RAMSEY FIRST INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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Administered by:

11th June 2026

Dear Board Members

Upcoming meeting of the Board
Thursday 18th June 2026

Please find overleaf the agenda for the meeting of the Board to be hosted at the Ramsey Golf Club, PE26 1DD at 1pm on Thursday 18th June 2026.

Lunch will be provided at **1pm** followed by the meeting at **2pm**, Please note that Ramsey Golf Club have a dress code of clean smart casual.

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 PSAg

Clerk to the Board

RAMSEY FIRST INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Thursday 18th June 2026 – 1pm (2pm Meeting)
Ramsey Golf Club, PE26 1DD

Agenda:

Item No	*Topic*	*Format*	*Lead*
1	Welcome & apologies	Verbal	Chair
2	Declarations of Interest	Verbal	Chair
3	Minutes of last meeting and matters arising	Pages 3 - 14	Clerk
4	Constitution & Membership	Pages 15 - 17	Clerk
5	Clerk's Report	Pages 18 - 22	Clerk
6	Environment Officer's Report	To follow	Clerk
7	Consulting Engineer's Reports	Pages 23 - 34	Clerk or Engineer
8	Health & Safety • Condition of Footbridge	Pages 35 - 43	Chair
9	District Officer's Report	Verbal	DO
10	Governance • Accounts Return for 2024/2025 • Auditors report for 2024/2025 • Annual Governance Statement	Pages 44 - 46 Pages 47 - 51 Page 52	Clerk
11	Finance Report: looking back • Budgeting • Payments 2025 • Annual Accounts and Finance papers 2025/2026	Pages 53 - 54 Page 55 Pages 56 - 57 Pages 58 - 61	Clerk
12	Finance Report: looking forward • Determination of land for rating purposes • Rating Estimates for 2025/2026 • Agricultural Drainage Rates and Special Levy requirements or 2025/2026	Pages 62 - 63 Page 64 Page 65 Page 66	Clerk
13	Date of Next Meeting Thursday 24th June 2027	Verbal	Chair
14	Any other business	Verbal	Chair

(NB: If required for any agenda item:

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

RAMSEY FIRST INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Ramsey First Internal Drainage Board
Held at the Ramsey Golf Club, Ramsey on 19th June 2025.

PRESENT

E Stokes (Chair)	D Caton
A Roberts (Vice-Chair)	S Johnson
C Armstrong	T Noble
J Armstrong	R Stacey
R Brereton (HDC)	D Stokes

Mrs Ruth Martin (Lead Clerk) representing the Clerk and Mr Morgan Lakey (Operations Engineer) representing the Chief Engineer was in attendance.

Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for such a good attendance.

An apology for absence was received from M Smalley and Mr David Caton gave Mr Tom Caton's apologies at the meeting.

B.1042 Declarations of Interest

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

Mr C Armstrong declared an interest in any matters relating to the District Officer.

B.1043 Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed, and it was noted that the agreed rate was 42.75p in the £, which did not agree with that shown in the budget papers for the meeting. It was calculated from the income received that the rate collected had been 42.75p in the £, and that the figure shown in the Financial Report was incorrect.

RESOLVED

> That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 20th June 2024 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1044 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

B.1045 Constitution & Membership

Elections, Vacancies and Appointments

Mrs Martin advised that there are currently no vacancies on the Board, and that the next election of the Board will be in 2026.

Mr Roberts noted the Board members that had not attended several meetings and asked the Board if this should be considered further. The Board agreed not to take this further at this time, but to discuss this point at the next meeting should circumstances change.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The Board agreed that Mr E Stokes be appointed as Chair. This was proposed by Mr D Caton and seconded by Mr C Armstrong.

The Board agreed that Mr A Roberts be appointed as Vice Chair. This was proposed by Mr C Armstrong and seconded by Mr D Caton.

RESOLVED

That Mr E Stokes be appointed as Chair.

That Mr A Roberts be appointed as Vice Chair.

Appointment of District Officer

Mr D Caton proposed that Mr C Armstrong continue as District Officer, and Mr C Armstrong accepted the proposal. This was seconded by Mr Noble and unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED

That Mr C Armstong be appointed as District Officer.

