RANSONMOOR DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Contact: Gemma Ashby, Senior Business Support Officer

Email: enquiries@middlelevel.gov.uk

Telephone: DD (01354) 699377

Administered by:

6th May 2026

Dear Board Members

Upcoming meeting of the Board
Wednesday 13th May 2026

Please find overleaf the agenda for the meeting of the Board to be hosted at the Middle Level Offices, PE15 0AH at 2pm on Wednesday 13th May 2026.

As you'll be aware, we administer twenty-three 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

RANSONMOOR DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Wednesday 13th May 2026 – 2pm
Middle Level Offices, PE15 0AH

Agenda:

Item No	*Topic*	*Format*	*Lead*
1	Welcome & apologies	Verbal	Chair
2	Declarations of Interest	Verbal	Chair
3	Minutes of last meeting and matters arising	Pages 3 - 13	Chair
4	Constitution & Membership	Pages 14 - 16	Clerk
5	Clerk's Report	Pages 17 - 21	Clerk
6	Environment Officer's Report	Pages 22 - 23	Clerk
7	Consulting Engineer's Reports.	Pages 24 - 34	Clerk or Engineer
8	Health & Safety	Pages 35 - 42	Chair
9	District Officer's Report	Verbal	DO
10	Governance • Accounts Return for 2024/2025 • Auditors report for 2024/2025	Pages 43 - 45 Pages 46 - 50	Clerk
11	Finance Report: looking back • Payments 2025 • Annual Accounts and Finance papers 2024/2025	Pages 51 - 52 Page 53 Pages 54 - 58	Clerk
12	Finance Report: looking forward • Rating Estimates for 2025/2026 • Agricultural Drainage Rates and Special Levy requirements or 2025/2026	Pages 59 - 60 Page 61 Page 62	Clerk
13	Date of Next Meeting Wednesday 12th May 2027 – 2pm	Verbal	Chair
14	Any other business	Verbal	Chair

(NB: If required for any agenda item:

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

RANSONMOOR DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

At a Meeting of the Ransonmoor District Drainage Commissioners
Held at the Middle Level Offices, March on 14th May 2025.

PRESENT

G Wakeham (VC – Acting Chair)	J Pollington
M Dale	T Taylor
R Mason	W Veal

Ruth Martin (Lead Clerk) representing the Clerk, and Morgan Lakey (Operations Engineer) were in attendance.

Welcome and Apologies

Mr Wakeham welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that the Chair had sent his apologies. The meeting was subsequently chaired by Mr Wakeham, the Vice Chair.

Apologies for absence were received from D Boughton, R Dring, Ms J French and J Jolley.

C.1329 Declarations of Interest

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

Mr Dale declared an interest in matters relating to the District Officer.

C.1330 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

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

RESOLVED

> That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Commissioners held on the 14th May 2024 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

C.1331 Constitution & Membership

Vacancies

The Vice Chair welcomed Mr Pollington to the Board and advised that his appointment had filled the vacancy on the Board. However, it was noted that Mr Wakeham had advised of his intention to stand down at the end of this meeting.

Mr Wakeham suggested that Mr Chris White who is Mr Wakeham's tenant, has shown an interest in joining the Board and Mr Wakeham would be happy to support Mr White as his nominee. This was agreed by the Board.

RESOLVED

That Mr Chris White be invited to join the Board as a nominee of Mr G Wakeham

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The Board agreed that Mr Duncan Boughton be appointed as Chairman of the Commissioners. This was proposed by Mr Wakeham and seconded by Mr Taylor.

The Board agreed that Mr Dale be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Commissioners. This was proposed by Mr Wakeham and seconded by Mr Taylor.

The Board agreed that Mr Dale be appointed as District Officer, and that this role will be shared with Mr Pollington with the intention that Mr Pollington will take on the role fully in the future.

Mr Dale was thanked for the work he does as District Officer, and Mr Pollington was thanked for agreeing to take on the role in future.

RESOLVED

That Mr D Broughton be appointed as Chairman of the Commissioners.

That Mr Dale be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Commissioners.

That Mr Dale with Mr Pollington be appointed as District Officers

Training

Mrs Martin advised that the updated version of the ADA Good Governance Guide has been printed and that copies are being sent for distribution amongst Board members. It is not yet clear what supporting training material will follow. The Vice Chair reminded the Board of their legal responsibilities and urged them the read the guide and undertake the 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.

C.1332 Clerk's Report

Mrs Martin advised that the Clerks Report would be taken largely 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. Mr Dale asked if the Commissioners were a statutory power for planning but was advised that Internal Drainage Boards are not statutory consultees. It is understood that the local councils would back a change to this situation but to change this would require an Act of Parliament. The Vice Chair hoped that the change would encourage more proactive consultation with developers and Mr Lakey advised the Board of the impact of Sustainable Drainage Solutions (SuDS). The Board expressed their satisfaction with the model.

Highland Water and IDB Precept

Mrs Martin outlined the issues detailed in the Clerks Report, and that 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.

<u>RESOLVED</u>

> 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.

<u>Fens Reservoir</u>

Although this Board are not directly impacted by the scheme, all IDBs that gravity outfall or pump into the Middle Level watercourses have an interest and Mrs Martin reminded the Board of this. 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.

The Vice Chair stressed that he would not wish for any legal services that are not covered by the agreement to be undertaken.

<u>RESOLVED</u>

> 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.

<u>C.1333 Environment Officers’ Report</u>

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 visit has been carried out with the Chair, Vice Chair and District Officer, and that the report will be presented to them once complete.

Mr Lakey drew the Boards attention to the changes in the Hedgerow Regulations and advised the Board that the Ecology Team can now check if any works affecting trees may impact on bats. He reminded the Board that any non-routine maintenance works will require a survey before works commence, and the Ecology Team have an environmental screening form that needs to be completed. He advised the Board that any bank slips should be reported as early as possible, as the slip will most likely displace any water voles that may have been present and so will not prevent any repair works being carried out. Alternatively leaving the slip and dealing with it later may

give water voles chance to re-establish themselves and therefore prevent works being carried out. Mr Lakey referred the Board to the 'Water Voles – Myth Busting' part of the report.
The Board are invited to attend a biodiversity training day, although all of this work is undertaken by Mr Lakey on behalf of the Board.

