SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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Administered by:

27th May 2026

Dear Board Members

Upcoming meeting of the Board
Wednesday 3rd June 2026

Please find overleaf the agenda for the meeting of the Board to be hosted at the Admiral Wells Inn, Holme, PE7 3PH at 10.00am on Wednesday 3rd June 2026.

Lunch will follow at 1.00pm.

As you'll be aware, we administer over twenty 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

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Wednesday 3rd June 2026 – 10.00am
The Admiral Wells Inn, Holme PE7 3PH

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 • Parish Council – Woodland funding update & phase 3 plans	Pages 3 - 10	Chair/ Karen Sanderson
4	Constitution & Membership	Pages 11 - 13	Clerk
5	Clerk's Report	Pages 14 - 18	Clerk
6	Environment Officer's Report	Pages 19 - 21	Clerk
7	Chairman's Items	Verbal	Chair
8	Consulting Engineer's Reports	Pages 22 - 31	Clerk or Engineer
9	Health & Safety	Pages 32 - 40	Chair
10	District Officer's Report	verbal	Chair
11	Governance • Accounts Return for 2024/2025 • Auditors report for 2024/2025 (Link) • Annual Governance Statement	Pages 41 - 43 Pages 44 - 48 Page 49	Clerk
12	Finance Report: looking back • Budgeting • Payments 2025 • Annual Accounts and Finance papers 2025/2026	Pages 50 - 52 Page 53 - 56 Pages 57 - 61 Pages 62	Clerk
13	Finance Report: looking forward • Determination of land for rating purposes • Rating Estimates for 2026/2027 • Agricultural Drainage Rates and Special Levy requirements or 2026/2027	Pages 63 - 64 Pages 65 Page 66 - 69 Pages 70 - 73	Clerk
14	Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 9th June 2027 at 10am	Verbal	Chair
15	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.)

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Sawtry IDB held at the Admiral Wells on Wednesday 4th June 2025

PRESENT

S Custance (Chair)
D Elmore (Vice-Chair)
A Darby
P Custance
S Raby
A Lensen
S Bywater (HDC)
R Martin (HDC)

Paul Burrows the Clerk was in attendance. Mr D Tuplin, the Chairman of Sawtry Parish Council attended as observer.

Apologies for absence

An apology was received from S Parsley.

B.1330 Declarations of Interest

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

> Messers A Lensen and S Raby declared interests (as Members of the Middle Level Board) in payments to and any matters concerning the Middle Level Commissioners.
>
> Messrs A Lensen and Mr A Darby declared interests in any matters concerning and payments in relation to pumping station attendants (AgReserves and T E Darby & Son respectively).
>
> Mr S Raby declared an interest in matters concerning payments and drain maintenance works within the district (H Raby & Son).

B.1331 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

> That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 5th June 2024 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1332 Matters Arising

Sawtry Parish Council – Woodland Update
Karen Sanderson and Steve Browing from Sawtry Parish Council joined the meeting for this item and provided an update on their works to land leased from the Board at Bill Hall Way/Fen Lane. It was outlined that they had received and invested c£8k of grant funding from Huntingdonshire District Council in creating a circular path and clearing, hedge planting and removal of plastic cages from many trees. Native seeds and bulbs are on order with bat and bird boxes to be installed in Autumn. A litter bin will be added, and the Parish Council will be responsible to emptying it.

The next phase of works, which require Board agreement will be subject to a further grant funding application. This phase would involve the construction of an accessible pathway and a low-level wire fence to help keep people and dogs out of some areas of planting. There is the potential for CCTV to be installed for monitoring. It was highlighted that the Parish Council now has a biodiversity policy.

S Bywater added that he had visited the area and supported the vision for what was poor quality scrubland, recommending that the Board offer their continued support. He added in response to S Raby and the Chairman that there is no history of fly-tipping in the area and appreciates the concerns about enabling a place for anti-social behaviour, but that this is not a reason not to open up land and create community spaces, citing the success of the skate park.

The Chairman added that the reason the Board purchased the land was to secure a suitable site for future attenuation requirements. R Martin added that the agreement between the Board and Parish Council needs to cater for the risk that a public right of way could be created, constraining the future requirements of the Board.

In response to a question regarding tree health, K Sanderson added that the District Council specialists has inspected and there would be routine inspections, adding that the Parish Council have suitable public liability insurance.

P Burrows enquired as to whether the exiting agreement between the Parish Council and Board was sufficient, and both parties agreed it needed a review as it was not fit for this new purpose. P Burrows will secure external legal costs to update and seek the Chairman's approval to proceed.

The Board agreed later in the meeting that these costs may need to be met or shared with the Parish Council.

RESOLVED

The Board agreed in principle to support the Parish Council's grant application and subsequent delivery of its plans for Phase 2, contingent on a new lease agreement between the Board and Parish Council being agreed that manages any risk and liabilities of the Board and secures its future interests in terms of alternative use of the site for Board operations.

MP Engagement

R Martin declared that he works for in the Office of Ben Obese-Jecty MP with Sawtry IDB within his Huntingdon constituency. A Darby mentioned at the last meeting it was decided to invite the MP to a meeting of the Board. P Burrows mentioned that he had met the MP with R martin soon after the general election as an introduction to the Middle Level and that inviting to a meeting was not the best way to engage with MPs.

He suggested that a session at one of the Board's Pumping Stations be arranged to provide the MP with an overview of Board operations and to discuss the government's new flood funding policy to which consultation has just been launched. He will liaise with R Martin to look for a suitable date.

B.1333 Constitution & Membership

The Board noted their current membership and acknowledged the upcoming elections. In terms of K Smith's lack of attendance over 4 years, P Burrows highlighted that he had already had a conversation with the Area Director from Natural England regarding this. He will no write to Natural England suggesting they nominate an alternative representative.

P Burrows highlighted that ADA had now updated their Good Governance Guide for IDB Board Members and distributed a hardcopy, adding that he understood a training package would be developed and made available by ADA later in the year.

B.1334 Clerk's Report

P Burrows highlighted to the Board that the government had yesterday announced a long-awaited consultation on flood funding policy reform. It has been long felt that the Partnership Funding policy, introduced in 2011, has been overly complex and deficient in expediting efficient delivery, despite for IDBs largely being a financially positive policy as it removed the 45% grant cap that existed beforehand.

He added that the consultation seeks views on proposals to reform the floods funding approach and resolve those challenges by:

- Introducing a contribution free allowance so all flood and coastal erosion risk management projects have the first £3 million of their project costs fully funded by government.
- Applying a flat rate of 90% Defra funding to project costs above £3 million.
- Fully funding projects to refurbish existing assets which currently find it challenging to attract funding.

He added that project prioritisation would be important, given that the call on government funding from all potentially eligible projects typically exceeds the total amount of funding available from the government. Competition for government funding is likely to increase under the proposed new approach, given the more generous approach proposed to notionally funding projects.

He added that he would be providing a consultation response on behalf of the MLC and administered IDBs but also encouraged members to review and respond by the deadline of 29th July 2025, with the proposed implementation date being 1st April 2026.

The Board considered the written report and its content. P Burrows highlighted the improvement work that has been undertaken in terms of planning and consenting and the importance of the new fee model that has been launched. He added that the Middle level Board have now supported the creation of a new compliance and enforcement role to work in conjunction with the new fee model to better manage risks and bring in income for the IDBs and Middle Level Commissioners. The Board were supportive of the measures.

S Raby asked about the Local Plan and call for sites citing the need for attenuation in the catchment and the questionable performance of existing sustainable urban drainage features. P Burrows added that MLC are improving their inputs within strategic spatial planning. R Martin highlighted the role of the mayor and Combined Authority in terms of Strategic Growth. P Burrows confirmed that he had met with the previous mayor and had been in dialogue with senior colleagues at the Combined Authority to outline the criticality and opportunity of MLC and IDB infrastructure and operations.

Referring to the clerk's report regarding insurance provision for IDBs, S Bywater suggested that this was a significant risk for the sector and worth escalating via MPs.

<u>Fens Reservoir</u>

Paul Burrows introduced the paper and outlined that whilst not directly affected, the Board will have an indirect interest given they pump water into the Middle Level Commissioners system which will be the reservoir's primary source of water. He added that the recommended resolutions are to cover the eventuality that the Board's interests need legal support.

<u>RESOLVED</u>

Approved 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.

Acknowledged that the Fens Reservoir DCO may need to overwrite/disallow existing statutory powers held by the Board and delegate the decision making on this to the Clerk, engaging with the Chairman/Vice Chairman as he sees fit.

