

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	7
Meeting:	RANSONMOOR DDC (Hereafter referred to as the Board)	Subject:	CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: CHIEF ENGINEER'S SUMMARY & CAPITAL PROGRAMME
Date:	Wednesday 13th May 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 from MLC.**
- B. Liaise with the Consulting Engineer to develop an asset improvement plan for future refurbishment/replacement works.**
- C. Confirm when it wishes to overhaul the pump so that quotes can be obtained accordingly. Estimated cost £50k.**

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, unlicensed 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. 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)

Asset Refurbishment Projects

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 new FCERM funding policy existing FCERM assets are eligible for 100% of funding for refurbishment.

New or Improved Asset Projects

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.

Applying for funding

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 consider part-funding projects. 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 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.

Timescales

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 onwards
- delivery 2027/28 onwards

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

5. Capital Improvement Programme

Based on age alone, the pumping station will be due for replacement in 2027/28. This is indicated highlighted green on the Capital Improvement Programme. It should be noted that it takes 2-3 years to properly develop a plan, design and procure a replacement asset, where required. Replacement or refurbishment needs will be driven by KHIs and a detailed asset condition survey. These will inform the development of a more robust costed plan of works.

It should be noted that the M&E Engineer has recommended that an overhaul of the pump should be undertaken soon. This would allow time for the development of a robust pumping station refurbishment/replacement plan.

The Board is strongly advised to liaise with the Consulting Engineer to develop an asset improvement plan for future refurbishment/replacement works.

Author Name: Nicola Oldfield

Role: Chief Engineer

Appendix 1: Capital Programme

Appendix 2: List of applications since last meeting & Planning updates

Appendix 3: Operational Services

Appendix 4: M&E Services

Appendix 1

Ransoonmoor District Drainage Commissioners														
Capital Improvement Programme (2026/2027)		PREVIOUS YEARS	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	FUTURE YEARS	ALL YEARS
		Pre Yr 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Post Year 10	Total Expenditure
Ransoonmoor P/S	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12000*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping plant overhaul, replacement of diesel power unit with automatic control equipment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0
	Pumping station delivery pipeline (diesel) replacement/refurbishment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.6	4.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.1
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Drainage Channels		0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Structural survey				50									50.0
	Refurbishment of inlets/outfalls	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		4.6	4.5	0	50	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	109
NOTES														
May-25 An indicative cost for pumping station replacment has been included in 2027 based on pumping station build date.														
May-26 *A robust costed plan is needed to better inform future refubishment/replacement works														

There have been 17 planning applications responded to since the last meeting.

There have been 1 application for Byelaw Consent (to undertake works in and around watercourses) since the last meeting.

There have been 6 applications for Byelaw Consent (to discharge to a watercourse) granted since the last meeting.

There have been no infiltration device applications acknowledged since the last meeting.

Planning updates & Consultations

Cambridgeshire County Council Highways resurfacing of Floods Ferry Road (full) & Knight's Bridge Road (part).

In early November 2025, works were provisionally pencilled in for June/July 2026 to avoid interruption to harvest and HGV traffic to and from Greenvale AP. Early on, it was noticed that the proposal included road planning up to 600mm of the old surface over the outfall pipes of Ransonmoor Pumping Station. Having checked engineering drawings for the outfalls, these are only 800mm below the existing road surface. This was red flagged from the outset to the CCC Project Manager and Scheme Designer who agreed a Watching Brief should be maintained while working in their proximity. However, these works were brought forward with a matter of days' notice and commenced on 24th March 2026 without a consent application being duly made and formal consent being issued. Programmed works are with 20m of the Old River Nene requiring an MLC Byelaw Consent and 9m of Ransonmoor Drain and Pumping Station requiring an IDB Byelaw Consent.