Training

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

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

B.1046 Clerk's Report

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

Planning and Consenting Charging Model

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

Highland Water and IDB Precept

Mrs Martin outlined the issues detailed in the Clerks Report, and that after being advised that claims would not be paid in full, a formal appeal was narrowly avoided after the shortfall was met by the Anglian (Great Ouse) Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC). Following this the Clerk has written ‘The Highland Water

Conundrum' document which has been submitted to the Minister, Defra, the EA and our local authorities, and also circulated to all Board members.
Mrs Martin advised that the IDB Precept had increased by 2% this year, and that the Clerk was considering whether an appeal should be lodged, and if this would have greater gravitas if this were on behalf of all the Boards that he administers. The Board agreed to delegate this decision to the Clerk acting with the Chair.

Death In Service

The Board were asked if they would consider providing a death in service benefit for their employee, as detailed in the report. The Board agreed that this provision should be offered.

RESOLVED

> The Board agreed to delegate the decision on whether to appeal the IDB Precept (under s40 of the Water Resources Act) to the Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman. Any appeal must be lodged within 6 weeks of formal notification.
>
> That the Board wish to provide Death in Service benefit to their employee.
>
> That the report be noted.

Fens Reservoir

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

RESOLVED

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

B.1047 Environment Officers' Report

Mr Lakey took the Board through the main points of the Environment Officers report. He advised the Board on the updated Environmental Services package, and that the increase in fee for this Board was reduced slightly as they contract Operational Services from MLC. He drew the Boards attention to the changes in the Hedgerow Regulations and advised the Board that the Ecology Team can now check if any works affecting trees may impact on bats. He reminded the Board that any non-routine maintenance works will require a survey before works commence, and the Ecology Team have an environmental screening form that needs to be completed. He advised the Board that any bank slips should be reported as early as possible, as the slip will most likely displace any water voles that may have been present and so will not prevent any repair works being carried out. Alternatively leaving the slip and dealing with it later may give water voles chance to re-establish themselves and therefore prevent works being carried out. Mr Lakey referred the Board to the 'Water Voles – Myth Busting' part of the report. Mr Lakey also reminded the Board of their culverting policy, and that culverts should be seen as the last resort. Loss of habitat needs to be considered when installing any culverts.

The Chair advised that he has met with the Environment Officer, and some discussion followed regarding the new fees, after which the Board were satisfied with the rationale behind them.

The Board are invited to attend a biodiversity training day, although all of this work is undertaken by Mr Lakey on behalf of the Board.

<u>RESOLVED</u>

That the Environment Report be approved.

<u>B.1048 Consulting Engineers' Reports</u>

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

<u>Capital Programme</u>

The Board considered the Capital Programme and they agreed that FCERM GiA funding be sought to undertake an asset and catchment study. Mr Roberts thought that this would put the Board in a good position and would be happy to go forward with a study provided it is fully funded.

Mrs Martin advised the Board of consultation on flood funding policy reform, which had recently been released. The proposals include a contribution free allowance which would mean the first £3 million of projects fully funded by government, with Boards expected to fund 10% of project costs over that figure. Mr Lakey added that major works cannot be afforded by this Board.

<u>Operational Services Report</u>

Mr Lakey updated the Board with the Operational Services report, advising that full funding had been received to replace Boons Culvert at Point 11. The Board agreed that this work go ahead.

Mr Roberts added that if the Board were considering adopting more ditches near to Ramsey Golf Club, that they would need to look at further culvert replacements. Some discussion followed regarding which culverts would be first priorities.

Mr Lakey referred the Board to reaches 69-70-71 and some discussions followed on the agreed actions to be taken in order to manage the drains but also provide water for abstraction. It was agreed that some additional boards be installed around the District at points agreed by Mr Lakey and the District Officer, and some additional machine cleansing may be required.

It was agreed that the Board would machine cleanse east of point 69 and north of point 71, and adopt the upstream section north of point 71, and that this would be reviewed again next year.