Mr Dale asked about the displacement of 150m of water voles, noting this is not far. Mr Lakey advised that if water voles are present, only 150m of reprofiling is permitted to be carried out at one time, although if there is suitable habitat on the opposite bank it may be possible to do more.

The Vice Chair asked about the equivalent days figure in the new package, and if this is the same for each board. He felt that this would be disproportionate for smaller boards, but Mr Lakey advised that this may be reviewed going forward but smaller Boards will be receiving the same level of service as a larger Board. The package should be seen as an insurance. The time allocated is the basis of the fee which reflects the minimum time needed, so larger Boards will pay additional costs. The Vice Chair suggested that the Board questions the level of the fee but accepts the service is needed. He would prefer to see a tiered structure linked to size and/or use but accepts the proposal this year.

RESOLVED

That the Environment Report be approved.

C.1334 Consulting Engineers' Reports

The Board considered the report of the Consulting Engineer and is was taken as read.

Doddington Water Recycling Centre

Mrs Martin reported that the Planning Engineer had raised concerns previously and it was not clear that these issues had been addressed. The Board asked the Planning Officer to continue to pursue this issue.

Standing Advice Note

Mrs Martin advised that MLC have published a 'standing advise note' effectively declaring the Middle Level flood and drainage infrastructure 'at capacity', and the Board were asked if they wished to create, adopt and issue standing advice notes for its district. Mr Dale thought that the Board could accept flows provided that they were paid for, and with the funding they could increase their holding capacity. However, Mr Lakey advised that this would not increase the Boards pumping capacity and asked if the Board wished to accept flows greater that greenfield run off. Mr Dale was still of the opinion that the Board could accept the flows if this were paid for. Mr Taylor thought it was important to consider issuing a statement, as this would give him, as a Councillor, support when advising that the district could not accept any additional flow, although the Vice Chair thought that the Board could cope with additional flows if they received the additional funding. However, after some further discussion it was decided that the Board is at capacity and a suitable advice note should be drafted. Mr Taylor asked that he be sent a copy of the completed note.

RESOLVED

That the Board confirms it wishes to create, adopt and issue a standing advice note for its district and instruct the Consulting Engineer accordingly.

That the completed note be sent to Mr Taylor

Operational Services Report

Mr Lakey reported that works were been undertaken as previously approved and talked the Board through his report. The Board acknowledged the report.

Mechanical and Electrical Report

Mr Lakey advised the Board that the weed screen had been refurbished this year, and that the dates needed to be revised within the key dates record. (Post Meeting Note: date had not been updated as only part overhauled)

Mr Dale queried the electric pump hours run as he thought the diesel was being used more than electric. Mr Lakey confirmed he would check these figures with the M&E Engineer. (Post Meeting Note: the figures have been checked and are correct.)

RESOLVED

That the reports be approved.

C.1335 Health & Safety

The Vice Chair referred to the report received from Cope Safety Management following their visit in January, which he and the Chair attended. He reported that all matters raised are in hand and that some concreting works had been carried out.

He thanked the District Officer for dealing with the matters raised.

C.1336 District Officers Report

Mr Dale delivered a verbal report. He advised that the only issue being encountered at present is due to fly tipping at Coneywood. He had considered trying to fit some CCTV in the area, but this was not possible to do, and some Board members with experience of CCTV advised on the legal issues that could be encountered in this regard.

Mr Dale advised that there is a service plan for the pumps, but that the pumping station is due for refurbishment. Another Board had removed the roof of their pumping station and reduced the load on the roof, and he suggested that this be considered for the Board's pumping station. Mr Lakey advised that as the pumping stations roof and building is in good order it is not likely such works would be needed at the present time, and suggested the Board consider moving the funds allocated in the Capital Programme forward 10 years. The Vice Chair added that money has been spent on the station recently and asked that the figure in the capital programme for the pumping station refurb be checked. He reflected that this Board has promoted keeping their system in good order and this is paying dividends.

The Vice Chair thanked the District Officer for his work.

C.1337 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 – 2023/2024

i) The Board/Commissioners 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/Commissioners 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 web-page.

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.

Insured Values

The Vice Chair identified that some discussions previously in the meeting would cause the Board to reconsider this figure. Other works in the area may give a better indication of the costs so it would be prudent to review the insured figure following this. The Board do not wish to be underinsured but will need more information before making any changes to the figures. However, until such time a review can be carried out the Board agreed their contentment with the Insured Values.

The Board also agreed that the insurance should continue to be index linked.

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.

Risk Management Strategy and Internal Controls

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 no additional controls were highlighted as required.

Exercise of Public Rights

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

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.

DEFRA IDB1 Return

RESOLVED

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

Annual Governance Statement

RESOLVED

> 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.

C.1338 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. The Board noted the Storm Recovery Grant Fund bids and that the Board received £23,792.22 for excess winter pumping costs, and £11,962 was received to fund the weed screen cleaner overhaul.

Payments for 2024

The Vice Chair asked about the payments made on account to Corona Energy and asked if this related to back charges from the previous year. It was thought that they were, but this would be referred back to the Finance Officer for clarification.

It was observed that the Board are very vulnerable to changes in energy costs.

The Payments were reviewed and accepted.

Highland Water Contributions

The Board noted the Highland Water contributions.

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.

C.1339 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:

i) ADA subscription

The Clerk reported that ADA have increased subscriptions by 6.5% for 2025, from £636 to £678 (plus VAT).

RESOLVED

That the requested increased ADA subscription for 2025 be paid.

ii) District Officers Honorarium

The Board gave consideration to the District Officers Honorarium for 2025-2026. The Vice Chair observed that previously the Board had used the Middle Level pay award as an indicator, which had been set at 4.15%. The District Officer role will be shared between Mr Dale and Mr Pollington.

RESOLVED

That the Board agree that the District Officers Honorarium increase to £750.00 for 2025/2026.

iii) Rental of Land at Pumping Station Bungalow

RESOLVED

That the annual licence continues with the same annual fees.

iv) 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 £6498.16.

RESOLVED

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

v) Contributions from Developers.

