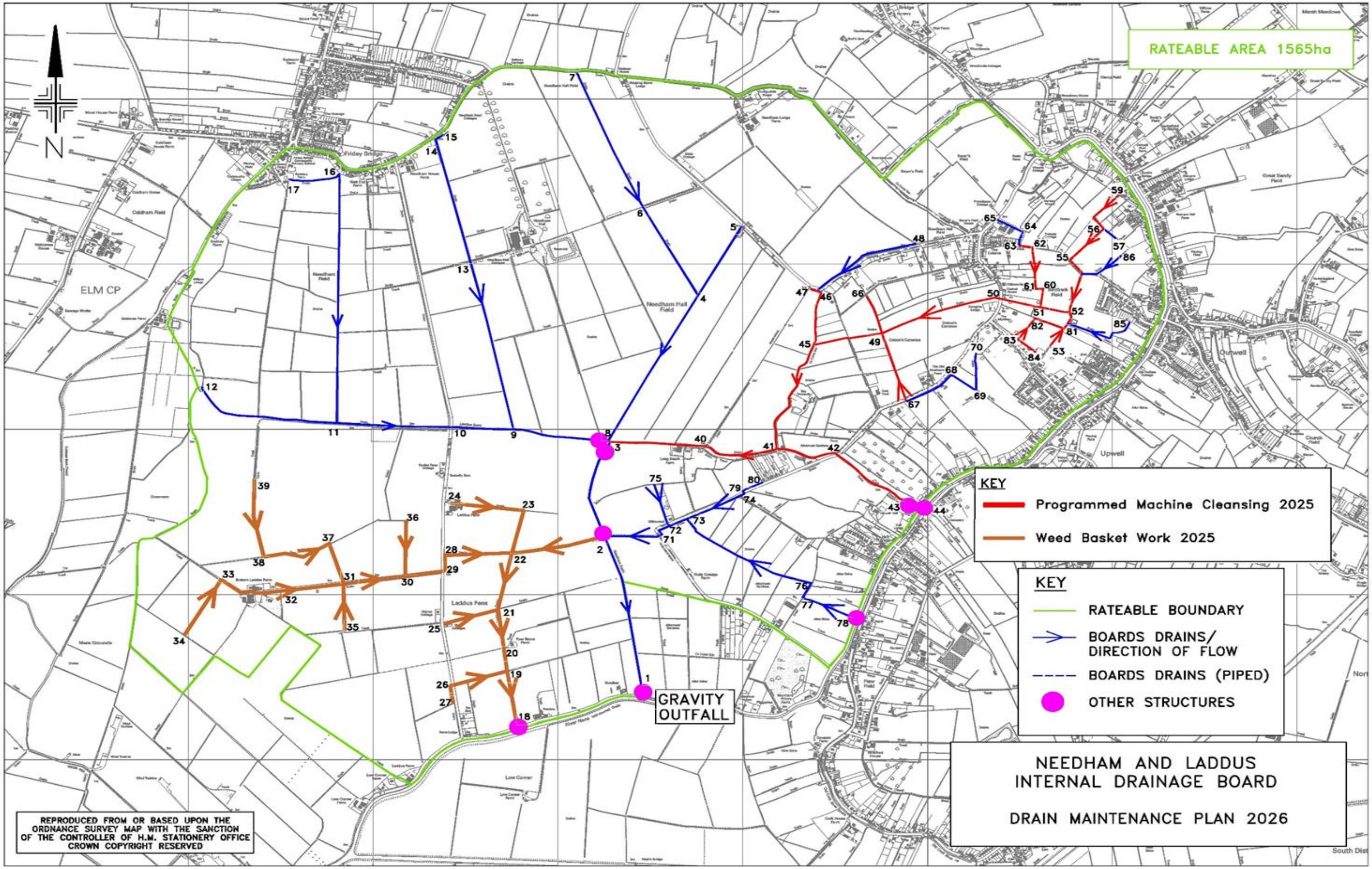
Harrison Agricultural Contractors have indicated that they are available to undertake the Board's flail mowing and tractor mounted bucket requirements for the ensuing year. A sum for the completion of flail mowing District drains has been included within the estimate.