<u>M&E Engineers Report</u>

The M&E Engineer's report asked that the Board consider further investigating moving of the panels supply and electricity meter. The Board agreed that the M&E Engineer could progress with the investigation but that they would like this to include provision to fit an auxiliary power unit to the panel in the event of a power outage. Mr Lakey advised that progressing with this would put the Board in a good position should further funding opportunities come available. The Board agreed that a subcommittee of the Chair, Vice Chair and District Officer be approved to make decisions on the replacement for the purpose of ordering works planned for summer 2026.

RESOLVED

That the Chief Engineer seek funding to undertake an asset and catchment study.

The reach north of point 71 be adopted by the Board.

That M&E engineer progress with investigations to move the panels, supply and electricity meter and to include provision for an auxiliary power input.

That a subcommittee of the Chair, Vice Chair and District Officer be approved to make decisions on the replacements.

That the reports are noted.

B.1049 Health & Safety

The Cope Safety Management report was discussed, and Mr Lakey advised the Board that the signage is now ready to be fitted.

The Board discussed deep water signage near to the slacker but decided that as this had not been identified by Cope, that no further action would be taken.

The Board expressed their satisfaction with the services provided by Cope.

B.1050 District Officers Report

The District Officer reported that all drains are clear, and that the blocked culvert at point 52 has now been cleared. He reported that everything else was in good order and had nothing further to report.

B.1051 Governance

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

RESOLVED

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

The Board noted the continued appointment of Whitings as Internal Auditor

b) Review of Internal Controls

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

RESOLVED

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

c) Approval of authorised officers for operational/regulatory roles

RESOLVED

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

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

d) Responsible Finance Officer

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

RESOLVED

The Board considered and approved the recommendations that:

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

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

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

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

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

e) Insured Values

The Board reviewed the Insured Values and were pleased that they continue to be index linked.

f) Policy Reviews

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

RESOLVED

> That the update and re-publication of the Complaints Procedure and Privacy Policy is approved.
>
> That the Board reviewed and approved the publication of an Anti-Bribery policy, and the Financial Regulations policy.
>
> That the Board reviewed and approved the publication of the Boards Policy Statement.
>
> That the MLC Lead Clerk, currently Ruth Martin, acts as the Board's Data Protection Officer and acknowledges that this role will be associated within the incumbent employee role of MLC Lead Clerk.

g) Risk Management Strategy and Internal Controls

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

h) Exercise of Public Rights

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

i) Consideration of potential litigation, liabilities, commitments.

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

RESOLVED

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

j) DEFRA IDB1 Return

RESOLVED

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

k) Annual Governance Statement

RESOLVED

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

B.1052 Finance Report – Looking Back

Finance officer's review and key messages

The Board considered and noted the key finance messages of the Finance Officer, and the payments detailed for 2024/25. The Board noted the Storm Recovery Grant Fund bids and that the Board received £32,583.20 for excess winter pumping costs, and £92,663 was received to fund the watercourse repairs and Pump Overhaul.

The Chair noted that in the previous year the Board had been concerned about the General Fund reducing but they had started the previous year with £52k in the fund and ended the year with £102k thanks to the Storm Recovery Fund. The Board is now in a much healthier financial position.

Payments for 2024

The District Officer declared an interest in this item.

Mr J Armstrong noted that the payments had included an invoice to Lattenbury Services for £12,012 and asked if anyone on the Board was aware what this payment related to. No one was aware of any works undertaken by Lattenbury Services on behalf of the Board, and Mrs Martin was asked to establish the circumstances around this payment after the meeting.

Excepting the payment to Lattenbury Services, the Payments were reviewed and accepted.

(Post meeting note: the payment had been attributed to the Board incorrectly and this has now been resolved)

Highland Water Contributions

The Board noted the Highland Water contributions.

Annual Accounts and Finance Papers 2024/2025

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

RESOLVED

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

B.1053 Finance Report – Looking Forward

Finance officer's review and key messages

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

Fees, Remuneration & Subscriptions:

a) ADA subscription

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

RESOLVED

That the requested increased ADA subscription for 2025 be paid.

b) District Officers Fees

The District Officer declared an interest in this item.

The Board gave consideration to the District Officers Fee for 2025-2026.

RESOLVED

That the Board agree that the District Officers Fee allowance increase to £4,193 for 2025/2026.

c) Pump Attendants Salary

The Board gave consideration to the Pump Attendant's Salary for 2025-2026.