B.1335 Environment Officer's Report

P Burrows introduced the report highlighting the new service package arrangement and increase fee, highlighting that this has been developed to help IDBs meet their minimum statutory compliance. He reported that the BAP was a legal requirement and meeting has been held with the Chairman as part of the review and update. He also advised the Board on the approach they ought to take regarding future bank-slips and the need for prompt action should piling be needed in order to reduce the likelihood of needing water vole displacement which add costs and working window constraint to such works.

B.1336 Consulting Engineers' Reports

The Board considered the consulting engineer's reports and P Burrows highlighted that the MLC's Bevill's pond project that had secured government grant via the IDB Fund will benefit the Board as per the M&E report. The Board were expressed the support and gratitude.

A Lenson reported that the electric keep tripping out at Moat Farm Pumping Station and that he had complained to UKPN. P Burrows asked that if it continued to be an issue please report to Sam Ablett at the MLC as we had managed to get a contact at UKPN who resolved meter relocation issues for Conington & Holme IDB.

B.1337 Health & Safety

The Chairman reported that the actions advised by COPE were focussed on installing LED lighting and associated sensors at the Board's stations. P Burrows asked whether the Board wanted the MLC M&E engineer to address this and would see if it could be undertaken alongside the control panel works. The Board were supportive.

B.1338 Governance

a) Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2023/2024

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

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

b) Review of Internal Controls

Paul Burrows 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 Board's web-page.

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

c) Authorisations

The Board considered the review of authorisations.

RESOLVED

i) The Board considered and authorised that all employees and contractors of the Middle Level Commissioners are considered as duly authorised officers and are therefore able to use the Boards powers and IDB byelaws for their operational and regulatory roles on behalf of the Board.

ii) The Board confirmed their stance that their Chairman, Vice-Chair and Superintendents are considered as duly authorised officers and therefore able to use the Boards powers and IDB byelaws for their operational and regulatory roles on behalf of the Board.

e) Responsible Finance Officer

RESOLVED

The Board considered and approved the recommendations that:

a) 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.

b) 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.

c) That the Chairman and Vice-Chair be approved to be added to the Barclays Bank Plc mandate.

d) 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.

e) 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.

f) 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.

f) Policy Reviews & DPO

The Board considered the review of the policies.

RESOLVED

i) The Board considered and approved the policy reviews for the Complaints Procedure, Privacy policy and the Anti-Bribery policy.
ii) The Board considered and approved adoption of updated Finance Regulations covering the period 2025-2035 and its Policy Statement.
iii) That the Board approve that while there is a service level agreement for provision of clerking services in place between the Board and the Middle Level Commissioners, the Middle Level Commissioner’s Lead Clerk acts as their Data Protection Officer.

g) IDB1 and Annual Governance Statement

RESOLVED

The Board noted and supported the IDB1 return submitted on their behalf.

The Board noted and approved the submission of their Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24 authorising the Chairman and Clerk to sign the statement.

g) Exercise of Public Rights

Paul Burrows 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.

h) Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments.

P Burrows 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. He 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.

B.1339 Finance Report – Looking Back

The Board reviewed and noted the Finance Officers' report and key messages. S Raby asked whether ratepayer enquires regarding the level of reserves and S Bywater added that reserves are a sensible way of managing risk.

A Lenson enquired about the Board's need for temporary pumps in the event of a failure and associated finance. P Burrows outlined the MLC project funded via the IDB Fund to develop a suite of mobile pumps. He suggested hat once phase two of this work is completed later this year it would better enable the IDB to consider its specific and residual risk in this regard.

RESOLVED

That all payments and develop contributions noted.
The Board considered and approved their annual accounts for 2024/25

B.1340 Finance Report – Looking Forward

The Board considered the paper from their Responsible Finance Officer. A Lenson supported the rate reductions given the pressures on farming at the moment, adding that this Board has relatively comfortable levels of reserves. R Martin added it was important to continue to build reserves given the costs ahead and P Custance suggested a middle ground be sought between last year's rates and the recommendation.

However no firm alternative proposal was tabled and the recommended rates for Area 1, 3 and 4 were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

a) To continue to subscribe to be a member of the Association of Drainage Authorities.

b) Pump attendant fees agreed the sum up to £1206.00.

c) Rental agreement with Sawtry Parish Council to remain at £5 per annum.

d) Drainage rates:

i) That a total sum of £50,605 be raised by drainage rates and special levy.

ii) 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 £32,670 and £17,935 respectively.

iii) That drainage rates in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District as follows:-

AREA 1	-	2.20p
AREA 2	-	0.0p
AREA 3	-	34.00p
AREA 4	-	60.00p

iv) That a Special levy of £17,935 be made and issued to Huntingdonshire District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.

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

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

B.1341 Middle Level IDB Change

P Burrows summarised the work and referred to the report that was sent to Members separately. Following a positive conversation, the Board were open-minded regarding future reform and keen to ensure that it is shaped locally. S Bywater offered to join the working group to help shape. The Board agreed.

RESOLVED

To prove a £300 contribution towards the costs of developing the detailed design.

B.1342 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That next meeting of the Board will be 3rd June 2026, 10AM at the Admiral Wells Inn.

B.1343 Any Other Business

D Tuplin, the Parish Council Chairman observing the meeting asked about responsibilities for various development attenuation features in Sawtry. These were confirmed as within a management company so not an IDB issue. P Burrows highlighted that there could be future opportunities for the Board to adopt and manage SUDS schemes if they are of benefit to the Board and the developers are open to this arrangement.

The Chairman then referred to the A1M attenuation measures that appear to have had little maintenance and do not seem to perform. R martin added that within his capacity working for the MP, they had met with the management company. It was felt that the 30-year management agreements must soon be due to end and P Burrows suggested he write a strategic letter to Highways England with collective concerns.

S Bywater enquired regarding maintenance of hedges at point 85 where they are overhanging, and mean pedestrians have to step into the road. The Chairman agreed to investigate.

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	4
Meeting:	**SAWTRY IDB**	**Subject:**	**CONSTITUTION & MEMBERSHIP**
Date:	**Wednesday 3rd June 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	8	N/A		7
Actual	7	2 HDC	9	
Vacancies	1		1	

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

No	Name	Status (one of four categories)	Commentary
1	Anthony Darby	Ratepayer	
2	Philip Custance	Nominee of ratepayer (H & D Custance Ltd)	
3	Stephen Parsley	Ratepayer	
4	Samuel Raby	Ratepayer	
5	Andrew Lensen	Nominee of Ratepayer (AG Reserves)	
6	Stephen Custance	Ratepayer	Chairman
7	David Elmore	Ratepayer	Vice-Chairman
8			

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	Simon Bywater	HDC	Councillor
2	Ross Martin	HDC	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	4/6/2025	5/6/2024	21/6/2023	29/6/2022
1	Anthony Darby	Present	Present	Present	Present
2	Philip Custance	Present	Present	Present	N/A
3	Stephen Parsley	Apologies	Present	Present	Present
4	Samuel Raby	Present	Present	Present	Present
5	Andrew Lensen	Present	Present	Present	Apologies
6	Stephen Custance	Present	Present	Present	Present
7	David Elmore	Present	Present	Present	Present
8					

Attendance at Chairs Meetings

No	Name	5/12/2025	6/12/2024	6/10/2023	13/12/2022
1	Stephen Custance	Apologies – VC present	Present	Present	

Appointed Members (current and previous)

No	Name (Council)	4/6/2025	5/6/2024	21/6/2023	29/6/2022
1	Simon Bywater (HDC)	Present	Present	Present	Present
2	Ross Martin (HDC)	Present	Present	Apologies	Apologies

3. Elections, vacancies & appointments

3.1 To consider the appointment of a Chair and Vice Chair

3.2 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 9 years, and the tenure of the current Vice Chairman is 2 years.

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:	**SAWTRY IDB**	**Subject:**	**CLERK'S REPORT**
Date:	**Wednesday 3rd June 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.

This paper was drafted in February 2026 for use within all the MLC administered IDB agendas over the Spring 2026 meeting season. Verbal updates to the content below will be provided as necessary.

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:	**SAWTRY IDB**	**Subject:**	**ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT**
Date:	**Wednesday 3rd June 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: **www.middlelevel.gov.uk/sawtry-3/**

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 to purchase a swift box and request suggestions for it to be put up on an agricultural building (6m + from ground) ideally near a channel.