The estimated costs of this year's recommended Weed Control and Drain Maintenance works follows. A provisional sum has also been included within the Board's budget to allow for any emergency machine cleansing, bank slip repair or culvert clearance works required later in the season.

2. Estimated Costs of Anticipated Drain Maintenance and Weed Control Programme

2.1	*Provisional Sum*			£
	Allow sum for Roundup application to Board's drains where it is required	Item	Sum	800.00
	Allow sum for Machine Cleansing and Weed /Cott removal from Board's Drains	Item	Sum	8625.00
	Estimated Sum Flail mowing Board's Drains	Item	Sum	7000.00
	Provisional Item Allow for emergency machine cleansing, culvert clearance or bank slip repair works. Removal of fly tipped materials.	Item	Sum	2000.00
	Fees for inspection, preparation and Submission of report to the Board, arrangement and supervision of herbicide applications and maintenance works	Item	Sum	1500.00
			TOTAL	£ 19,925.00

Author Name: Morgan Lakey
Role: Operations Manager


RATEABLE AREA 1565ha
N
ELM CP
Friday Bridge
Needham Hall Field
Laddus Fens
Outwell
Upwell
GRAVITY OUTFALL
KEY
Programmed Machine Cleansing 2025
Weed Basket Work 2025
KEY
RATEABLE BOUNDARY
BOARDS DRAINS/ DIRECTION OF FLOW
BOARDS DRAINS (PIPED)
OTHER STRUCTURES
NEEDHAM AND LADDUS
INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
DRAIN MAINTENANCE PLAN 2026
REPRODUCED FROM OR BASED UPON THE ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE SANCTION OF THE CONTROLLER OF H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	9
Meeting:	**NEEDHAM & LADDUS IDB**	**Subject:**	**HEALTH & SAFETY**
Date:	**Tuesday 14th April 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Paul Burrows**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Note its Health & Safety accountabilities.
B. Take initial actions to strengthen its governance of Health & Safety (Section 3).

1. Introduction

The ADA Good Governance Guide covers Health & Safety (P90-91) and there is a new guide in development that will go much deeper into responsibilities and standards. The Annual Report (IDB1) to Defra also asks the following questions:

- Whether the Board has a current Health & Safety Policy
- Whether the Board has a Board Member focussed on ensuring that Health & Safety is considered when Board decisions are made.
- Whether the Board has a responsible officer for Health & Safety.
- The number of 'near miss' incidents in the reporting period.
- Details of any reportable incidents in the reporting period.

2. Clarification of H&S accountabilities

For the avoidance of doubt, an IDB and the MLC are each different public bodies, independent from each other. In the UK, a public body can delegate specific health and safety *tasks* and *functions* to another body, but it cannot transfer its ultimate legal accountability or liability for ensuring that those duties are carried out safely. The original public body retains overall responsibility. Accountabilities and responsibilities cannot be outsourced to H&S service providers either.

Delegation of statutory functions requires explicit laws to enable, and these do not exist within MLC and IDB legislation. Specific day-to-day tasks can be delegated to competent individuals or organisations, provided there are clear arrangements for supervision, monitoring, and reporting. Delegation should be set out in formal, robust contracts or agreements (e.g., a written contract or a scheme of delegation) that clearly define roles, responsibilities, reporting arrangements, and monitoring procedures.

Currently, the only H&S task that MLC provides for administered IDBs is to facilitate specialist H&S advice via a group arrangement currently with AW Safety Management Ltd (previously COPE) as the supplier. As MLC further matures their own Health & Safety capacity, capability and standards, it may be that they can offer a broader service to administered IDBs.

The specific scope of services/advice that each IDB wants or needs from AW Safety Management Ltd is within their gift and responsibility to determine. Each Board essentially pays for an annual day with the H&S advisor as well as their ad hoc advice as required. These days have in recent years been focussed on a site inspection (e.g. pumping stations), however there is a diminishing value in repeat inspections of the same asset. It is also not clear whether Board's are making use of the ad hoc advice arrangements that they are paying for.

Where MLC are delivering specific operational services for an IDB (e.g. overseeing the maintenance programme, M&E works, ecological surveys) then they have responsibility to manage the H&S associated with those activities and any contractors they use. The IDB remains accountable for assuring themselves of MLC's competence in this regard.