The Chair advised that the Pump Attendant had made his intention to continue in post for a further year but would be considering leaving the role in the near future. The Board resolved that should it be necessary to take action in relation to the role, that the Chair, Vice Chair and District Officer be authorised to do so.

Mr C Armstrong advised that the Board had still not purchased the ride on lawn mower as discussed at the previous meeting. The Financial Procedures were reviewed, and it was established that the Chair could make the purchase without a Board resolution as the value was below £5,000. The Chair agreed to make the necessary arrangements after the meeting. It was also agreed that the Pump Attendant could purchase the fuel for the vehicle using the expenses procedure to reclaim the costs. In addition, it was agreed that the Pump Attendant purchase a key that would allow the electric gate to the pumping station and his bungalow to be operated during periods of power outage. The key will cost £39.

RESOLVED

That the Pump Attendant's salary agreed up to the sum of £4,193 from 1st April 2025.

That the lawn mower purchase be arranged by the Chair

That the Pump Attendant claim fuel for the lawnmower and the key to the gate through the expenses process.

d) Salary Sacrifice Scheme

The Middle Level Commissioner has introduced a salary sacrifice scheme as part of the Nest Pension Scheme, and the Board agreed to extend this offer to their employee.

RESOLVED

That the Salary Sacrifice Scheme in relation to the Nest Pension Scheme be extended to the Board's employee.

e) Clerks Fees

The Board gave consideration to the fee and Mrs Martin advised that an increase from £5871 to £6253 had been included in the budget and the Board agreed with this figure.

RESOLVED

That the Clerks fee increase from £5871 to £6253 for 2025/2026.

f) Precept

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

The Anglian (Great Ouse) Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC) determined that the Precept will increase by 2% for 2025.

The precept for 2024 was £6,950.44.

RESOLVED

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

g) Estimates & Rate Requirements for 2025/26.

The Board reviewed the proposed budget for 2025/2026.

RESOLVED

That the budget is agreed.

h) Rate Requirement for 2025/26

Following the earlier discussions, it was established that the rate for 2024/25 was set at 42.75p in the £, and that a rate of 39.75p in the £ would satisfy the budget.

The Chair suggested that keeping the rate at 42.75p would generate an additional £7500 and Mr Roberts agreed that this sum would be a significant proportion of the cost of the panel works discussed earlier. With this in mind Mr Roberts proposed a rate of 42.75p in the £ which was seconded by Mr Noble.

There were no other proposals, and the Board agreed the rate of 42.75p unanimously.

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2025/2026. and were informed by the Clerk that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by special levy on local billing authorities would be respectively 93.39% and 6.61%.

RESOLVED

i) That the estimates be approved.

ii) That a total sum of £110,707 be raised by drainage rates and special levy.

iii) That the amounts comprised in the sum referred to in ii) above to be raised by drainage rates and to be met by special levy are £103,384 and £7,323.

iv) That a rate of 42.75p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.

v) That a Special Levy of £7,323 be made and issued to Huntingdonshire District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.

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

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

B.1054 Middle Level IDB Change

Mrs Martin referred to the Clerks Report relating to the Middle Level IDB Change and updated the Board on the process to date.

The Board reviewed the questions and provided their answers which would be fed back to the Clerk as requested. However, the Board were not prepared to provide a financial contribution towards the detailed design report.

RESOLVED

That no contribution be made by the Board towards the cost of developing the detailed design.

B.1055 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That next Meeting of the Board be held on Thursday 18th June 2026 at 2pm at the Ramsey Golf Club, Ramsey.

B.1056 Any Other Business

With no other items being raised by the Board, the meeting was closed at 3.45pm.

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	4
Meeting:	**RAMSEY FIRST IDB**	**Subject:**	**CONSTITUTION & MEMBERSHIP**
Date:	**Thursday 18th 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. Approve the proposed Register of Electors
C. Note the current status of its membership and the role they each play as members serving the interests of the Board.
D. Review attendance records and identify any resolutions as necessary.
E. Outline the training undertaken in the last year as well as future needs or plan for training.