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:		Stephen Custance	
KCI:	**Description of KCI:**	**Status:**	**Comments:**
1.	A current channel categorisation map & reasoning is available	Partly complete	SL will assist SC to compile in June
2.	Standard Operating Procedures audit has been undertaken and works considered compliant	Partly complete	SL will audit in 2026
3.	The previous year's maintenance record is available for review and to inform the following year's works planning.	Partly complete	Will review in June 26
4.	A channel maintenance plan (flail mowing and desilting) has been prepared for Board review and approval.	Partly complete	SL will assist SC to compile in June
5.	All non-routine works undertaken in the previous year were screened for environmental impacts and opportunities using the ESR process	Complete	None done. ESR expected for a bank slip near point 1-2
6.	The Biodiversity Action Plan has been reviewed and objectives for the previous year have been met and following objectives set	Complete	As Above
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	In progress – will attend BioDay in Dec
9.	There has been no net loss of open watercourse (via culverting or other) in the district in the previous year	Complete	
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	In Progress

middle level commissioners

Sawtry IDB

Annual Environmental Review - Notes from Meeting

Attended by: Stephen Custance, Sofi Lloyd

Date: 19/05/2026

Point No.	Notes:	Action by and due date
1	The KCI's for the Board report were completed	
2	SL will arrange a day in June to assist SC in planning and mapping the channel maintenance.	SL 26
3	Noted that most channels are managed annually by cutting down to the waters' edge on both sides. Noted John Harding is the flail mowing contractor.	
4	Noted that desilting is undertaken as and when there is a need.	
5	Noted that points 144-142 is managed by S Custance, points 146-141 and 149-140 are managed annually by the Darby's annually, also failed down to the waters' edge both sides.	
6	Noted that A Lensen cleared out many of the channels on Ag Reserves land between the railway and the reserve, west of Moat Farm last year, including vegetation clearance and desilting.	
7	Noted that the stretch from point 63 near Sam Raby's house is due to be desilted and veg cleared this year as when it backs up it floods the listed building there	
8	SL to ask Ruth if the SUDS pond on Gidding Road is owned by Persimmon homes as it is not being managed appropriately.	SL 26
9	Discussed if there were any flooding issues associated with Sawtry village that the Board has been approached to resolve or assist with. SC confirmed no issues known.	
10	SC confirmed that regular channel management is required through Sawtry village to manage water levels effectively especially following increased development in the area.	
11	SC has requested a map of water level control structures in the district. SL to provide	SL 26
12	Will confirm the embanked stretches of drains when inspecting the district with SL in June. The section east of the Great Raveley is, but it does not total the 2km quoted in the policy document. SC & SL will map during visit in June.	SL/SC 26
13	Noted that a defunct channel that used to be the Catchwater before the MLC catchwater was dug is now defunct and grassed up. SL & SC will map during visit in June. Could be a conservation feature / habitat	SL/SC 26
14	Noted that 3 acres of grassland in Sawtry were owned by the IDB and sold to the Parish council, next to Gloucester Road / Queen end Road	
15	SC to identify the Boundary Post Listed Building feature on the A! to ensure that routine works do not impact it.	SC 26
16	Noted that there are lots of hedges in the district so hedges should be included in the BAP.	SL 26
17	Note that works between point 62-63 are close to the scheduled ancient monument so anything that breaks ground or significantly different water levels would require Heritage England consent.	
18	Discussed that all works in drains in close proximity to Woodwalton Fen reserve should more mobile species that could use the channels. Maintenance approaches in the ditches should aim to compliment the reserve and support mobile species associated with it. SL will check programmes.	SL 26
19	Discussed that the channel maintenance regimes in channels that dissect the Five Arches Pit CWS should also aim to compliment the site management objectives. SL will obtain site details and check.	SL 26
20	Noted that channel from point 10-11-12 needs visiting to confirm condition & status	SC/SL 26
21	Discussed that there were an unusually high density of valuable wildlife sites in the district including priority habitats that need to be considered when IDB channels are in close proximity to them.	SL 26
22	Highlighted that some types of development are restricted around SSSI sites, indicated on the BAP maps with pink lines. Types that are restricted tend to be those which have the potential to negatively affect the condition status of the site i.e. through water quality, air quality or otherwise. Details provided in the BAP and MLC monitors that on the IDBs behalf.	
23	SL stressed the importance of recording and reporting more species that are found within the area to better inform efforts for conservation and enhancement. Please use the **iRecord** app: **www.irecord.org.uk/app** and join the **Middle Level Commissioners Activity** or online *www://irecord.org.uk/join/middle-level-commissioners-nature*	ALL 26

24	Highlighted that the LNRS habitat opportunity mapping highlights areas that will become attractive for conservation funding in future years	
25	Remaining points captured in the draft BAP.	
26	Discussed that swifts aren't doing very well and maybe the Board could set their biodiversity budget this year to purchase a swift box and ask for suggested private locations at the Board meeting. Boxes are approx. £250. Best locations are under the eaves of higher agricultural buildings, near water.	**SC 26**
27	SL will load draft BAP onto the Sawtry IDB webpage on the MLC website and make a link available to Board members in the Board papers ahead of the meeting for them to review. The aim is to have the BAP approved by then end of June.	**SL 26**

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	8
Meeting:	**SAWTRY IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: CHIEF ENGINEER'S SUMMARY & CAPITAL PROGRAMME**
Date:	**Wednesday 3rd June 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. To consider the development of an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement and to instruct the Consulting Engineer with a view to seeking grant in aid.

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.

2.1 Flood incident 15th January 2026 – Glatton Brook

On 16 January 2026, the Enforcement & Compliance (E&C) Team was contacted by a Glatton resident regarding flooding issues affecting the areas around Infield Road and Sawtry Road. Concerns were also raised about an Internal Drainage Board (IDB) drain that runs from Sawtry Road parallel to Glatton Ways before joining the Connington Brook watercourse.

Initial assessments found that some of the flooding, particularly around Infield Road, was not directly linked to IDB assets. During the rainfall event, a temporary road closure was implemented in this area. However, water from the Highways drainage system ultimately discharged into the IDB drain at Sawtry Road, Glatton, contributing to elevated water levels during periods of heavy rainfall. These matters were raised with Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) and Highways, both of whom have responded positively to the concerns.

The IDB drain at Sawtry Road passes through private land, specifically the gardens of two residential properties. Following site inspections, the IDB Chair and District Officer identified this section of drain as a potential candidate for un-adoption. The rationale is based on the anticipated difficulty and cost of enforcing maintenance responsibilities and vegetation clearance on private landowners where resistance may occur.

Multiple site visits and community engagement activities have already taken place, with additional visits planned as required.

3. IDB Recovery Fund T2B

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

Works delivered included:

- Pump control panel refurbishments
- Water level monitoring across the wider Bevill's Pond

4. New FCERM grant funding guidance

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

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

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

Project types that are eligible for grant funding include:

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

Asset Refurbishment Projects

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

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

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

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

New or Improved Asset Projects

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

These include:

- projects replacing existing assets with a like for like replacement
- projects building new or improved assets
- projects with combined asset interventions

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

Applying for funding

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

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

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

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

Timescales

The Consulting Engineer currently has limited resources to develop and deliver projects, although recruitment is currently in progress to address this.

The likely timescales for project delivery are:

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

It is recommended that the Board considers the development of an investment plan for future asset refurbishment/replacement with a view to seeking grant in aid.

5. Capital Programme

The Board's Capital Programme is shown as Appendix 1. Pumping station replacement costs are included on the capital programme. Further investment will be needed in the interim and will be developed further in line with the Key Health Indicators.

The Board is advised to consider the development of a capital investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement and instruct the Consulting Engineer accordingly.

Author Name: Nicola Oldfield
Role: Chief Engineer

Appendix 1: Capital Programme
Appendix 2: List of applications since last meeting
Appendix 3: M&E Report

Appendix 1

Sawtry Internal Drainage Board

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
Castle Hill p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,700.0	1700.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement/pump overhaul	4.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0
	Pumping station weedscreen refurbishment	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
	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	0.0
Moat Farm p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,500.0	1500.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement/pump overhaul	4.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0
	Pumping station weedscreen refurbishment	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
	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	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
Sawtry Roughs p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,725.0	2725.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement/pump overhaul	4.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0	0.0	28.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	108.0
	Pumping station weedscreen refurbishment	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
	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	15.0	15.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0	0.0	15.0
Drainage Channels	System watercourses	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
		13.9	**0.0**	**0**	**15**	**0**	**200**	**100**	**0**	**28**	**0**	**15**	**5,940**	**6,298**

Appendix 2

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

There have been 1 application for Byelaw Consent (to discharge to a watercourse) granted since the last meeting.

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

There have been no applications for Byelaw Consent (to undertake works in and around watercourses) granted since the last meeting.