3. Strengthening IDB H&S governance

It is recommended that the Board review its governance of its Health & Safety accountabilities. This should include the following initial actions, but not necessarily be limited to these:

a) Reconfirm if they have a lead Board Member and responsible official for H&S, and if so, who they are.
b) Confirming which Board Members and officials (e.g. District Officers, Pump Attendants) have been suitably trained in H&S leadership (e.g. IOSH Managing Safely) via their 'day job' employers, providing certification to MLC so it can be held on the Board's file.
c) Identifying Members and Officials (and employees) who ought to be trained*. This will then need to be budgeted for and arranged.
d) Review the Board's near miss and accident reporting approach and ensure any records are sent to MLC Offices for inclusion on the Board's file. MLC have template forms for their own H&S management that can be provided.
e) Consider its wider H&S risk exposure and target the days with AW Safety Management Ltd accordingly.
f) Provide feedback as to whether a broader H&S service from the MLC would be valued (reducing or replacing the need for a 3rd party service provider) and what range of services would be most valuable.

**The Institution of Occupational Health & Safety (IOSH) Manging Safely Course is a 3-day classroom style course costing circa £600 (exc VAT). There are also online learning options available.*

Author Name: Paul Burrows
Role: Clerk

Site Safety Inspection

Needham & Laddus

carried out on

Wednesday, 11 February 2026

by

AW Safety Management

Key Information	
Client:	March 5 IDB
Site:	North Creek & South Creek
Site Contact:	Tony Hopkin
Site Contact E-mail:	enquires@middlelevel.go.uk
Inspection date:	11/02/2026
Inspected by:	Vicki Clutterbuck
Introduction:	This health and safety Inspection Report is part of the annual support programme from AW Safety Management and is designed to review the practical implementation of health and safety arrangements within the Company. The purpose of the inspection was to assess systems, management controls, working practices and identification of hazards and the controls in place. The aim was to conduct an examination to ensure that best practice is used and there has been compliance within set standards and any relevant legislation. We plan our work to ensure that we have a reasonable expectation of detecting any significant control weaknesses, however, our processes alone are not a guarantee that all operational conditions / activities will be witnessed, this is particularly relevant for any off-site activities. The responsibility for maintaining suitable controls for the safety of employees and anyone else who may be affected and safe operation of the business rests with the management of the Company. Subject areas that require action are detailed in the 'Action Plan' section of the report. Each subject is given a brief outline and the suggested remedial action required, a target completion date (based on the priority rating) and the person responsible for ensuring that the action is addressed. The person responsible listed against the action is based on our visit to site and understanding of the Company structure. Each subject area is given a priority rating, which is based on the auditor/s knowledge, understanding & judgement and is selected to highlight areas of non-compliance and provide general guidance on safe working. Where applicable, a number of key photographs are included in the report, these are referenced to the relevant subject area reference number. These can be used as a reminder of conditions at the time of inspection and provide additional guidance on the action required.

Priority Rating		
Priority Rating	Effectiveness of Controls	Target Completion
High	Serious 'material breach' of legislation and / or serious and imminent danger to persons	Immediate Action Required
Medium	Significant control weakness exposing persons to moderate degree of risk	Planned Action Required
Low	General guidance or areas where there are opportunities to implement better practice and reduce exposure to risk	Actionable Comment

Purpose of Inspection / Executive Summary
Thank you to Jon for accompanying me to Needham & Laddus pumping stations. Please find actions listed in report below, no other areas of concern were raised at the time of inspection All actions were discussed with on site at the time of inspection. If you have any questions in relation to actions raised on this report, please don't hesitate to get in touch

Action Plan

High Priority	Immediate Action Required
Medium Priority	Planned Action Required
Low Priority	Actionable Comment

Reference Number	Additional Controls / Actions / Comments	Supporting Photographs / Pictures	Person(s) Responsible	Risk Rating	Action Complete When / Who
01	Access stairs and walkways are overgrown with vegetation and moss. To prevent slips, trips and falls, prior to using these access points ensure the walkways and stairs are cleaned and cleared.		Jon Fenn	Medium	