1. Current status

1.1 The table below outline the current composition of the Board and the quorum as detailed in the standing orders.

	Elected Members	Appointed Members	Total Members	Quorum
Composition	12	N/A		4
Actual	12	0 HDC	12	
Vacancies	0		0	

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

No	Name	Status (one of four categories)	Commentary
1	Cedric Armstrong	Ratepayer	District Officer
2	Jacob Armstrong	Ratepayer	
3	David Caton	Ratepayer	
4	Tom Caton	Nominee of Ratepayer (J A Caton & Son)	
5	Sam Johnson	Nominee of Ratepayer (J A Caton & Son)	
6	Tom Noble	Ratepayer	
7	Ben Rignall	Ratepayer	
8	Andrew Roberts	Ratepayer	Vice-Chair
9	Michael Smalley	Nominee of Ratepayer (Abbots Ripton Farming Co Ltd)	
10	Robert Stacey	Ratepayer	
11	David Stokes	Ratepayer	
12	Edward Stokes	Nominee of Ratepayer (E & E Stokes)	Chairman

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	Awaiting appointment	HDC	
2			

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	19/6/2025	20/6/2024	22/6/2023	23/6/2022
1	Cedric Armstrong	Present	Present	Present	Present
2	Jacob Armstrong	Present	Apologies		Apologies
3	David Caton	Present	Present	Present	Present
4	Tom Caton	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
5	Sam Johnson	Present	Present	Present	Present
6	Tom Noble	Present	Present	Present	Apologies
7	Ben Rignall		Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
8	Andrew Roberts	Present	Present	Present	Present
9	Michael Smalley	Apologies	Present	Present	Apologies
10	Robert Stacey	Present	Present	Present	
11	David Stokes	Present	Apologies		Present
12	Edward Stokes	Present	Present	Apologies	Present

Attendance at Chairs Meetings

No	Name	5/12/2025	6/12/2024	6/10/2023	13/12/2022
1	Edward Stokes	Apologies	Present	n/a	n/a

Appointed Members (current and previous)

No	Name (Council)	19/6/2025	20/6/2024	22/6/2023	23/6/2022
1	Roger Brereton (HDC)	Present	Present	Present	
2					

3. Elections, vacancies & appointments

3.1 In appointing the Chairman and Vice Chairman, the Board is expected to follow the principles within the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, there is a strong presumption that no individual should serve in any one post for more than ten years. The tenure of the current Chairman is 1 years, and the tenure of the current Vice Chairman is 8 years.

3.2 The Election of members of the Board will take place this year. Members will receive an election notice during July/August and are requested to return their complete slip as soon as possible. This term for current members ends on 31st October 2026.

3.3 The proposed Register of Electors which is applicable to this Election will be available to the Board for approval

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

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**5**
Meeting:	**RAMSEY FIRST IDB**	**Subject:**	**CLERK'S REPORT**
Date:	**Thursday 18th 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
- Enforcement & Sanctions 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:**	**7**
Meeting:	**RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: CHIEF ENGINEER'S SUMMARY & CAPITAL PROGRAMME**
Date:	**Thursday 18th 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. Approve critical work identified in the M&E Report.
C. Consider the development of an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement and grant funding and instruct the Consulting Engineer.

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 22 boards plus Middle Level Commissioners.

We have a total of 102 investigations of which 47 are currently active including:

- 29 surface water or surface water and foul discharges,
- 12 byelaw cases.

The Officers will also be taking over some aspects of Navigation Enforcement.

Since joining they have successfully recovered £445,000 of outstanding discharge contributions across IDBs 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.

Refer to Appendix 2 for more details.

3. Technical Services Overview

The team was joined by Project Manager, Ellie Edwards at the end of April. She will be assisting the Engineer in planning and delivering capital projects, significantly increasing our capacity to deliver the developing works programme.

4. IDB Recovery Fund T2B

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

Works delivered for this district include the following:

- Control panel replacement
- Culvert improvements

5. New FCERM grant funding guidance

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

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

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

Project types that are eligible for grant funding include:

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

<u>Asset Refurbishment Projects</u>

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

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

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

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

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

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

These include:

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

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

Applying for funding

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

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

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

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

Timescales

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

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

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

6. Capital Programme

The Board's Capital Programme is shown as Appendix 1.