The Board considered the Developers Contributions.

The Vice Chair asked if the annual contributions could be shown more clearly in the accounts in future years.

vi) Estimates & Rate Requirements for 2025/26.

The Board reviewed the proposed budget for 2025/2026.

The Vice Chair said that the Board had previously talked about moving £15-20k into the Capital Realisation Account, to begin to build up a capital fund. He proposed that £20k is moved from the General Fund into the Capital Realisation Account provided that this account is for building funds for future capital works. If this account is not for this purpose, then the funds should be moved to an account that is. This proposal was agreed unanimously by the Board.

The Board recorded their thanks to all the Middle Level staff that were involved in coordinating, applying for, and dealing with the additional funding applications.

RESOLVED

That the budget is agreed.

That £20k is moved from the General Fund to the Capital Realisation Account (or another suitable account)

vii) Rate Requirement for 2025/26

The Vice Chair reminded the Board that they had previously spoken about a 19p or 20p rate, although based on the forecast budget a rate of 18.75p in the £ would be required. Mr Dale proposed raising the rate to 19p in the £ and this was seconded by Mr Taylor and agreed unanimously.

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 the Clerk 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 76.39% and 23.61%.

RESOLVED

i) That the estimates be approved.

ii) That a total sum of £63,258 be raised by drainage rates and special levy and by way of a contribution from Middle Level Commissioners.

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 are £48,321 and £14,937.

iv) That a rate of 19.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.

v) That a Special Levy of £14,937 be made and issued to 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 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.

C.1340 Middle Level IDB Change

Mrs Martin referred to the Clerks Report relating to the Middle Level IDB Change and provided a precis of the report. The Vice Chair added that if the system were being designed now it would not look like the model we currently have, especially considering the administration involved in dealing with so many Boards.

Mr Dale added that they are all in favour of something happening but is disappointed that every pumping station on every Board is at a different stage of modernisation, with some having telemetry and some not. If all Boards were at the same standard, it would make things easier, and he wouldn't want to subsidise Boards that have not kept their equipment in good order.

Mr Lakey advised that the Key Health Indicators that it is proposed to introduce will give a picture of the condition of each Board and so we can provide strong advice to Boards that need to bring their assets up to a better standard.

The Vice Chair agreed with Mr Dale, adding that the proposals have opened up some big discussions. The question is are this Board happy to go ahead with the discussions. Mr Taylor raised concerns about the loss of local knowledge and Mr Lakey observed that many of the neighbouring Boards have many of the same people around the table. The Vice Chair explained that at a Board meeting he attended the previous day, Mr Burrows had explained that he thought that larger combined Boards would still have local representation and that Boards in other areas of the country have used smaller working groups within their larger Boards to look after specific areas. Mr Burrows could see these groups mirroring the current Board districts. Mr Dale thought that the end goal should be that all Boards are brought to and maintained at the same level.

The Vice Chair proposed that the £300 of funding that was being requested be agreed and lent his support to the ongoing report. This view was agreed by the Board. However, the Board would still like to see funds raised now staying in the Boards area in the future and asked that this view be fed back to the Clerk. The Board also asked if the report could be recirculated.

RESOLVED

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

That the report be resent electronically to all Board members.

C.1341 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That next Meeting of the Board be held on 13th May 2026 at 3pm at The Middle Level Offices, March.

C.1342 Any Other Business

Mr Mason asked the Board to join with him to thank the Vice Chair, Mr Wakeham, for his work on the Board as this would be his last meeting. The Board wished Mr Wakeham a happy retirement.

With no other items being raised by the Board, the meeting was closed at 4.55pm.

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	4
Meeting:	**RANSONMOOR DDC**	**Subject:**	**CONSTITUTION & MEMBERSHIP**
Date:	**Wednesday 13th May 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	10	N/A		3
Actual	10	2 FDC	12	
Vacancies	0		0	

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

No	Name	Status (one of four categories)	Commentary
1	Duncan Boughton	Ratepayer	Chair
2	Charles Boughton	Ratepayer	
3	Michael Dale	Ratepayer	Vice Chair – District Officer
4	Michael Deptford	Ratepayer	
5	Ricky Dring	Nominee of Ratepayer (Lavenham Fen Farms Ltd)	
6	Jason Jolley	Ratepayer	
7	Raymond Mason	Nominee of Ratepayer (E Mason & Son)	
8	William Veal	Ratepayer	
9	Chris White	Nominee of Ratepayer (JP & SE White)	
10	James Pollington	Ratepayer	District Officer

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	Jan French	FDC	Councillor
2	Tim Taylor	FDC	Councillor

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

2. Attendance

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

Elected Members

No	Name	14/5/2025	8/5/2024	10/5/2023	11/5/2022
1	Duncan Boughton	Apologies	Present	Present	Present
2	Charles Boughton		Apologies	Present	Apologies
3	Michael Dale	Present	Present	Present	Present
4	Michael Deptford		Present	Present	Present
5	Ricky Dring	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
6	Jason Jolley	Apologies	Apologies		
7	Raymond Mason	Present	Present	Apologies	Present
8	William Veal	Present	Present	Apologies	
9	James Pollington	Present	N/A	N/A	N/A
10	Chris White	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Attendance at Chairs Meetings

No	Name	5/12/2025	6/12/2024	6/10/2023	13/12/2022
1	Duncan Boughton	Present	Present	Present	Present

Appointed Members (current and previous)

No	Name (Council)	14/5/2025	8/5/2024	10/5/2023	11/5/2022
1	Jan French (FDC)	Apologies	Present		N/A
2	Tim Taylor (FDC)	Present	Present		N/A

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 48 years, and the tenure of the current Vice Chairman is 1 year.

4. Composition and amalgamations

4.1 The Board is encouraged to continually monitor and review its membership, financial and climate resilience, along with assessing its influence locally, regionally and nationally. These are all factors that may lead the Board to consider changing its composition and/or amalgamation with (an)other Board(s). See 'The IDB governance future within the Middle Level of the Fen' within the Clerk's Report.

4.2 Amalgamations and composition changes are not swift processes and can take a number of years. They require planning and additional/specialist resourcing by the MLC as your clerk, Environment Agency and

Defra. Therefore, the Board is encouraged to think ahead five to ten years in its decision making, thinking about the next generation.