Appendix 3

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**8**
Meeting:	**SAWTRY IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL**
Date:	**Wednesday 3rd June 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 each of the stations is mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition. The stations and pumps are at an age where reliability is a concern, and a plan should be put in place to overhaul or replace items as necessary to ensure ongoing reliability.

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

1.1 **M&E Equipment Key Health Indicators**

Over the past 2 years we have been compiling and verifying Pumping Station Key Date to allow easier identification of equipment age and the need for refurbishment to assist in developing an investment plan for asset refurbishment or replacement. The details below include any works already scheduled and funded to be completed this year. For example, the level Controller and Pump Starter work carried out across Castle Hill, Moat Farm and Sawtry Roughs by Carlton Controls. 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	Built	Pump	Pump Overhaul	Controls	Weedscreen Bars
Castle Hill	1973	1973	2003	2026	1973
Moat Farm	1965	1965	2003	2026	1965
Sawtry Roughs	1970	1970	2004	2026	2011

The weedscreen bars are manually raked so condition is not as critical as it is for automatic machine cleansed screens.

The Key Health Indicators table above shows the critical area for concern and improvement is the pumps. The pumps range from 53 to 61 years old with last refurbishments ranging from 22 to 23 years ago. The Board is advised to develop and start a pump refurbishment/replacement plan for the 3 pumps that are due refurbishment. Having a plan in place and underway helps to secure further grant funding when it comes available, such as the recent IDB Recovery Fund.

Standard pumps are normally cost effective to repair and lead times can be as short as 4 weeks or can be over a year if impellors are damaged and must be reverse engineered. Costs can be in the range £20k to £100k depending on pump condition.

Please confirm if the Board would like for quotes to be obtained for pump overhauls.

2. Pumping Stations

2.1 Sawtry Roughs

The Pump Control Panel has been upgraded with a Pulsar Ultimate controller which has been installed as part of the IDB Fund Tranche 2B GIA package.

The last routine inspection at Sawtry Roughs Pump Station took place 18th February 2026. Recommendations / remarks include:

1) The onsite chrome is not long enough to effectively clean the weedscreen.
2) The inlet drain has lots of weed and would benefit from being cleaned out.
3) The seal water hose is corroded and will require replacement soon.
4) Siphon Breaker Vent Tube Broken.

Also, a note to consider replacing the internal and external lights for modern LED lighting (6ft Led) is mentioned.

Castle Hill

The Pump Control Panel complete with Pulsar Ultimate has been installed as part of the IDB Fund Tranche 2B – GIA package.

The last routine inspection at Castle Hill Pump Station took place 18th February 2026.

Recommendations / remarks include:

1)The inlet drain has lots of weed and would benefit from being cleaned out.
2)Probes corroded, requires stainless tube.

Moat / Manor Farm

The Pump Control Panel complete with Pulsar Ultimate has been installed as part of the IDB Fund Tranche 2B – GIA package.

The last routine inspection at Moat Farm Pump Station took place 1st December 2025. Recommendations / remarks include:

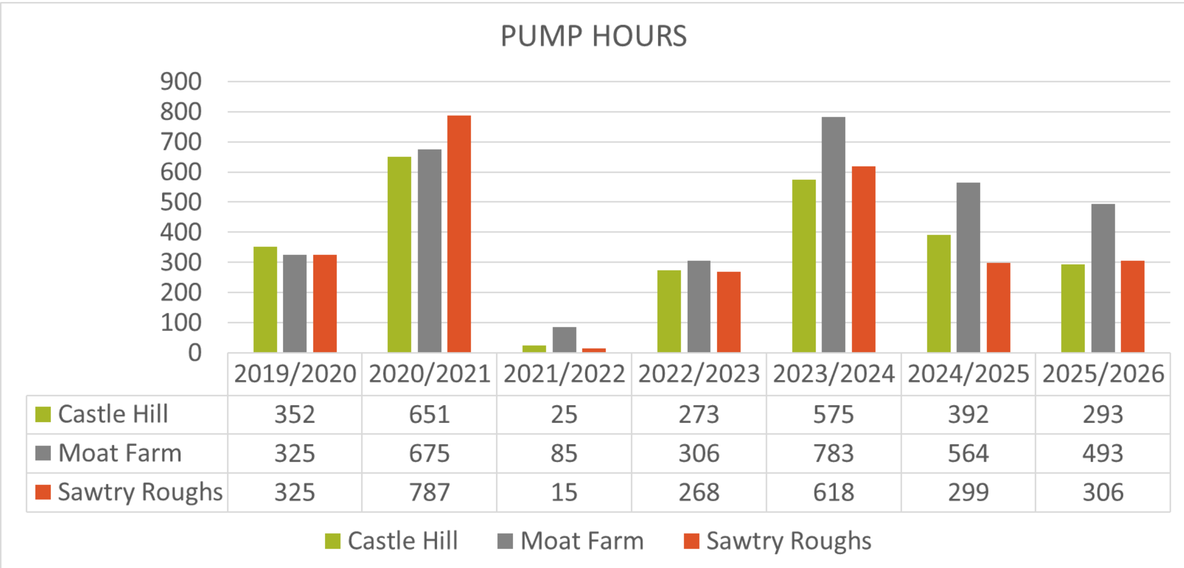
1) Inlet drain has lots of weed and would benefit from being cleaned out.

The inspection due in February 2026 was not carried out due to poor access to the site along the bank.

2.2 **Electricity Readings**

Mr S Custance has provided regular meter readings and pump hours for Sawtry Roughs, Castle Hill & Moat Farm which has been a great help verifying electric bills.

3. Pumping summary



	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
Castle Hill	352	651	25	273	575	392	293
Moat Farm	325	675	85	306	783	564	493
Sawtry Roughs	325	787	15	268	618	299	306

4. Inspections

4.1 HSB Engineering annual inspection for insurance was carried out at Castle Hill Pump Station during September 2025.

4.2 The mandatory site Electrical Installation Condition Report (due every 5 years) are in date, the upcoming inspections will be booked as required.

Station	**EICR Date**	**EICR Due**
Castle Hill	17-Jan-2025	17-Jan-2030

Moat Farm	17-Jan-2025	17-Jan-2030
Sawtry Roughs	17-Jan-2025	17-Jan-2030

5. 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

		Item No:	**8**
Meeting:	**SAWTRY IDB**	**Subject:**	**HEALTH & SAFETY**
Date:	**Wednesday 3rd June 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Paul Burrows**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

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

1. Introduction

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

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

2. Clarification of H&S accountabilities

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

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

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

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

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

3. Strengthening IDB H&S governance

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

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

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

Author Name: Paul Burrows
Role: Clerk

Site Safety Inspection Record

Sawtry IDB 06.02.26

Complete

Name of organisation:	Sawtry IDB 06.02.26
Date of site visit	06 Feb 2026 08:50 AM GMT
Address of inspected premises	Sawtry Roughs Pumping Station Castle Hill Pumping Station Moat Farm Pumping Station
Name of Advisor	Scott Butters
Time of arrival at site:	06 Feb 2026 08:50 AM GMT
Audit Name	Sawtry IDB 06.02.26

Audit

An opening meeting was held with

Stephen Custance on behalf of the board

1

An accompanied visit was made to each of the three pumping stations.

It was noted that each pumping station was provided with a PTO shaft for the transfer of power in an emergency for the pumps, either external or internal. However it was reported that these are seldom used, and observed that, due to some pump locations, access would be difficult. A number of mobile pumps are available to Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) to be used in the event of an emergency. This would negate the need for PTOs to be used.

As previous, focus was placed on the following items, to determine where improvements could be made, if applicable:

- Signage. Determine the type and locations of site identification and hazard warning signage to try and get consistency of signage with just one sign for each location that has the name of the site, location details (e.g. What3Words, grid ref), contact details and warning pictograms.
- Gate pedestrian access. Where gated access is provided, particularly double gates, identify any sites where the gates do not align and are difficult to open/close. In addition, assess the quality of the pedestrian access to, and around the pumping station grounds.
- Site vehicle access. Following on from the above identify any sites where access might be difficult or hindered for telehandler/tractor, etc., due to location of gates relative to the weed piles area, tight corners, steep inclines or poor surfaces (e.g. grass, mud or loose stones making it slippery).
- Weed piles. How the weed piles are being managed/removed at pumping station sites where either manually or machinery cleared. MLC are sometimes contracted by the IDBs to remove them when they have got too big making it difficult to scoop up with telehandler/tractor or in-position trailer overflowing.
- Lighting. Identify what lighting provision is at each site, if none or there is any - what, where, etc., to determine if any improvements can be made across all sites. Although access to pumping stations is typically infrequent and for short durations, particularly during darkness, suitable internal and external lighting is recommended to be provided, such as external PIR lighting. In the interim, pump attendants can use vehicle lights or a torch to provide temporary lighting, if required.