Contacts & Addendum	
Contact Information:	**AW Safety** **Nottingham Office:** Edwinstowe House, High Street, Edwinstowe, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG21 9PR **Lincolnshire Office:** Boston Enterprise Centre, Venture House, Enterprise Way, Lincolnshire, PE21 7TW **Cumbria Office:** Low Cross Buildings, 4 Low Cross Street, Brampton, Cumbria, CA8 1NP **Tel:** 0330 223 7470 **E-mail:** Support@awsafety.co.uk
Website:	www.awsafety.co.uk / www.irmconnect.co.uk
Note:	It is important to note that this Inspection highlights conditions at the time of the visit at the premises detailed on the front cover of the report. It remains the responsibility of the management and staff within the business to make known to the inspector any potentially unsafe conditions or practices which were not apparent during the Inspection, or that may take place at any off-site location. It is the ongoing responsibility of management to ensure that the business and its employees operate safely at all times and that any day-to-day health and safety issues are addressed immediately. Any queries or inaccuracies with this report should be raised immediately with the auditor.
AW Group	**AW Safety is a core division of the AW Group, designed to deliver end-to-end health, safety, and compliance solutions as part of our fully integrated service model.** **The AW Group also includes AW Human Resources, AW Training, and AW Facilities Management. Each division specialising in a critical area of organisational support. Together, we provide a holistic 360° service offering that helps you manage risk, improve performance, and maintain operational resilience across all aspects of your business.**

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	11
Meeting:	**NEEDHAM & LADDUS IDB**	**Subject:**	**GOVERNANCE**
Date:	**Tuesday 14th April 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Paul Burrows**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Consider and approve the Annual Return 2024/2025
B. Note the continued appointment of Whitings as Internal Auditor and consider the Internal Auditors Report for 2024/2025 (link)
C. Consider any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions occurring during or after the year-end that have a financial impact on the Board.
D. Review the effectiveness of existing Internal Controls and identify any new or strengthened Internal Controls that they may require.
E. 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.
F. Note the submission of the IDB1 form to Defra. (link)
G. Assure themselves 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.
H. Continue with a limited assurance review approach.

1. Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) and Internal Auditor

1.1 The AGAR provides the framework by which the governance of the Board is assessed. The Board's last AGAR is available on its page via www.middlelevel.gov.uk

1.2 As part of their AGAR return, the Board is asked whether it has considered any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions occurring during or after the year-end that have a financial impact on the Board.

1.3 The Board/Commissioners to consider the comments of the auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2025. (Appendix 1)

1.4 The Board/Commissioners to consider the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended 31st March 2025. (here)

1.5 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). The Board is asked to act on the advice of the Auditor within its decision making.

1.6 The latest report of the Internal Auditor is available on the MLC website for the consideration. This report covers the MLC and all administered IDBs.

2. Internal Controls

2.1 Within the financial operations at the Middle Level offices there are a series of controls in place to ensure the segregation of duties, so as far as practical within a small workforce, that no one person has control of a single operation from start to finish. The Internal Controls are available via the website within the 'Governance' section on the Board's page.

2.2 Note the Financial Code for the Board is included within its 'Governance Documents' also available on its page via www.middlevel.gov.uk

2.3 The Board needs to ensure there is adequate separation of duties within its running and decision making. Members are asked to refresh themselves as to the Member Code of Conduct (available within the Governance Documents on the Board's webpage) and ensure their declarations of interests are clear and up to date.

2.4 If a Board Member (or their business) undertakes contracted work (or bids for such work) for the Board it is recommended that they be excluded from any decision making as a matter of course and that appropriate contractual arrangements are in place.

2.5 If the Member also has a lead role for the Board (e.g. 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

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

4. IDB1 (Annual Report to Defra)

4.1 All IDBs are required to report annually to Defra via an Annual Report called an IDB1 form. These reports are copied to the Environment Agency and to the relevant District Councils. The most recent form submitted on behalf of the Board is available on the Board's webpage.

5. Exercise of Public Rights

5.1 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.

5.2 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.

5.3 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.

5.4 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.

6. Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

6.1 In previous years the Board has continued with a limited assurance review approach and not take advantage of the audit exemption available for smaller public bodies with income and expenditure less than £25,000.