5. Training

5.1 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.

5.2 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).

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

5.4 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.

5.5 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:	**RANSONMOOR DDC**	**Subject:**	**CLERK'S REPORT**
Date:	**Wednesday 13th May 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. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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:	**RANSONMOOR DDC**	**Subject:**	**ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT**
Date:	**Wednesday 13th May 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Sofi Lloyd**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. **Review and approve the new Biodiversity Action Plan** – available from the IDB's webpage on the Middle Level Website: https://middlelevel.gov.uk/ransonmoor-4/

B. 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.

C. Propose to set the biodiversity budget at £250 for a swift box and seek offers of places to set it up (high building within 100m of water).

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:		**Michael Dale**	
KCI:	**Description of KCI:**	**Status:**	**Comments:**
1.	A current channel categorisation map & reasoning is available	Partly complete	ML to complete 2026
2.	Standard Operating Procedures audit has been undertaken and works considered compliant	Complete	ML completed 2025
3.	The previous year's maintenance record is available for review and to inform the following year's works planning.	Complete	ML completed
4.	A channel maintenance plan (flail mowing and desilting) has been prepared for Board review and approval.	Partly complete	Done and management where needed which is good but consider a shorter rotation to improve diversity, prevent the need to clear mature vegetation, and to reduce the risk of species dominance
5.	All non-routine works undertaken in the previous year were screened for environmental impacts and opportunities using the ESR process	Complete	None undertaken
6.	The Biodiversity Action Plan has been reviewed and objectives for the previous year have been met and following objectives set	Complete	New BAP available for review
7.	Biodiversity budget is proposed and defined	Complete	As above
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	Partly complete	First year so in progress
9.	There has been no net loss of open watercourse (via culverting or other) in the district in the previous year	Complete	SL completed
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	Partly complete	ML in progress

middle level commissioners

Ransonmoor DDC

Annual Environmental Review - Notes from Meeting

Attended by: Sofi Lloyd, Duncan Boughton, Michale Dale, Morgan Lakey

Date: 29/04/2026

Point No.	Notes	Action by and due date
1	The KCI's for the Board report were completed.	
2	Discussed that flail mowing some banks more frequently than the current "when needed" 6-8 year rotation may bring biodiversity benefits and encourage more diversity in the plants, preventing one dominant species from taking over. Also discussed that allowing some vegetation to mature and establish such as bramble and scrub and then cutting it out is not as good for nature as a "little and often" approach which allows nature to adapt more easily to routine management. SL reminded that the clearing of dense bramble and scrub would always require ecological screening prior to works.	
3	Noted that the desilting regime is also a rotation of a maximum of 6-8 years and "as needed" in most channels however points 23-22 and 24-38 towards Duncombs PS is a 1-3 year rotation due to sediment build up, particularly from the water treatment plant.	
4	Noted that where desilting works are planned, channels are flail mowed to the waters' edge to enable better view of the channel.	
5	Noted the reported presence of rigid hornwort in some drains. Fools water cress is a problem in those drains that are particularly high in nutrients i.e. near the water treatment works outfalls. Duckweed is an issue in some channels as it completely blankets the surface in summer.	
6	Confirmed that any work undertaken to or in close proximity to trees in the tree protection area highlighted in the BAP from point 45, westwards and north towards Grange Farm would require approval from the Local Authority as all trees along the channel are protected. There are a great number of rare elms in this area.	
7	DB requested a map to be included that shows land in SFI schemes. SL will add.	**SL 2026**
8	Noted that a number of known woodlandsare not showing on the priority habitats map.	
9	Point 5 west of Old Nene is a Reedbed – record	**SL 2026**
10	DB explained about the role that Streetpride has in Doddington including their maintenance of a pocket park including a pond. SL will find out more to see if they would be interested in assisting with BAP deliverables including Fen Drove and tree mapping.	**SL 2026**
11	DB confirmed his attendance at Doddington Parish Council and will inform them of the upcoming new BAP and request their contribution.	**DB Apr 2026**
12	SL will aim to organise a Parish & Town Council Knowledge Exchange day regarding IDBs and their support of biodiversity	**SL 2026**
13	SL will launch a Whatsapp group for sightings of wildlife to be submitted.	**SL 2026**
14	SL stressed that it was really important for all sightings of wildlife to be reported to MLC.	
15	Stressed that because there are very few designated nature sites, either formally or identified priority habitats, within the catchment, that the ditches and drains are even more vital for wildlife as there is no-where else for them to go.	
16	SL will update the BAP on todays' discussions and send to DB & MD to review with the aim of having a final draft approved by mid-May.	**DB & MD 2026**
17	Recommendation by SL for the Board to set aside £250 for swift boxes and a new Barn Owl box this year in the Bio budget.	**DB & MD 2026**
18	Remaining meeting points are captured in the BAP draft and Board Report KCIs.	

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, 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. 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 new 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.

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

Ransonmoor 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
Ransonmoor 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.

Appendix 3

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	7
Meeting:	**RANSONMOOR DDC (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: OPERATIONAL SERVICES**
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.