A site meeting was hastily arranged on the 24th March 2026 with the knowledge of the Chairman, where the CCC Project Manager acknowledged he and the Scheme Director should have notified us in advance, but this was overlooked, for which they apologised. The program of works and site access issues for MLC and IDB staff were discussed, along with Watching Brief arrangement. Such cooperation will ensure consents will be issued ahead of works near the Pumping Station. It was agreed that MLC would be advised a minimum 48 hours in advance of any heavy plant machinery works 10m either side of the outfall pipes during surface removal, subsequent ground consolidation, and resurfacing. Such measures are prudent as one of the outfall pipes is cast iron and therefore potentially brittle and vulnerable to cracking under pressure or at risk from pipe joins splaying. Works are programmed to be completed by the end of April – early May.

In addition to the ongoing discussions, a consent rejection letter was issued relating to the original incomplete consent application.

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Date:	Wednesday 13th May 2026	Officer Responsible:	Morgan Lakey

1. Weed Control & Drain Maintenance

- 1.1 The maintenance works carried out last year generally accorded with the recommendations approved by the Board at its last annual meeting.

An application of Roundup was made last autumn to district drains where it was required to control growths of emergent aquatic vegetation, bramble patches and self-sown saplings. It is recommended that the phased application approach continues this season, until adequate control is achieved.

As with many other local Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs), the Ransonmoor district continues to suffer its fair share of fly tipping incidents throughout the year in the Coneywood drains. A provisional sum has been allocated to allow fly tipped debris to be cleared, on the basis that the Ransonmoor area has been targeted in past years and unfortunately continues to be targeted on a regular basis each year.

A recent joint inspection of the Board's district drains has been undertaken with the District Officer. It was found that majority of drains were in a satisfactory condition and are being maintained to a good standard and last year's successful herbicide applications are evident throughout the Board's drains.

The inspection highlighted sporadic stands of aquatic vegetation and accumulations of silt downstream of last year's machine cleansing works. It is recommended that the affected reaches are treated with an application of Roundup herbicide and included in the machine cleansing programme. A provisional sum has been included in the estimated costs for these works to be carried out. As the inspection falls at the early part of the growing season, a subsequent, second, district inspection will be carried out pre-harvest to accurately identify any additional drain maintenance requirements.

Following reports from adjacent landowners, of surface ponding and water being held up in drains within the upstream reaches of the catchment, further investigations were carried out during the joint inspection. To alleviate any possible issues and in agreement with the District Officer the identified reaches will be included in this year's machine cleansing programme and a provisional sum has been included in the estimated costs for the works to be completed.

M&C Agri Services have indicated they will be available to undertake the Board's flail mowing requirements for the coming season. It is recommended that flail mowing is undertaken in advance of the machine cleansing works to afford the operator sufficient visibility of the working area. Provision has been included within the estimate for this work to be undertaken.

A provisional sum has also been included within the estimate to allow for any emergency machine cleansing, culvert cleansing or emergency Cott clearance works that may be required later in the year.

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

- 2.1 The estimated cost of this year's recommended Weed Control and Drain Maintenance programme is as follows, please refer to the site plan at the end of this report for locations.

				£
1.	<u>Provisional Sum</u>			
	Allow sum to remove fly tipped materials from District drains as required	Item	Sum	1000.00
2.	<u>Machine cleansing</u>	m	£	
	Reach 20-22-23-11-12	2000	1.40	2800.00
	Additional Drains within catchment	Item	Sum	2400.00
3.	Roundup application to control emerging aquatic weed growth in District drains.	Item	Sum	1200.00
4.	Flail mowing in advance of machine cleansing and to control bramble on banks, where required.	Item	Sum	2400.00
5.	<u>Provisional Item</u>			
	Allow sum for emergency machine cleansing, culvert clearance and emergency cott removal works	Item	Sum	1000.00
6.	Fees for inspection, preparation and submission of report to the Commissioners, arrangement and supervision of herbicide applications and maintenance work	Item	Sum	1400.00
TOTAL				£12,200.00

Orders for the application of herbicides are accepted on condition that they are weather dependant and the Middle Level Commissioners will not be held responsible for the efficacy of any treatments.