2

Sawtry Roughs Pumping Station.

This small brick built building contains the electrical control panel for the single external pump. A small weedscreen is cleared manually using a rake/crome when necessary. Testing of the electrical panel had been undertaken in Jan 2025, this is repeated every 5 years.

- Signage. There is currently one sign displayed on the side of the building indicating the location and contact details. Although there is a warning about automatic machinery starting, this is not supported by a recognised pictogram. Consistent signage across all locations, applicable to each site, has been recommended.
- Pedestrian access. A set of concrete steps with handrail has been provided and a concrete plinth walkway to the building and weedscreen which is provided with a handrail. The wooden nosings on several steps had started to come loose creating a gap and presenting a trip hazard.
- Vehicle access. Access to the site is along a farm track which was also a Public Bridleway. Access onto the site itself is limited due to the terrain.
- Weedpile management. As highlighted above, vehicular access is limited onto the site. Notwithstanding, only a small weedpile was observed placed on the bank beside the weedscreen.
- Lighting. Internal lighting was provided. There did not appear to be any external lighting provided, apart from a red light to indicate when the pump is running. It is recommended that appropriate external lighting, such as a small PIR light be installed to illuminate the access and external work area.
- General. It was observed that some of the mesh guarding preventing access to the pump shaft had come lose. This needs repairing. In addition, a bar that appears to be in place to secure a manhole cover next to the pump is unsecure and raised at one end creating a trip hazard. Secure the bar. The pumping station appeared to be adequately secured and watertight.


Photo 1


Photo 2


Photo 3


Photo 4

3

Castle Hill Pumping Station.

This small brick built building contains the electrical control panel for the single internal pump. A small weedscreen is cleared manually using a rake/crome when necessary. Road planings have been provided from the farm track to the building. These have raised the ground and a handrail that was provided beside the previous steps are too low. As the steps are covered the main reason for having the handrail has been removed. Consider removing the handrail. Within the building an overhead gantry is provided with a block and tackle to lift the pump, if required. It was suggested that this would be required very infrequently, e.g. every 10 years. It was previously recommended that if the lifting equipment is to be used, it should be inspected prior to use to ensure its suitability, as required by the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equiment Regs (LOLER) 1998. Testing of the electrical panel had been undertaken in Jan 2025, this is repeated every 5 years.

- Signage. There is currently no sign displayed on the side of the building indicating the location and contact details, although it appears that a sign was in place previously and is now missing. Consistent signage across all locations, applicable to each site, has been recommended.
- Pedestrian access. Considered suitable, a set of concrete steps with a handrail leads down the side of the building to the weed-deck and screen.
- Vehicle access. Access to the site is along a farm track, which also runs around the building to the other side if required.
- Weedpile management. Only a small weedpile was observed, this was placed on the ground near the rear of the building which can be accessed by vehicle.
- Lighting. There appeared to be external lighting provided to the side of the building to illuminate the weedscreen area, although this could not be illuminated. It is recommended that the bulb be changed and that appropriate external lighting is provided, such as a small PIR light, to replace or supplement the existing unit to illuminate the access and external work area.
- General. A metal ladder is provided beside the weedscreen. It was unclear what the ladder was used for. It is recommended that the ladder be removed, if not required. Else, that unauthorised access be protected against using a ladder guard or similar barrier. The cover to the surge pipe on the nearby bank was not secured. There is risk of falling if the cover is removed. Secure in place.


Photo 5


Photo 6

4

Moat Farm Pumping Station.

This small brick built building contains the electrical control panel for the single external pump. A small width but tall weedscreen is cleared manually using a rake/crome when necessary. It was suggested that testing of the electrical panel had been undertaken in Jan 2025 along with the panels at the above stations, and that this is repeated every 5 years, however no evidence was displayed.

- Signage. There is currently one sign displayed on the side of the building indicating the location and contact details. Although there is a warning about automatic machinery starting, this is not supported by a recognised pictogram. Consistent signage across all locations, applicable to each site, has been recommended.
- Pedestrian access. A set of concrete steps with a handrail is provided down the bank from the track and also down to the lower level. At the time of visit the steps and lower level excess were significantly contaminated with weed creating a slip hazard. A concrete platform surrounds the building and

weedscreen area. Access between these areas is currently across the grass/vegetation. If practicable, it is recommended that a suitable pathway is provided to link the entry steps with the lower level area and building/weedscreen area. As a minimum it should be ensured that weed and vegetation is cleared periodically to ensure safe access.
- Vehicle access. Access to the site is along a grass farm track approximately a quarter of a mile alongside the watercourse, therefore suitable off-road vehicles are required, particularly if wet and muddy.
- Weedpile management. As previously noted, the weedpile was spread around the access steps and lower level area.
- Lighting. There appeared to be external lighting provided on a post to illuminate the weedscreen area but not the side of the building or access. It is recommended that appropriate external lighting is provided, such as a small PIR light, to replace or supplement the existing unit to illuminate the access and external work area(s).
- General. The drive shaft for the automatic greaser inside the pumping station was partially exposed. Hazard is entanglement. Provide suitable guarding. A Halon extinguisher was located inside the pumping station. This is not suitable for use. Remove. Replacement is not considered necessary.


Photo 7


Photo 8


Photo 9


Photo 10

Photographic Risk Assessment

Advisor's signature

 Scott Butters

Departure time	06 Feb 2026 11:30 AM GMT
Number of outstanding Photographic Risk Assessments	0 From 0 to 99

Media summary

Photo 1

Photo 2

Photo 3

Photo 4

Photo 5

Photo 6

Photo 7

Photo 8

Photo 9

Photo 10

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	11
Meeting:	**SAWTRY IDB**	**Subject:**	**GOVERNANCE**
Date:	**Wednesday 3rd June 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Paul Burrows**

RECOMMENDATIONS

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. To review and approve the submission of their Annual Governance Statement for 2026 and authorising the Chair and Clerk to sign the statement.

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.middlelevel.gov.uk

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

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

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

SAWTRY IDB
INSURED VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS

PUMPING STATIONS

	As At 1st April 2026	
SAWTRY ROUGHS PUMPING STATION	1,073,292.00	
CASTLE HILL PUMPING STATION	1,073,292.00	
MOAT FARM PUMPING STATION	1,073,292.00	
	3,219,876.00	Index linked

4. IDB1 (Annual Report to Defra)

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

5. Exercise of Public Rights

5.1 For completion of the Annual Governance Statement the Board is required to confirm that they provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

5.2 In order to warrant a positive response to this assertation the authority needs to have taken the following actions in respect of the previous annual return:

Exercise of Public Rights: The authority provided for the exercise of public rights set out in Sections 26 and 27 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. Part 5 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 requires the RFO to have published including on the authority's website or other website:

- Sections 1 and 2 of the annual return
- A declaration that the status of the statement of accounts is 'unaudited;' and
- A statement that sets out details of how public rights can be exercised, as set out in Regulation 15(2)(b), which includes the period for the exercise of public rights.

5.3 In addition, a notice of the conclusion of the external auditor's limited assurance review of the annual return, together with relevant accompanying information, has been published in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 16 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. We also display the 'Local Authority Accounts – A Summary of Your Rights' with the notice.

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

6. Annual Governance Statement

6.1 That the Chair be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement on behalf of the Board for the financial year ended 31st March 2026 (Appendix 2)

Author Name: Paul Burrows
Role: Clerk

Appendix 1 Annual Return 2024/2025
Appendix 2 Annual Governance Statement 2025/2026

Sawtry Internal Drainage Board

Notice of conclusion of the audit

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

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

1 The Audit of accounts for the Sawtry Internal Drainage Board for the year ended 31st March 2025 has been completed and the accounts have been published.