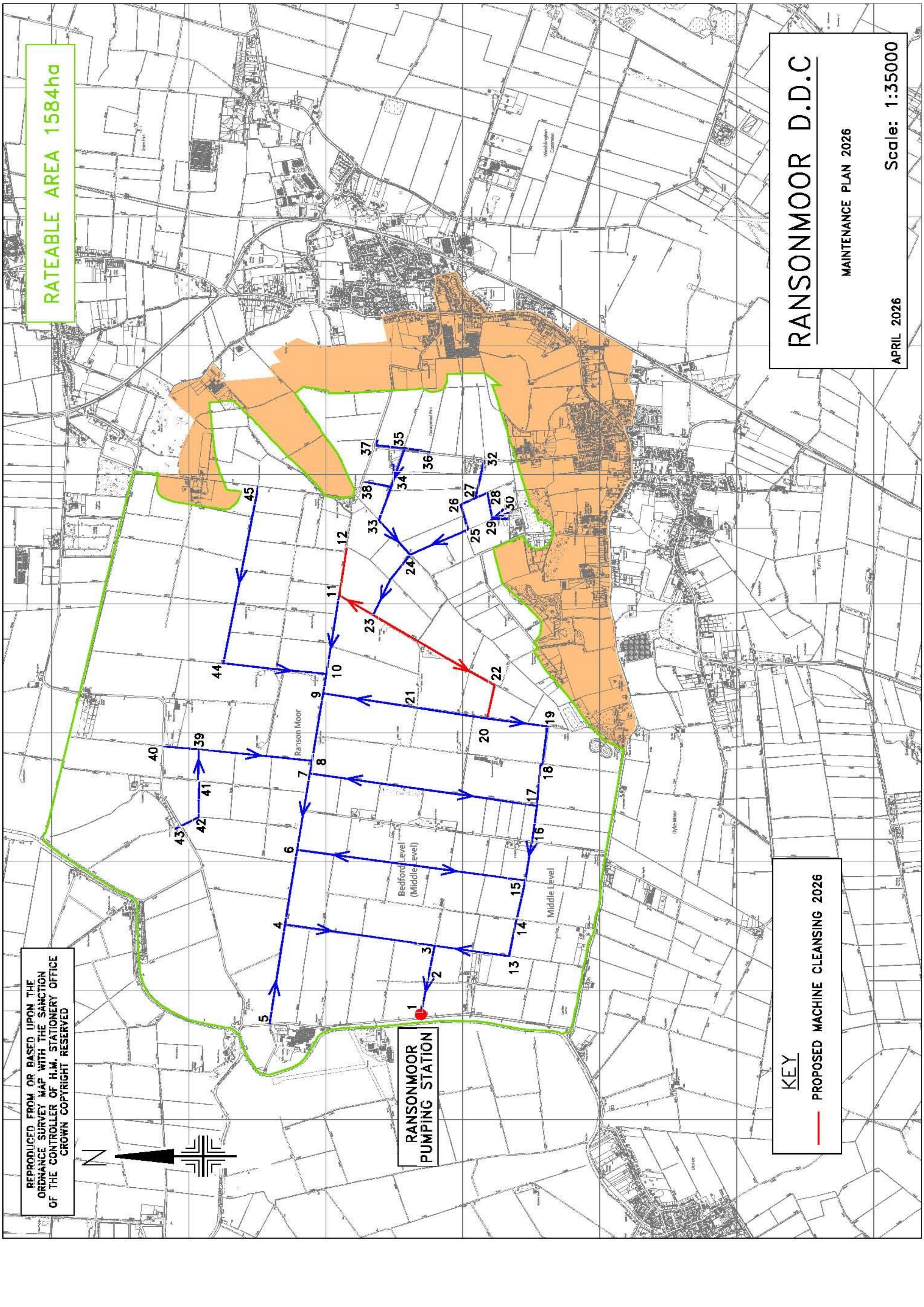
2. Estimated Costs of Anticipated Drain Maintenance and Weed Control Programme

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.	**Provisional Sum** Allow sum to remove fly tipped materials from District drains as required	Item	Sum	1000.00
2.	**Machine cleansing**	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.	**Provisional Item** 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.

Author Name: Morgan Lakey
Role: Operations Manager


RATEABLE AREA 1584ha
RANSONMOOR D.D.C
MAINTENANCE PLAN 2026
APRIL 2026
Scale: 1:35000
KEY
PROPOSED MACHINE CLEANSING 2026
RANSONMOOR PUMPING STATION
REPRODUCED FROM OR BASED UPON THE ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE SANCTION OF THE CONTROLLER OF H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED
N
Ranson Moor
Bedford Level (Middle Level)
Middle Level

Appendix 4

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	7
Meeting:	**RANSONMOOR DDC (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL**
Date:	**Wednesday 13th 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

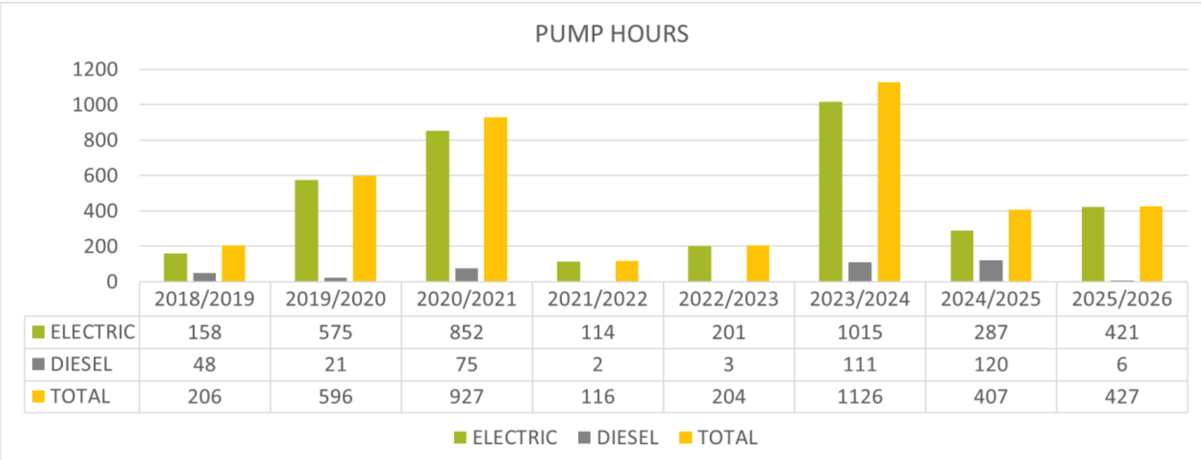
The Key Health Indicators table above shows the critical area for concern and improvement is the electric pump. The pump is now 20 years since last overhaul and should be overhauled soon to ensure the station's reliability. The Board is advised to develop and start an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement. 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) Drainpipe 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

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	8
Meeting:	**RANSONMOOR DDC**	**Subject:**	**HEALTH & SAFETY**
Date:	**Wednesday 13th May 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

Health & Safety
Workplace Inspection

Ransonmoor DDC

carried out on

Monday, 12 January 2026

by

AW Safety Management Ltd

Key Information	
Client:	Ransonmoor DDC
Site:	Ransonmoor Pumping Station, Floods Ferry Road, Doddington, PE15 1 UL
Site Contact:	Duncan Boughton and Michael Dale
Site Contact E-mail:	enquiries@middlelevel.gov.uk
Inspection date:	12/01/2026
Inspected by:	Elena Spataru
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 Date
High	Serious 'material breach' of legislation and / or serious and imminent danger to persons	0-3 Months
Medium	Significant control weakness exposing persons to moderate degree of risk	3-6 Months
Low	General guidance or areas where there are opportunities to implement better practice and reduce exposure to risk	6-12 Months

Executive Summary / Additional Comments

The meeting was held with Duncan Boughton and Michael Dale.