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Role: Operations Manager

REPRODUCED FROM OR BASED UPON THE
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RATEABLE AREA 1584ha

RANSONMOOR
PUMPING STATION

KEY

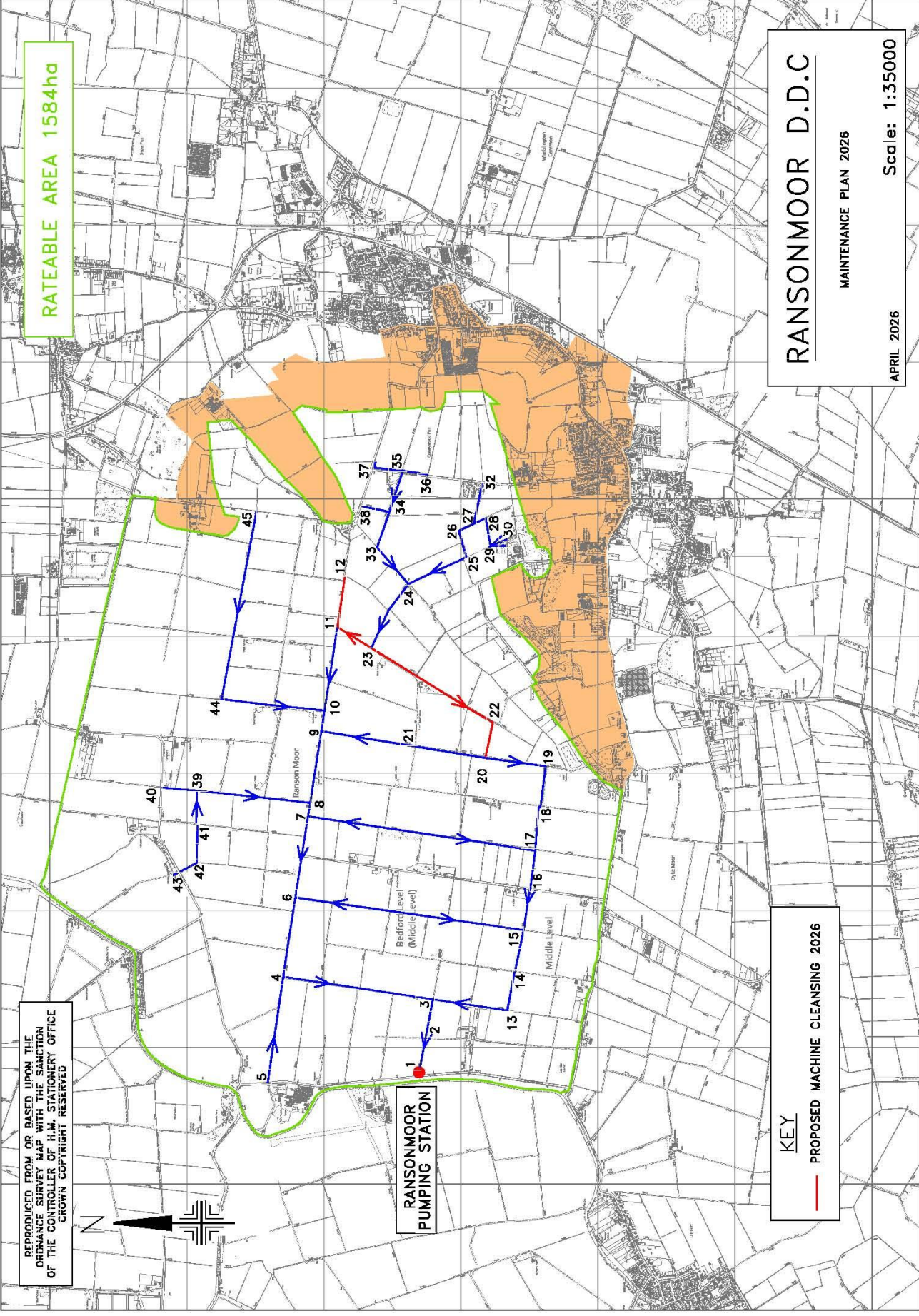
— PROPOSED MACHINE CLEANSING 2026

RANSONMOOR D.D.C

MAINTENANCE PLAN 2026

APRIL 2026

Scale: 1:35000



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Meeting:	RANSONMOOR DDC (Hereafter referred to as the Board)	Subject:	CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL
Date:	Wednesday 13 th May 2026	Officer Responsible:	Dave Bantoft