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

The Clerk
Sawtry Internal Drainage Board
85 Whittlesey Road
March
Cambridgeshire
PE15 0AH

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

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

Announcement made by: P Burrows - Clerk to the Board

Date of Announcement: 17th September 2025

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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

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

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

O. (For local councils only)	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

28/05/2025 29/05/2025 09/06/2025

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

WHITINGS LLP

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

D PEZZIT WHITINGS LLP

Date 09/06/2025

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

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

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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

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

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

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

04/06/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

B. 1340

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

Chair S.T. [signature]

Clerk [signature]

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward	498,632	512,848	*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	60,238	61,936	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	16,976	36,992	*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	62,998	47,714	*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	512,848	564,062	*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	543,562	576,175	*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	1,264,000	1,264,000	*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

BLWool

Date 28/05/2025

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

04/06/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

B.1341

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

S. J. [illegible]

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

In respect of **Sawtry Internal Drainage Board – DB0093**

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 14/09/2025

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

We acknowledge as the members of:

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026, 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 have assured 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.*
10. We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.	✓		*has made suitable arrangements for its IT and data management and has complied with proper practices in doing so.*

***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:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

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

Chair SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk SIGNATURE REQUIRED

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Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	12
Meeting:	**SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING BACK**
Date:	**Wednesday 3rd June 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Andrew Wool/Sam Ablett**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Note the Budgeting review within Appendix 1.
B. Note the Highland Water contributions
C. Consider and approve the payments detailed within Appendix 2.
D. Consider and approve the Annual Accounts & Finance Papers 2025/2026 within Appendix 3.

Finance Officer's review and key messages

Actual Expenditure against Budget

GRAVITY. AREA 1

For 2025/2026 the estimated expenditure for Gravity Area 1 was for the year of £11,254 and a rate of 2.20p was set to raise this through agricultural drainage rates and Special Levies.

Net Expenditure in 2025/2026 was £14,692 against the budget of £11,254 due to higher than estimated District Maintenance. Generally other areas of expenditure have been generally in-line with budget provisions. The balance of the General Fund on 31st March 2026 was £50,712.

GRAVITY. AREA 2

For 2025/2026 the estimated expenditure for Gravity Area 2 for the year was £9,512 with all the expenditure being borne by Special Levy issued to Huntingdonshire District Council. The levy raised however was £8,393 for 2025/2026.

Net Expenditure in 2025/2026 was £6,830 against the Budget of £9,512, the only major variance was the calculated Highland Water repayment which was less than when the budget was completed. Generally other areas of expenditure have been generally in-line with budget provisions. The balance of the General Fund on 31st March 2026 was £20,881.

PUMPED. AREA 3

For 2025/2026 the estimated expenditure for pumped Area 3 for the year was £21,379 equivalent to a rate of 34.00p, the Board set a rate of 34.00p which raised £21,377 in agricultural drainage rates and special levy.

Net Expenditure in 2025/2026 was lower than the estimated budget. Fuel costs were £5,661 lower than budget, following a dry summer and a below average year for pumping volumes. Repairs and Renewals were lower than budget and district maintenance works was higher than the budget estimate. Other areas of expenditure have been generally in-line with budget provisions.

Following the setting of the rates for 2025/2026 additional funding became available in respect of the Storm Recovery Grant, MLC were successful in acquiring additional funding. As part of the Bevill's Pond Package the Control panels at Castle Hill Pumping Station and Sawtry Roughs Pumping Station were replaced at a cost of £19,123. All works were 100% funded through the various Storm Recovery Grants.

The balance of the General Fund on 31st March 2026 was £106,922.

PUMPED. AREA 4

For 2025/2026 the estimated expenditure for pumped Area 4 for the year was £9,601 and a rate of 60.00p was set to raise this through agricultural drainage rates.

Net Expenditure in 2025/2026 was lower than the estimated budget. Fuel costs were £1,605 lower than budget, following a dry summer and below average year for pumping volumes. District Maintenance works was higher than the budget estimate because of higher weed control costs. Repairs and Renewals were £1,155 lower than budget. Other areas of expenditure have been generally in-line with budget provisions.

Following the setting of the rates for 2025/2026 additional funding became available in respect of the Storm Recovery Grant, MLC were successful in acquiring additional funding. As part of the Bevill's Pond Package the Control panels at Moat Farm Pumping Station were replaced at a cost of £12,783. All works were 100% funded through the various Storm Recovery Grants.

The balance of the General Fund on 31st March 2026 was £42,584.

These balances for all four Areas are reflected in the Boards financial statements and Annual Return which they are requested to review and approve.

1. **Budgeting**

1.1 The budget comparison of the forecasted out-turn as of 31st December 2025 for the financial year ending 31st March 2026 is included as Appendix 1.

2. Payments for 2026

2.1 Payments are detailed within Appendix 2

3. Highland Water Contributions

3.1 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 a net repayment of £237.07 across the four areas.

Following the submission of claims for contributions the net sum of £(3,595.65) (£4,062.44 less £7,658.10 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 £3,411.26 in respect of 80% of the Boards' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2025/2026. As a result, a repayment of £184.39 was due to be repaid, this will be deducted from the 2025/2026 claim.

4. Storm Recovery Grant – T2B

4.1 During the year MLC were successful in securing Grant Aid on behalf of some of the IDB's that they administer. As a result of the decisions made when setting the rates for 2025/2026 works that had already been started or was to be started meet the criteria to be Grant eligible. The following work was done and was 100% Grant funded as a result:

Work Done – Area 3	Value	Penny rate equivalent
Castle Hill PS – Weed Screen Overhaul	£12,793	20.35p
Sawtry Roughs PS – Control Panel Replaced	£6,331	10.07p
	£19,123	30.42p
Work Done – Area 4		
Moat Farm PS – Control Panel Replaced	£12,783	80.07p
	£12,783	80.07p

5. Annual Accounts and Finance papers 2025/2026:

5.1 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 3

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

Appendix 1	**Budget Review**
Appendix 2	**Payments for 2025/26**
Appendix 3	**Annual Accounts & Finance Papers 2025/26**

Appendix 1

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET MONITORING 2025/2026
GRAVITY AREA - AREA 1

		Approved budget 2025/2026 £	Actual to 31/12/2025 £	Forecast To 31/03/2026 £	Remarks	
1	Insurances	140	152	152 A	A - Increased premiums	
2	District maintenance work (including Environmental measures)	12,350	1,768 B	12,350	B - Includes for: Flail mowing	1,620
3	Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	3,658	1,709	3,658	C - No Highland Water due to expenditure being less than forecast in 2024/2025	
4	Environment Agency - Precept	3,509	3,579	3,579		
5	Clearance of Sawtry Brook	-	-	-		
		19,658	7,209	19,740		
	LESS Development Contributions, Deposit Accounts interest etc	4,338	815	975 C		
		15,319	6,394	18,765		

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET MONITORING 2025/2026
GRAVITY AREA (FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME) - AREA 2

	Approved budget 2025/2026 £	Actual to 31/12/2025 £	Forecast To 31/03/2026 £	Remarks
1 Insurances	140	152	152 [A]	A - Increased premiums
2 District maintenance work (including Environmental measures)	7,750	839	7,750	B - No Highland Water due to expenditure being less than forecast in 2024/2025
3 Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, etc Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	3,658	1,709	3,658	
4 Environment Agency - Precept	1,228	1,253	1,253	
	12,777	3,953	12,813	
LESS Use of Development conts, Deposit Accounts interest etc	4,309	174 [B]	235 [B]	
	8,468	3,779	12,578	

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET MONITORING 2025/2026
PUMPED AREA (SAWTRY FEN) - AREA 3

		Approved budget 2025/2026 £	Actual to 31/12/2025 £	Forecast To 31/03/2026 £	Remarks
1	Insurances	950	1,045	1,045 A	A - Increased premiums
2	Pumping Stations - Repairs and renewals	3,500	1,013	3,500	B - No Highland Water due to expenditure being less than forecast in 2024/2025
3	Fuel	11,750	2,786	11,750	
4	District maintenance work (including Environmental measures)	11,375	-	11,375	
5	Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, etc Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	2,744	1,407	2,744	
6	Environment Agency - Precept	1,895	1,933	1,933	
7	Improvement works	-	-	-	
		32,214	8,185	32,347	
	LESS Deposit Accounts interest etc	3,343	898 B	1,200 B	
		28,871	7,287	31,147	

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET MONITORING 2025/2026
PUMPED AREA (MOAT FARM) - AREA 4

		Approved budget 2025/26 £	Actual to 31/12/2025 £	Forecast 31/03/2026 £	Remarks
1	Insurances	550	599	599 A	A - Increased premiums
2	Pumping Stations - Repairs and renewals	1,750	479	1,750 B	B - No Highland Water due to expenditure being less than forecast in 2024/2025
3	Fuel	3,350	(1,648) C	3,350 B	
4	District maintenance work (including Environmental measures)	6,975	- C	6,975 D	
5	Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, etc Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions	915	552	915	
6	Environment Agency - Precept	386	394	386	
7	Improvement works	-	-	-	
		13,926	376	13,974	
	LESS Deposit Accounts interest etc	1,426	365 B	490 B	
		12,500	11	13,484	

APPENDIX 2

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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