It was pleasing to see that new warning signage identifying the major hazards has been installed.

No fire extinguisher or first aid kit was observed on site. It was understood that the maintenance team carries the required equipment in their vehicles. Please ensured that these items are readily available on site and are regularly inspected to confirm they are fully operational.

The requirement for an accident book at this location has been discussed. While it is not mandatory due to the site not being regularly occupied, it is recommended that Middle Level Maintenance Company implements a system to report and record any near misses or accidents.

Please see below recommendations following AW Safety visit. If you have any queries, please contact us at support@awsafety.co.uk.

Workplace Inspection

AUDIT & INSPECTION

Action Plan	
High Priority	0-3 Months
Medium Priority	3-6 Months
Low Priority	6-12 Months

Reference Number	Additional Controls / Actions / Comments	Supporting Photographs / Pictures	Person(s) Responsible	Risk Rating	Action Complete When / Who
1.	Some safety signage onsite is faded due to sun damage and the elements. Advise that a survey of all signage onsite is performed and any faded signage replaced or removed if not required, so that the visual impact of any safety signage onsite is not lost. Although this action has been graded at a low risk, it is advised that this action is taken as soon as possible / 1-4 weeks.	 		Low	
2.	Flammable paint cans were observed to be stored within the pumping station. This presents a risk of fire or explosion due to vapor release and potential ignition. It is recommended that unused cans are removed from site and that any remaining paint is stored in an approved flammable storage cabinet to reduce fire spread and vapors exposure.			Medium	

Ref:	AW Safety	Version:	01	Date:	13.01.2026	Page 4 of 6

Action Plan					
High Priority			0-3 Months		
Medium Priority			3-6 Months		
Low Priority			6-12 Months		
Reference Number	Additional Controls / Actions / Comments	Supporting Photographs / Pictures	Person(s) Responsible	Risk Rating	Action Complete When / Who
3.	Exposed batteries present a risk of electric shock, short-circuiting, fire, or battery explosion due to accidental contact or foreign object ingress; it is recommended that suitable protective battery covers are installed to prevent access to live terminals and reduce the risk of injury or equipment damage.			High	

General Comments	
Audit Carried out on Behalf of:	AW Safety Management Ltd / IRM Safety Ltd
Contact Information (Edwinstowe Office):	Edwinstowe House High Street Edwinstowe Mansfield NG21 9PR 01623 821516
Contact Information (Brampton Office):	Low Cross Buildings 4 Low Cross Street Brampton Cumbria CA8 1NP 01697 270020
Contact Information (Boston Office):	Boston Enterprise Centre Venture House Enterprise Way Boston Lincolnshire PE21 7TW 0330 2237470
Website:	www.awsafety.co.uk / www.integratedrisk.org.uk
Note:	It is important to note that this Audit Report 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 auditor any potentially unsafe conditions or practices which were not apparent during the Audit, 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.

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	11
Meeting:	**RANSONMOOR DDC**	**Subject:**	**GOVERNANCE**
Date:	**Wednesday 13th May 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Paul Burrows**

The Board is asked to:

A. Note the Annual Return submitted for 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. Review pumping station valuations for insurance purposes.
G. Note the submission of the IDB1 form to Defra. (link)
H. 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.
I. 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 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.

1.5 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 Regulations for the Board is 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 (eg Chair/Vice Chair) then it is important that the Board puts in place safeguards to ensure a separation of duties, particularly being clear on who is acting as lead client for the contractor.

3. Risk Assessment and Insured Values

3.1 The Board are asked to consider their Risk Management Strategy and review the insured values for their pumping stations as detailed below:

RANSONMOOR DDC
INSURED VALUE AS AT 31ST MARCH 2026

PUMPING STATION

	As At 1st April 2026
Ransonmoor Pumping Station	1,750,947.00

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.

Author Name: Paul Burrows
Role: Clerk

Appendix 1 Annual Return 2024/2025

Ransonmoor District Drainage Commissioners

Notice of conclusion of the audit

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

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

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

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

The Clerk
Ransonmoor District Drainage Commissioners
85 Whittlesey Road
March
Cambridgeshire
PE15 0AH

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

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

Announcement made by: P Burrows - Clerk to the Commissioners

Date of Announcement: 22nd September 2025

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

RANSONMOOR DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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).*	✓		

O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
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: 07/05/2025 13/05/2025 15/05/2025

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

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: S. BEECH – WHITINGS LLP

Date: 15/05/2025

***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:

RANSONMOOR DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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

	Agreed			
	Yes	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:

14/05/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

C. 1337

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

Chair

Clerk

WWW.MIDDLELEVEL.GOV.UK

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

RANSONMOOR DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward	123,812	107,122	*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	50,579	62,550	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	10,514	57,284	*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	77,783	63,155	*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	107,122	163,801	*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	169,643	194,753	*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	1,110,000	1,110,000	*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

Date 07/05/2025

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

14/05/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

C.1338

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

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

In respect of **Ransonmoor District Drainage Commissioners - DB0081**

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

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

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

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

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

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2024/25

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

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

None.

3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

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

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature: PKF Littlejohn LLP

Date: 15/09/2025

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:		11
Meeting:	**RANSONMOOR DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING BACK**	
Date:	**Wednesday 13th May 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**		**Andrew Wool/Sam Ablett**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Note the Budgeting review
B. Note the Highland Water contributions
C. Consider and approve the payments detailed within Appendix 1.
D. Consider and approve the Annual Accounts & Finance Papers 2025/2026 within Appendix 2.