1. M&E key messages and advice

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

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

1.1 M&E Equipment Key Health Indicators

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

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



Table 1: Key Health Indicators

Station					Weedscreen			
	Built	Pump	Pump Overhaul	Controls	Bars	WSC	WSC O/H	Controls
Ransonmoor	1952	2015 (D)	2005 (E)	2015	1998	1998	2015	1998

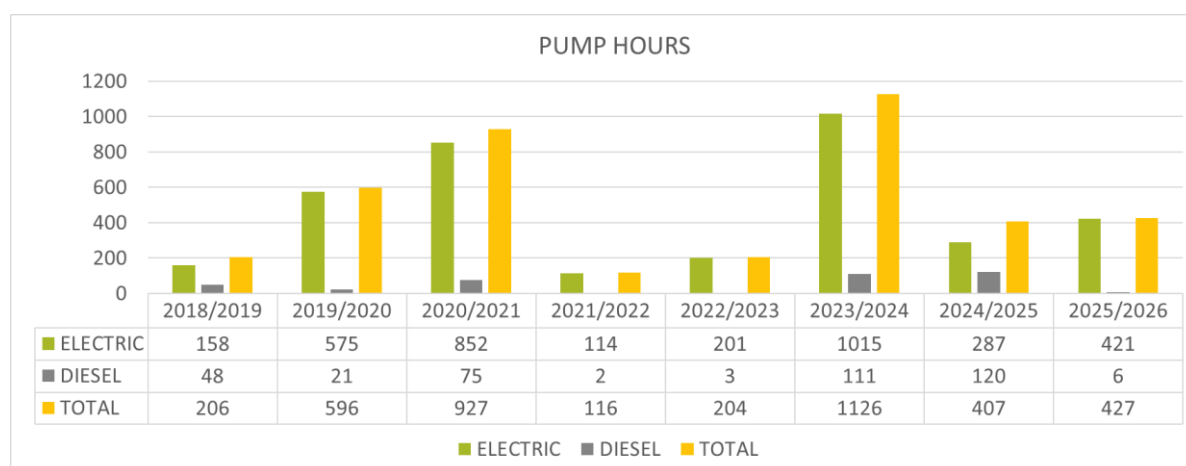
The Key Health Indicators table above shows the critical area for concern and improvement is the electric pump. The pump is now 20 years since last overhaul and should be overhauled soon to ensure the station's reliability. The Board is advised to develop and start an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement. Having a plan in place and underway helps to secure further grant funding when it comes available, such as the recent IDB Recovery Fund.

Standard pumps of the type at Ransonmoor are normally cost effective to repair and lead times can be as short as 4 weeks or can be over a year depending on contractor availability and pump condition. Costs can be in the range £30k to £100k depending on pump condition.

Please confirm when the Board would like to overhaul this pump so that quotes can be obtained accordingly. I would expect this pump overhaul to be c£50k. This has been included on the Capital Improvement Programme for this year.

2. Pumping summary

2.1 Pumping Hours



- 2.2 As previously reported the plan is to dewater the electric pump sump and check for a build-up of debris around the pump suction in conjunction with the District Officer, which may be the cause of the rattle, which is often, but not always, present from the pump.

The last routine inspection at Ransonmoor Pump Station took place on 27th January 2026. Recommendation/remarks are as follows:

- 1) Electric Pumps Still Noisy (See Report 29.10.20).
- 2) Water leak around fresh air vent – put jug underneath and moved paperwork.
- 3) Drain pipe for gutter broken – washing away foundations.
- 4) New Tube light required 4x5ft twin (emergency).

3. Inspections

- 3.1 The mandatory site Electrical Installation Condition Reports (due every 5 years) are in date, and the upcoming check will be scheduled in.

Station	EICR Pass Date	EICR Due
Ransonmoor	6-Nov-2025	6-Nov-2030

- 3.2 HSB Engineering annual inspections for insurance were carried out in September 2025.

4. Water level Management

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

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

Author Name: Dave Bantoft
Role: M&E Engineer