Middle Level Commissioners - Supply remedial Health & Safety signage (Account from 3B Design & Print)	208.80
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	705.43
Middle Level Commisssioners - Replace lights at Castle Hill pumping station	208.48
Middle Level Commisssioners - Replace lights, clean probes and repairs to panel at Moat Farm pumping station (Accounts from RS Components and Lhayley)	696.43
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery, travelling, health & safety contract and storm recovery - tranche 1 claim	6,076.94
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	240.38
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning and development applications)	255.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Board ID cards	14.74
Environment Agency - Precept	3,579.42
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2025	926.40
H Raby & Sons - Flail mowing	1,944.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	580.02
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	605.22
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	894.60
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit fees (2024-2025 accounts)	378.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, storm recovery tranche 2A claim, IDB change contribution, internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2024-2025 accounts)	6,564.59
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	1,973.77
Middle Level Commissioners - Expenses in connection with Board meeting (Account from Admiral Wells)	159.00
Environment Agency - Precept	3,579.42
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	290.40
Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal	52.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	605.22
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2026	1,309.20
V & J Services - Flail mowing	11,520.60
Middle Level Commissioners - Fault finding on pump at Castle Hill Pumping Station	137.39
Middle Level Commissioners - Check pump operation at Moat Farm Pumping Station	139.07
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	410.92
Ag Reserves - Pumping station duties (Castle Hill and Moat Farm pumping stations 2025-2026)	6,139.80
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply for February and March 2023 (Moat Farm pumping station)	712.63
EDF Energy - Electricity supply - (Moat Farm pumping station)	2,375.92
EDF Energy - Electricity supply - (Sawtry Roughs pumping station)	2,587.90
EDF Energy - Electricity supply - (Castle Hill pumping station)	3,558.81
British Gas - Electricity supply - (Moat Farm pumping station)	210.21
British Gas - Electricity supply - (Sawtry Roughs pumping station)	2,005.31
British Gas - Electricity supply - (Castle Hill pumping station)	645.56
	62,291.58

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

Appendix 3

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2026

GENERAL FUND

EXPENDITURE

		TOTAL	AREA 1	AREA 2	AREA 3	AREA 4
2026						
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year:-					
	Precept	7,158.84	3,579.41	1,252.80	1,932.89	393.74
	Insurances	1,947.51	151.91	151.91	1,045.15	598.54
	Repairs and renewals	2,064.90	-	-	1,470.25	594.65
	Fuel	5,834.65	-	-	4,089.30	1,745.35
	District maintenance work	22,713.35	8,838.88	2,951.87	6,306.35	4,616.25
	Administration charge, Audit fee, fee, printing, stationery, advertising etc	12,227.27	3,992.43	3,992.43	3,119.31	1,123.10
	Improvement works	31,906.55	-	-	19,123.15	12,783.40
		83,853.07	16,562.63	8,349.01	37,086.40	21,855.03
	Balance carried forward	221,098.98	50,711.26	20,880.85	106,923.05	42,583.82
		304,952.05	67,273.89	29,229.86	144,009.45	64,438.85

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH 2024

LIABILITIES

	TOTAL	AREA 1	AREA 2	AREA 3	AREA 4
CAPITAL SECTION					
Capital Provisions Account	1,264,000.00	-	15,000.00	859,000.00	390,000.00
REVENUE SECTION					
General Fund	221,098.98	50,711.26	20,880.85	106,923.05	42,583.82
Development Charges Account	73,437.32	48,718.70	24,718.62	-	-
Discharge Consent Contributions - A1(M) Account	299,820.47	191,274.24	108,546.23	-	-
Sundry Creditors	22,696.22	3,682.99	4,506.19	9,460.34	5,046.70
	1,881,052.99	294,387.19	173,651.89	975,383.39	437,630.52

Sawtry Internal Drainage Board

Summary of Bank Reconciliations as at 31st March 2026

Barclays - Treasurers Account 2025/2026

1st April 2025			31st March 2025	
Balance brought forward		570,077.04	Payments made during the year	62,291.58
31st March 2025				
Receipts during the year				
Clerk's collection account	83,577.15			
Interest on deposit accounts	6,348.01	89,925.16	Balance carried forward	597,710.62
		660,002.20		**660,002.20**

National Savings - Treasurers Account 2025/2026

1st April 2025		31st March 2026	
Balance brought forward	6,097.52	Payments made during the year	0.00
31st March 2026			
Interest on deposit accounts	60.98	Balance carried forward	6,158.50
	6,158.50		**6,158.50**

Barclays Bank PLc

Current Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2026	35,000.00
Less unpresented cheques	0.00
Add outstanding lodgements	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	**35,000.00**

Cash balances as at 31st March 2026

Barclays Bank PLc

Current Account	**35,000.00**
Business Premium Account	**562,710.62**

National Savings

Investment Account per passbook	**6,158.50**
Total reconciled cash balances per accounts	**603,869.12**

Sawtry IDB
Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return
Financial year ended 31st March 2025

					Per Annual Return
Line 1	**Balances brought forward**				
	General Fund		172,809.03		
	Development charges account		50,657.08		
	Discharge A1(M) account		289,381.46		
				512,847.57	**512,848**
Line 2	**Rates and Special Levies**				
	Agricultural rates		40,618.87		
	Special Levies		21,317.00		
	Penalty		0.00		
	Costs		0.00		
	Write-off		0.00		
				61,935.87	**61,936**
Line 3	**Total other receipts**				
	Interest				
		General fund	4,222.35		
		Development charges account	1,237.73		
		Discharge A1(M) account	7,070.65		
	Rent		5.00		
	Highland Water		8,827.00		
	Discharge contributions		970.00		
	Consent		250.00		
	Storm recovery grant		10,497.46		
	Write back of provisions		3,912.00		
				36,992.19	**36,992**
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**

Line 6	**All other payments**			
	Precept	7,018.47		
	Rates, insurances, telephones	1,641.73		
	Repairs and renewals	4,978.27		
	Fuel	9,543.70		
	Drainworks	13,143.70		
	Administration	11,324.95		
	Development charges fees	63.00		
	Improvements	0.00		
			47,713.82	**47,714**
Line 7	**Balances carried forward**			
	General Fund	217,415.89		
	Development charges account	50,193.81		
	Discharge A1(M) account	296,452.11		
			564,061.81	**564,062**

Reconciliation
Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6 564,061.81

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2026 £	*Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures **must** agree to underlying financial records.*
1. Balances brought forward	512,848	564,062	*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	61,936	50,604	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	36,992	63,544	*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	47,714	83,853	*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	564,062	594,357	*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	576,175	603,869	*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	1,264,000	1,264,000	*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 DHWool

Date 26/05/2026

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

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	13
Meeting:	**SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING FORWARD**
Date:	**Wednesday 3rd June 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Andrew Wool/Sam Ablett**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

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

Finance Officer's summary and key messages

GRAVITY. AREA 1

For the rating estimates for 2026/2027 standard provisions have been made for general expenditure with specific items included where known. The provision for drain maintenance works has been estimated in-line with previous annual allowances. However, following discussions with the Chairman additional funds may be required to be raised due to a Bank Slip of approximately 350 meters and some additional slubbing works. The costs of these are at the time of writing unknown.

The full calculated highland water claims have been included and the estimated expenditure for the year is £16,881 which is equivalent to a rate of 3.30p.

GRAVITY. AREA 2

For the rating estimates for 2026/2027 standard provisions have been made for general expenditure with specific items included where known. The provision for drain maintenance works has been estimated in-line with previous annual allowances.

The full calculated highland water claims have been included and the estimated expenditure for the year is £10,033.

PUMPED. AREA 3

For the rating estimates for 2026/2027 standard provisions have been made for general expenditure with specific items included where known. Standard annual estimates have been included for the drain maintenance programme.

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 East. Members should therefore consider if they think the provision is reasonable when setting the rate.

The full calculated highland water claims have been included and the estimated expenditure for the year is £22,636, equivalent to a rate of 36.00p, the rate for 2025/2026 being 34.00p.

PUMPED. AREA 4

For the rating estimates for 2025/2026 standard provisions have been made for general expenditure with specific items included where known. Standard annual estimates have been included for the drain maintenance programme.

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 East. Members should therefore consider if they think the provision is reasonable when setting the rate.

The full calculated highland water claims have been included and the estimated expenditure for the year is £11,988, equivalent to a rate of 75.00p, the rate for 2024/2025 being 60.00p.

1. Fees, Renumerations and Subscriptions

1.1 To consider the fees for the Pump attendants for 2026/2027.

The Sum of £1,206.00 (£402.00 per Pumping Station) was expensed for services of the District Officer for 2025/26.