Author Name: Paul Burrows
Role: Clerk

Appendix 1 Annual Return 2024/2025

Needham & Laddus Internal Drainage Board

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 Needham & Laddus Internal Drainage Board 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 Needham & Laddus Internal Drainage Board

The Clerk
Needham & Laddus Internal Drainage Board
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 Board

Date of Announcement: 22nd September 2025

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

NEEDHAM & LADDUS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

WWW.MIDDLELEVEL.GOV.UK

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).*	✓		

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

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: 03/04/2025 23/04/2025 25/04/2025

Name of person who carried out the internal audit: WHITINGS LLP

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: R. BEECH - WHITINGS LLP

Date: 25/04/2025

***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:

NEEDHAM & LADDUS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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

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

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

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

15/04/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

B.432

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

Chair J.F. Martin.

Clerk RMartin

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

NEEDHAM & LADDUS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward	114,512	119,271	*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	52,391	54,390	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	1,404	2,317	*Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.*
4. (-) Staff costs	0	0	*Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.*
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	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	49,036	35,199	*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	119,271	140,779	*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	137,663	156,467	*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	0	0	*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 03/04/2025

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

15/04/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

B.433

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

J.F. Martin.

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

In respect of **Needham and Laddus Internal Drainage Board – DB0058**

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		Date	15/09/2025

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	12
Meeting:	**NEEDHAM & LADDUS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING BACK**
Date:	**Tuesday 14th April 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Andrew Wool/Sam Ablett**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Consider the Budget review.
B. Consider and approve the payments detailed within Appendix 21
C. Consider and approve the Annual Accounts & Finance Papers 2025/2026 within Appendix 2.

Finance officer's review and key messages

For 2025/2026 the Board set a rate of 9.50p to raise a total of £57,390 in agricultural rates and special levies. The rate setting process was centred around standard provisions for routine maintenance.

Following the setting of the rates for 2025/2026 additional funding became available in respect of the Storm Recovery Grant, MLC were successful in acquiring additional funding. A claim for £160,005 was submitted on behalf of the Board for Culvert Improvement works at Point 50 which was successful and has now been paid.

The estimates against which the rate income was raised included the sum of £12,000 for future works. Routine drain maintenance works carried out in the year was less than budgeted estimates. In addition, £10,678 has been written back to the General Fund for the write back of provisions. This has given an overall underspend against budgeted expenditure of £9,510.

This will leave the General fund balance at £71,255 and over a year's expenditure in hand and the Asset Replacement Fund at £49,073 at 31st March 2026. This position is reflected in the Boards financial statements and Annual Return which they are requested to review and approve.

1. **Budgeting**

1.1 The budget comparison of the forecast out-turn and the actual out-turn for the financial year ending 31st March 2026.

2. Payments for 2025

2.1 Payments are detailed within Appendix 1

3. Storm Recovery Grant – T2B

3.1 During the year MLC were successful in securing Grant Aid on behalf of some of the IDB's that they administer. The following work was done and was 100% Grant funded as a result:

Work Done	Value	Penny rate equivalent
Culvert Improvements	£160,005	26.41p
	£160,005	26.41p

4. Annual Accounts and Finance papers 2025/2026:

4.1 Annual Return 2025/2026:

To consider the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2026 and the completion of Section 2 of the Annual Return as required in the Audit Regulations. Appendix 2

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

Appendix 1 Payments for 2025/26
Appendix 2 Annual Accounts & Finance Papers 2025/26

Appendix 1

Payments made 2025/2026 (1st April 2025 - 31st March 2026)

Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery, travelling, and Health & Safety Contract	5,942.60
Middle Level Commisssioners - Fees (Weed control and drain maintenance 2024/2025, production of Board report, planning and development applications)	2,375.40
Association of Drainage Authorities - Annual subscription 2025	813.60
Middle Level Commissioners - Rates summons	0.50
Crown Lodge Hotel - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	213.00
Environment Agency - Precept	3,566.57
Crown Lodge Hotel - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	485.10
Middle Level Commisssioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	762.90
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit fee (2024-2025 accounts)	378.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, IDB change contribution and Internal audit fees (Whiting and Partners 2024/2025)	6,603.67
Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd - Drain maintenance	4,020.00
Environment Agency - Precept	3,566.57
Middle Level Commissioners - Assist with digger access at Pious Drove Drain	83.44
B J Plant Hire Ltd - Flail mowing	4,764.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	800.72
Middle Level Commisssioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	310.50
Association of Drainage Authorities - Annual subscription 2026	854.40
Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd - Flailmowing	8,521.50
Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd - Drain maintenance	356.40
Middle Level Commissioners - Chemical weed control of District drains.	1,342.44
Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal	52.00
Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd - Drain maintenance	3,780.00
	49,593.31