Finance Officer's summary and key messages

For 2025/2026 the Board set a rate of 19.00p to raise a total of £63,258 in agricultural rates and special levies.

Actual expenditure for the year was £49,430 because of the dry summer and less than anticipated drain works.

This will leave the General fund balance as of 31st March 2026 at £137,033. The Development fund balance as of 31st March 2026 is £38,611. This position is reflected in the Boards financial statements and Annual Return which they are requested to review and approve.

1. Payments for 2025

1.1 Payments are detailed within Appendix 1

2. **Highland Water Contributions**

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

When completing the budget proposal claims were estimated against the likely out-turn for 2024/2025 and the budgeted expenditure for 2025/2026. The highland water claim included within the rating estimates was £4,049.27.

Following the submission of claims for contributions the net sum of £(1,495.88) (£4,527.03 less £6,022.91 paid on account) (inclusive of supervision) was netted off against the 2025/2026 claim based on the Boards' actual expenditure on maintenance work for that financial year and the sum of £5,045.21 in respect of 80% of the Boards' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2025/2026.

3. Annual Accounts and Finance papers 2025/2026:

3.1 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

RANSONMOOR DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

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

Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Discharge consent application - JMC Construction March Ltd)	78.62
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery, travelling, health and safety contract and storm recovery tranche 1 claim	6,923.78
Middle Level Commisssioners - Fees (Weed control and drain maintenance 2024/25, planning and development applications)	1,415.10
Middle Level Commissioners - Removal of rubbish from dyke	150.32
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of health & safety signage	69.60
Middle Level Commissioners - Board ID card	14.74
Environment Agency - Precept	3,314.06
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2025	813.60
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,169.86
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	288.07
Wave - Water charges (Pumping station)	19.18
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	301.27
Middle Level Commissioners - Grant in aid storm recovery T2a scheme works	13,184.60
Middle Level Commissioners - Grant in aid received for storm recovery T2a scheme	(11,962.05)
IMServ - Electricity meter operator agreement to 21st October 2026	23.20
IMServ - MOP adoption fee	72.00
Middle Level Commisssioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	373.50
IMServ - Electricity meter operator agreement to 21st October 2026	79.22
Wave - Water charges (Pumping station)	19.44
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit Fee (2024-2025 accounts)	504.00
IMServ - Annual half hourly electricity data collection to 21st October 2026	201.22
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, storm recovery tranche 2A claim, IDB change contribution and internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners 2024-2025)	7,683.16
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance (Weedscreen cleaner HSB insurance check)	110.47
M & C Agri Services Ltd - Flail mowing	2,301.60
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	2,193.25
Middle Level Commissioners - Attend site to clean up after batteries burst, service engine and replace battery (Accounts from Allerton, HGV Direct and Ben Burgess)	2,242.97
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	301.27
Environment Agency - Precept	3,314.06
Middle Level Commisssioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	780.00
Wave - Water charges (Pumping station)	19.22
M W Dale Farms - 2,000 litres of gas oil (Account from WFC Chandlers)	1,486.80
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2025	854.40
B J Plant Hire Ltd - Drain maintenance	3,312.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Discharge consent application - RJB East Ltd)	51.84
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Discharge consent application - Marfleet & Bradshaw)	138.24
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Discharge consent application - Savage Developments Ltd)	82.94
M & C Agri Services Ltd - Culvert jetting	840.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Health & safety remedial works	64.85
Middle Level Commissioners - Removal of sofa from Coneywood	76.54
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of signage	13.42
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply E.I.C.R	192.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Chemical weed control of District Drains	1,168.24
Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal	52.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Discharge consent application - Coogee Trading Ltd)	6,855.20
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	301.27
Wave - Water charges (Pumping station)	19.01
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery, health and safety contract, ecological and environmental services	9,718.25
M W Dale - Pumping station duties	900.00
EDF Energy - Electricity supply	18,159.77
British Gas - Electricity supply	12,144.98
	92,431.08

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

Appendix 2

RANSONMOOR DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2026
GENERAL FUND

2026				2025			
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year			Apr-01	Balance brought forward		123,170.25
	Precept		6,628.12	2026			
	Rates, insurances, telephone	2,118.63		Mar-31	Rate income & Special levy	63,292.92	
	Repairs & Renewals	3,227.66			Less irrecoverables	-	63,292.92
	Fuel	18,512.53					
	Drainworks	11,361.56			Interest on Deposit Accounts	1,593.95	
	Contractors charges	750.00			Highland Water contributions	3,549.33	
	Administration charge, Audit fee,				Development Charges	1,543.00	
	printing, stationery, advertising etc	13,577.67	49,548.05		Garden Rent	10.00	
					Consents	50.00	6,746.28
	Balance carried forward		137,033.28				
			193,209.45				193,209.45

BALANCE SHEET

Capital Section

Liabilities		Assets		
Capital Provisions Account	1,110,000.00	Pumping Station (Valuation)		1,110,000.00

Revenue Section

General Fund	137,033.28	Stock		1,132.80
Development Charges Account	38,611.48	Ratepayers' Account - Arrears		3,034.97
Sundry Creditors	5,376.63	Value added Tax-Refunds due		5,552.48
Asset Replacement Fund	11,765.51	Sundry Debtors		585.55
Grant in Aid	16,965.74	Balance in hand -		
		Barclays - Treasurer's Account	25,000.00	
		Barclays - Business Preium Account	173,882.23	
		National Savings - Treasurer's Account	564.61	199,446.84
	1,319,752.64			1,319,752.64

Ransonmoor District Drainage Commissioners

Summary of Bank Reconciliations as at 31st March 2026

Barclays - Treasurers Account 2025/2026

1st April 2025			31st March 2026	
Balance brought forward		194,194.32	Payments made during the year	92,431.08
31st March 2026				
Receipts during the year				
Clerk's collection account	95,004.83			
Interest on deposit accounts	2,114.16	97,118.99	Balance carried forward	198,882.23
		291,313.31		**291,313.31**

National Savings - Treasurers Account 2025/2026

1st April 2025		31st March 2026	
Balance brought forward	559.02	Payments made during the year	0.00
31st March 2026			
Interest on deposit accounts	5.59	Balance carried forward	564.61
	564.61		**564.61**