1.2 To consider & review the Rental Agreement for Woodland to Council at £5 per annum.

2. Precept to the Environment Agency

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

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

The precept for 2025 was £7,158.84.

3. Determination of annual values & rate arrears

3.1 Shown in Appendix 1

4. Estimates for 2026/27

4.1 The estimated budget for 2026/27 is shown in Appendix 2.

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

5. Rate Requirements for 2026/27

5.1 Appendix 3 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.

5.2 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 Determination of annual values & rate arrears
Appendix 2 Estimates for 2026/27
Appendix 3 Rate Requirements for 2026/27

Appendix 1

SAWTRY IDB

Determination of Annual Values for Rating purposes

Jun-20

2020-2021

Location	Transfer value to Special Levy - £13434.320 per hectare	Area (Hectares)	Agricultural Land				Special Levies		Rate
			Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Hunts.	TOTAL	Write Off
	Opening Values (£)	1619.323	**77,171**	**0**	**62,799**	**17,100**	**714,737**	**871,807**	
	Opening %		8.85%	0.00%	7.20%	1.96%	81.98%	100.00%	
Location	Reason for change.								
								0	
								0	
	Requested GIS mapping update	16.190	1,721					1,721	
		-0.044			7			7	
		-7.291				-1,134		-1,134	
								0	
								0	
								0	
								0	
								0	
								0	
								0	
								0	
	Total determinations	1628.178	1,721	0	7	-1,134	0	594	
	Closing Values (£)		**78,892**	**0**	**62,806**	**15,966**	**714,737**	**872,401**	
	Closing %		9.04%	0.00%	7.20%	1.83%	81.93%	100.00%	
									£0.00

Appendix 2

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET PROPOSAL 2026/2027
GRAVITY AREA - AREA 1

		Approved budget 2025/2026 £	Actual to 31/03/2026 £	Proposed Budget 2026/2027 £	Remarks	
1	Insurances	140	152	175 [A]	A - Assume Increase of 10% in premiums.	
2	District maintenance work (including Environmental measures)	6,500	8,839 [B]	9,816 [C]	B - Includes for: Flail mowing	7,950
3	Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	3,917	3,992	4,383	C - Includes for: Flail mowing	8,000
					D - No Highland Water due to expenditure being less than forecast in 2025/2026	
4	Environment Agency - Precept	3,579	3,579	3,651		
5	Clearance of Sawtry Brook	-	-	-		
		14,136	16,563	18,025		
	LESS Development Contributions, Deposit Accounts interest etc	2,882	1,870	1,144 [D]		
		11,254	14,692	16,881		

		Approved budget 2025/2026 £	Actual to 31/03/2026 £	Proposed Budget 2026/2027 £	Remarks	
1	Insurances	140	152	175 [A]	A - Assume Increase of 10% in premiums.	
2	District maintenance work (including Environmental measures)	3,000	2,952 [B]	3,250 [C]	B - Includes for: Flail mowing	686
					C - Includes for: Flail mowing	750
3	Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, etc Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	3,917	3,992	4,383		
4	Environment Agency - Precept	1,253	1,253	1,278		
		8,309	8,349	9,086		
	LESS Use of Development conts, Deposit Accounts interest etc	(1,202)	1,519	(947) [D]	D - No Highland Water due to expenditure being less than forecast in 2025/2026	
		9,512	6,830	10,033		

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET PROPOSAL 2026/2027
PUMPED AREA (SAWTRY FEN) - AREA 3

		Approved budget 2025/2026 £	Actual to 31/03/2026 £	Proposed Budget 2026/2027 £
1	Insurances	950	1,045	1,155 [A]
2	Pumping Stations - Repairs and renewals	3,500	1,470	3,500
3	Fuel	9,750	4,089	8,000 [B]
4	District maintenance work (including Environmental measures)	4,750	6,306 [C]	6,000 [D]
5	Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, etc Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions etc	2,938	3,119	3,288
6	Environment Agency - Precept	1,933	1,933	1,972
7	Improvement works	-	19,123 [E]	-
		23,820	37,086	23,914
	LESS Deposit Accounts interest etc	2,442	20,286 [F]	1,278 [G]
		21,379	16,800	22,636

Remarks

A - Assume Increase of 10% in premiums.

B - Based on 3 year average usage assuming a 20% Increase in rates from October 2026

C - Includes for:	
Flail mowing	2,135
Slubbing and Weed Cutting	2,678
D - Includes for:	
Flail mowing	3,000
Slubbing and Weed Cutting	1,500
E - Includes:	
Castle Hill PS - Control Panel replaced *	12,793
Sawtry Roughs PS - Control Panel replaced*	6,331
	19,123
F - Includes:	
Storm Recovery T2b Grant	19,123

G - No Highland Water due to expenditure being less than forecast in 2025/2026

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET PROPOSAL 2026/2027
PUMPED AREA (MOAT FARM) - AREA 4

		Approved budget 2025/26 £	Actual to 31/03/2026 £	Proposed Budget 2026/2027 £	Remarks	
1	Insurances	550	599	665 [A]	A - Assume Increase of 10% in premiums.	
2	Pumping Stations - Repairs and renewals	1,750	595	1,750	B - Based on 3 year average usage assuming a 20% Increase in rates from October 2026	
3	Fuel	3,350	1,745	2,500 [B]	C - Includes for:	
					Flail mowing	3,573
4	District maintenance work (including Environmental measures)	3,750	4,616 [C]	6,250 [D]	D - Includes for:	
					Flail mowing	3,500
					Slubbing and Weed Cutting	1,500
5	Administration charge, Health and Safety contract, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising, etc Association of Drainage Authorities subscriptions	979	1,123	1,096	E - Includes:	
					Moat Farm PS - Control Panel Replaced *	12,783
					F - Includes:	
6	Environment Agency - Precept	394	394	402	Storm Recovery T2b Grant	12,783
7	Improvement works	-	12,783 [E]	-	G - No Highland Water due to expenditure being less than forecast in 2025/2026	
		10,773	21,855	12,662		
	LESS Deposit Accounts interest etc	1,171	13,256 [F]	674 [G]		
		9,601	8,599	11,988		

Appendix 3

Sawtry Internal Drainage Board

AREA 1

Rate and levy requirements

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

a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 15.42%

b) Proportion to be borne by Special levy issued to Huntingdonshire District Council – 84.58%

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £789.

In 2026/2027 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levy would raise £5,115.

Revenue cash balance in hand on 31st March 2026 - £50,711.

The estimated net expenditure for the Boards Revenue and Capital Programmes in 2026/2027 is £16,881 and equivalent to: -

a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 3.30p and

b) a Special levy on Huntingdonshire District Council of £14,278.

In 2025/2026 a rate of 2.20p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £9,518 on Huntingdonshire District Council.

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Board

June 2026

Sawtry Internal Drainage Board

AREA 2

Rate and levy requirements

Under Section 37 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, the entire expenditure for the Revenue and Capital programmes of Area 2 for 2026/2027 must be borne by a Special levy issued to Huntingdonshire District Council.

Revenue cash balance in hand on 31st March 2026 - £20,881.

The estimated expenditure for 2026/2027 is £10,033.

In 2025/2026 a Special Levy of £8,393 was issued to Huntingdonshire District Council against budgeted expenditure of £9,512. This was the sixth Special Levy issued since 1991/92.

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Board

June 2026

Sawtry Internal Drainage Board

AREA 3

Rate and levy requirements

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

a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 99.89%

b) Proportion to be borne by Special levy issued to Huntingdonshire District Council – 0.11%

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £628.

In 2026/2027 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levy would raise £629.

Revenue cash balance in hand on 31st March 2026 - £106,923.

The estimated net expenditure for the Boards Revenue and Capital Programmes in 2026/2027 is £22,636 and equivalent to: -

a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 36.00p and

b) a Special levy on Huntingdonshire District Council of £26.

In 2025/2026 a rate of 34.00p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £24 on Huntingdonshire District Council.

Members should consider likely future expenditure, and the level of balances required when setting the rate for 2025/2026.

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Board

June 2026

Sawtry Internal Drainage Board

AREA 4

Rate and levy requirements

Under Section 37 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, the entire expenditure for the Revenue and Capital programmes of Area 4 for 2026/2027 must be borne by the Agricultural Sector.

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £160.

Revenue cash balance in hand on 31st March 2026 - £42,584.

The estimated net expenditure of £11,988 in 2026/2027, is equivalent to a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 75.00p

In 2025/2026 a rate of 60.00p in the £ was raised.

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Board

June 2026