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

Appendix 2

NEEDHAM & LADDUS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st March 2026

GENERAL FUND

31st March 2026				
To expenditure during the year			1st April 2025	
Precept		7,133.14	By balance brought forward	61,762.23
Insurances	800.72		31st March 2026	
Contractors charges	2,100.00		By Rate income & Special levies	57,373.26
Drainworks	23,833.49		By Interest on Deposit Accounts	787.70
Administration charge, Audit fee,			By Development Charges Account	0.00
printing, stationery, advertising etc	13,429.72	40,163.93	By Consents	-50.00
To Improvement Works		160,005.02	By Storm Recovery Grant	160,005.02
To Future works fund			By Write Back of Provisions	10,678.17
Rates raised 2025-2026		12,000.00		
To balance carried forward		71,254.29		
		290,556.38		**290,556.38**

BALANCE SHEET AT 31st March 2026

REVENUE SECTION

General Fund	71,254.29	Ratepayers - Arrears		3,365.48
Development Charges Account	32,393.18	Value added Tax - Refunds due		36,450.97
Commutation Fund (Rookery Farm Drain)	10,559.25	Sundry Debtors		534.00
Asset Replacement Fund	49,072.52	Balance in hand -		
Sundry Creditors	47,303.59	Treasurer's Account	169,226.26	
		National Savings Account	1,006.12	170,232.38
Grant in Aid - Creditor	0.00			
	210,582.83			**210,582.83**
			0.00	

Needham & Laddus IDB
Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return

Financial year ended 31st March 2026

				Per Annual Return
Line 1	**Balances brought forward**			
	General Fund	61,762.23		
	Development charges account	31,985.24		
	Commutation fund	10,426.28		
	Asset replacement Fund	36,605.66		
			140,779.41	**140,779**
Line 2	**Rates and Special Levies**			
	Agricultural rates	23,872.14		
	Contribution Needham Bank	154.00		
	Special Levies	33,367.00		
	Penalty	0.00		
	Costs	0.00		
	Write-off	-19.88		
			57,373.26	**57,373**
Line 3	**Total other receipts**			
	Interest			
	General fund	787.70		
	Development charges account	407.94		
	Commutation fund	132.97		
	Future works account	466.86		
	Grant in Aid	160,005.02		
	Consents	-50.00		
	Discharge contributions	0.00		
	Write back of provisions	10,678.17		
			172,428.66	**172,429**
Line 4	**Staff costs**			
	Wages/salaries	0.00		
	National insurance contributions	0.00		
	Pension costs	0.00		
	Travelling expenses	0.00		
			0.00	**0**
Line 5	**Loan repayments**			
	PWLB - Principal	0.00		
	PWLB - Interest	0.00		
			0.00	**0**

Needham & Laddus IDB

Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return

Financial year ended 31st March 2026

				Per Annual Return
Line 6	**All other payments**			
	Precept	7,133.14		
	Rates, insurances, telephones	800.72		
	Drainworks	23,833.49		
	Contractors charges	2,100.00		
	Administration	13,429.72		
	Development charges fees	0.00		
	Improvement works	160,005.02		
	Net credit against improvement works	0.00		
			207,302.09	**207,302**
Line 7	**Balances carried forward**			
	General Fund	71,254.29		
	Development charges account	32,393.18		
	Commutation fund	10,559.25		
	Asset replacement Fund	49,072.52		
			163,279.24	**163,279**

Reconciliation	
Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6	163,279.24

NEEDHAM & LADDUS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2026 £	*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	119,271	140,779	*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	54,390	57,373	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	2,317	172,429	*Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.*
4. (-) Staff costs	0	0	*Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.*
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	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	35,199	207,302	*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	140,779	163,279	*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	156,467	170,232	*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	0	0	*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	
11 Do the figures in the accounting statements above exclude any trust transactions?			*For guidance refer to the Practitioners' Guide sections 2.31 to 2.33.*