Barclays Bank PLc

Current Account	
Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2026	25,000.00
Less unpresented cheques	0.00
Add outstanding lodgements	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	**25,000.00**

Cash balances as at 31st March 2026

Barclays Bank PLc	
Current Account	**25,000.00**
Business Premium Account	**173,882.23**
Treasury Deposit	**0.00**
National Savings	
Investment Account per Statement	**564.61**
Total reconciled cash balances per accounts	**199,446.84**

Ransonmoor DDC
Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return
Financial year ended 31st March 2026

				Per Annual Return
Line 1	**Balances brought forward**			
	General Fund	123,170.25		
	Development charges account	29,015.31		
	Asset Replacement Fund	11,615.20		
			163,800.76	**163,801**
Line 2	**Rates and Special Levies**			
	Agricultural rates	48,321.94		
	Special Levies	14,937.00		
	Penalty	33.98		
	Costs	0.00		
	Write-off	0.00		
			63,292.92	**63,293**
Line 3	**Total other receipts**			
	Interest			
	General fund	1,593.95		
	Development charges account	375.49		
	Asset Replacement Fund	150.31		
	Consents	50.00		
	Rent	10.00		
	Highland Water	3,549.33		
	Write Back of Provisions	0.00		
	Storm Recovery Grant	0.00		
	Discharge contributions	10,991.20		
			16,720.28	**16,720**
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**

Ransonmoor DDC
Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return
Financial year ended 31st March 2026

				Per Annual Return
Line 6	**All other payments**			
	Precept	6,628.12		
	Rates, insurances, telephones	2,118.63		
	Repairs and renewals	3,227.66		
	Fuel	18,512.53		
	Drainworks	11,361.56		
	Contractors charges	750.00		
	Administration	13,577.67		
	Improvements	0.00		
	Development charges fees	227.52		
			56,403.69	**56,404**
Line 7	**Balances carried forward**			
	General Fund	137,033.28		
	Development charges account	38,611.48		
	Asset Replacement Fund	11,765.51		
			187,410.27	**187,410**
	Reconciliation			
	Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6		187,410.27	

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

RANSONMOOR DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

	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	107,122	163,801	*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	62,550	63,293	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	57,284	16,720	*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	63,155	56,404	*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	163,801	187,410	*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	194,753	199,447	*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	1,110,000	1,110,000	*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.

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date 05/05/2026

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

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners</td><td>**Item No:**</td><td>**12**</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Meeting:**</td><td>**RANSONMOOR DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSONERS**</td><td>**Subject:**</td><td>**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING FORWARD**</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Date:**</td><td>**Wednesday 13th May 2026**</td><td>**Officer Responsible:**</td><td>**Andrew Wool/Sam Ablett**</td></tr>
</table>

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
F Note that we will be introducing a consistent naming convention for MLC and IDB Reserves during 2026/27, this will include some rationalisation of funds.

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.

Estimates for pumping costs are as problematical as last year in that we need to factor in an 'average' pumping year, taking-into-account the impact of climate change. Further, we will have a new electricity supply contract from October 2026 with no current indications of possible unit costs, especially with the current uncertainty because of the conflicts within the Middle East. The provision is therefore an estimate of pumping volumes at an estimate of possible new contract rates (20% increase on 2025/26 rates). Members should therefore consider if they think the provision is reasonable when setting the rate. The Board also need to consider any increase in Contractor costs also with higher Fuel costs again as result of the conflict in the Middle Ease.

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

No provision has been made for any Improvement works.

The estimated expenditure for the year is £63,258, equivalent to a rate of 19.00p, the rate for 2025/2026 was set at 19.00p.

1. Fees, Remunerations and Subscriptions

1.1 To consider the District Officer's Honorarium for the ensuring year

The current Honorarium sum - £750.00

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 £6,628.12.

3. Estimates for 2026/27

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

3.2 The Board are reminded that it is standard practice to budget for an average year in terms of rainfall and associated pumping requirements.

4. Rate Requirements for 2026/27

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

RANSONMOOR DISTRICT DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET PROPOSAL - 2026/2027

		Approved budget 2025/2026 £	Actual to 31/03/2026 £	Proposed Budget 2026/2027 £
1	Rates, telephones and insurances	1,900	2,119	2,400 [A]
2	Fuel (oil and electricity)	25,750	18,513	23,000 [B]
3	Repairs and renewals	6,250	3,228	3,500
4	District labour	1,000	750	1,000
5	Drainworks (including Environmental measures)	17,250	11,362 [C]	17,000 [D]
6	Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	13,200	13,578	14,750
7	Environment Agency Precept	6,628	6,628.12	6,761
8	Improvement Works	0	0	0
		71,978	56,176	68,411
	LESS Deposit Accounts interest etc	8,720	6,746 [E]	5,153 [F]
		63,258	49,430	63,258

Rates raised 2025/2026	19.00 p	
Rate requirement - 2026/2027		19.00 P

Remarks

A - Increased Premiums + 10%

B - Average Usage over 3 Years
Assume a 20% increase in rates from October 2026

C - Includes:

Flail Mowing	1,918
Slubbing and Culvert Jetting	3,460
Ecological Fees	1,995
Weed Control	974
Fees	2,951
Other	64
	11,362

D - Includes engineers items:- 12,200

E - Includes:
Full Highland Water Claims 3,549

F - Includes provision for:
Full Highland Water Claims 4,394

Appendix 2

Ransonmoor District Drainage Commissioners

Rate and levy requirements

Under Section 37 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, the appropriate proportions in which the net expenditure of the Commissioners must be borne for 2026/2027 is: -

a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 76.39%

b) Proportion to be borne by Special levy issued to Fenland District Council – 23.61%.

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £2,543.

In 2026/2027 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levy would raise £3,329.

Revenue cash balance in hand on 31st March 2026 of - £137,033

The estimated net expenditure of £63,258 in 2026/2027 is equivalent to: -

a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 19.00p and

b) a Special levy on Fenland District Council of £14,937

In 2025/2026 a rate of 19.00p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £14,937 on Fenland District Council.

P BURROWS,
Clerk to the Commissioners

13h May 2026