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2026 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

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

Date 03/04/2026

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

as recorded in minute reference:

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

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	13
Meeting:	**NEEDHAM & LADDUS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING FORWARD**
Date:	**Tuesday 14th April 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Andrew Wool/Sam Ablett**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Consider the Finance Officer's summary
B. Fees, remuneration and subscriptions
C. Note the Precept to the Environment Agency
D. Review & Approve Rating Estimates for 2026/2027
E. Consider & approve the Agricultural Drainage Rates and Special Levy requirements for 2026/2027

Finance Officer's summary and key messages

The rating estimates for 2026/2027 are made up of standard budget provisions and the engineers estimate for drain maintenance works for the coming year.

The engineers estimate for drain maintenance works in 2026/2027 are £25,325, a slight decrease on the previous year's estimate.

A provision of £12,000 has been included for Future Works.

The estimated expenditure for the year is £60,579, this would indicate a rate requirement for 2026/2027 of 10.00p, the rate set for 2025/2026 being 9.50p.

1. Fees, Remunerations and Subscriptions

1.1 To consider the fees for District Officer.

The current District Officer fee is £2,100

2. Precept to the Environment Agency

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

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

The precept for 2025 was £7,133.14.

3. Estimates for 2026/27

3.1 The estimated budget for 2026/27 is shown in Appendix 1.

3.2 Standard budget provisions have been made, retaining the drain work budget for a normal years' work.

3.3 Indication is that Insurance costs is likely to increase above Inflation and an increase of 5% has been included.

3.4 These budget provisions indicate a rate requirement for 2025/2026 of 10.00p, the rate set for 2024/2025 being 9.50p.

3.5 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 Rate Requirements for 2026/27

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

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

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

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

APPENDIX 1

NEEDHAM AND LADDUS INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET 2026/2027

	Approved budget 2025/2026 £	Actuals to 31/03/2026 £	Proposed Budget 2026/2027 £
1 Insurances	790	801	845
2 Repairs and renewals	100	0	100
3 District Officer's fee	2,075	2,100	2,210
4 Drainworks (including Environmental measures)	25,782	23,833 [A]	25,325 [B]
5 Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	12,000	13,429	13,475
6 Environment Agency Precept	6,993	7,133	7,276
7 Future works funding	12,000 [c]	12,000	12,000 [c]
.			
8 Improvement works	0	160,005	0
	59,740	219,302	61,231
LESS Deposit Accounts interest	2,350	171,421	652
	57,390	47,881	60,579

Remarks

A -	Flail mowing/weed bucket/spraying	10,036
	Weed Control	1,119
	Contribution - Env. Officer	1,995
	Slubbing	7832
	Drainworks/Planning fees/misc	2,604
		23,586
B -	Slubbing (Including Emergency)	10,625
	Flail Mowing	7,000
	Weed Control	800
	Contribution - Env. Officer	1,995
	Drainworks/Planning fees/misc	4,905
		25,325
C -	Provision for Future works programme	
D -	Channels Work - Culvert Enlargements	160,005
E -	Storm Recovery Grant T2B	160,005

APPPENDIX 2

Needham and Laddus Internal Drainage Board
Rate and levy requirements

UNDER SECTION 37 OF THE LAND DRAINAGE ACT 1991, THE APPROPRIATE PROPORTIONS IN WHICH THE NET EXPENDITURE OF THE COMMISSIONERS MUST BE BORNE FOR 2026/2027 IS:-

a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 41.71%

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

Borough of Kings Lynn & Norfolk	50.30%
Fenland District Council	8.12%
	58.42%

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £2,512.

In 2026/2027 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levies and contributions would raise £6,042.

Revenue balance in hand on 31st March 2026 - £71,255

The estimated net expenditure of £60,579 in 2026/2027 is equivalent to:-

a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 10.00p

b) a Special levy on the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk of £30,391 and

c) a Special levy on Fenland District Council of £4,907

d) contributions from Hundred of Wisbech IDB of £162

In 2025/2026 an equivalent rate of 9.50p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £4,661 on Fenland District Council and £28,705 on the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, and contributions from Hundred of Wisbech IDB of £154.

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Board

April 2026