This includes budget estimates for critical works identified in the M&E Report – control panel, weedscreen and control building repairs.

The Board is asked to approve this work.

It is recommended that the Board considers the development of an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement. 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 asked 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:	**Operational Report**
Appendix 4:	**M&E Report**

Appendix 1

Ramsey First (Hollow) 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
Ramsey Hollow p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5,000.0	0.0	5000.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	5.3	0	50.0	0.0	25.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	230.3
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	45.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	5.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	55.0
	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
	Pumping station roadway and bridge maintenance	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0
Watercourses	Drainage Channels	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Refurbishment of inlets/outfalls	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Culvert 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
Property	Bungalow	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Study	Catchment Study	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		5	**0**	**50**	**5**	**100**	**50**	**50**	**60**	**0**	**0**	**5,000**	**20**	**5,340**

There have been 9 planning applications responded to since the last meeting.

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

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

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

Appendix 3

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:		7
Meeting:	**RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: OPERATIONAL SERVICES**	
Date:	**Thursday 18th June 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**		**Morgan Lakey**

1. Weed Control & Drain Maintenance

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

Fully funded, replacement culvert at Point 11

The Board was successful in securing full funding for improvement works from the DEFRA IDB assets resilience grant and the mobile pumps package. This allowed for fully funded culvert replacement at point 11, Long Drove. Once the works commenced, it was evident the 750mm culvert was not only half full with silt, (due to water depths at the culvert restricting the access for cleaning out) it was also not installed straight, increasing the build-up of silt in the middle, where slightly different size pipes met at an angle. The replacement 1500mm twin-wall plastic pipe, will improve water conveyance and suffer less from silting up in the future due to a straighter pipe and the greater diameter.

Fully funded improvement works at Pumping Station

Works carried out under the mobile pumps package included improvements at the Board's Pumping Station. Access improvements and a hard standing were installed at the stations weedscreen entrance, to allow for the deployment of mobile pumping equipment in the event of a pump breakdown.

A recent joint inspection of the Board's district drains has been undertaken with the District Officer revealing that the majority of the drains remain in a satisfactory condition and are being maintained to a good standard.

The inspection highlighted sporadic stands of reed and emergent aquatic vegetation in the Meggs Drove Drains to the Northwest of the District. It is recommended these reaches are treated with an application of Roundup herbicide followed by light machine cleansing, post-harvest this year. Emergent aquatic vegetation was also evident in the Bury Lug and Wistow Fen drains, and it is recommended the affected reaches are included in this year's herbicide programme to control any future growth and further spread. A provisional sum has been included within the Board's estimated costs, for the proposed works to be completed the season. The identified locations can be seen on the Board's plan following the estimated costs on the next page.

Meggs Drove drain, reach 11-12

Wistow Fen, reach 51 - 52

Collapsed Headwall, reach 2-11

It was also noted during the inspection the collapsed culvert headwall (reach 2 -11) discussed at previous Board meetings, still remains an issue and has deteriorated further. It is recommended that the current brick rubble is replaced with a new concrete bagged headwall to prevent any possible blockages and ensure continued water conveyance. A sum has been included within the estimates to allow for the works to be completed in conjunction with the proposed adjacent machine cleansing works.

The removal of the self-sown saplings identified on the western bank of the Board's main Ash Drain, was postponed last year and will be programmed in to be cut back or removed this autumn/winter. This will require an ecological survey to ensure the works are carried out compliantly and follow the correct guidelines for working around any wildlife identified. A provisional sum has been included in the estimated costs for the works to proceed at the end of the year.

The Board's previous flail mowing contractor, Mr Ashman will no longer be available due to retiring at the end of last year. For the previous three seasons, Mr Ashman has been assisted by M&C Agricultural services, and they are available to undertake the flail mowing requirements this year if the Board wish to proceed with them. Flail mowing in advance of the machine cleansing works will be required to afford the machine operator optimum visibility to undertake the cleansing work. A sum for the completion of flail mowing of the Board's drains for the ensuing year has been included in the estimated costs.

A provisional sum has been included within the estimated costs for any emergency machine cleansing, Cott removal or culvert clearance works that may be required later in the year.

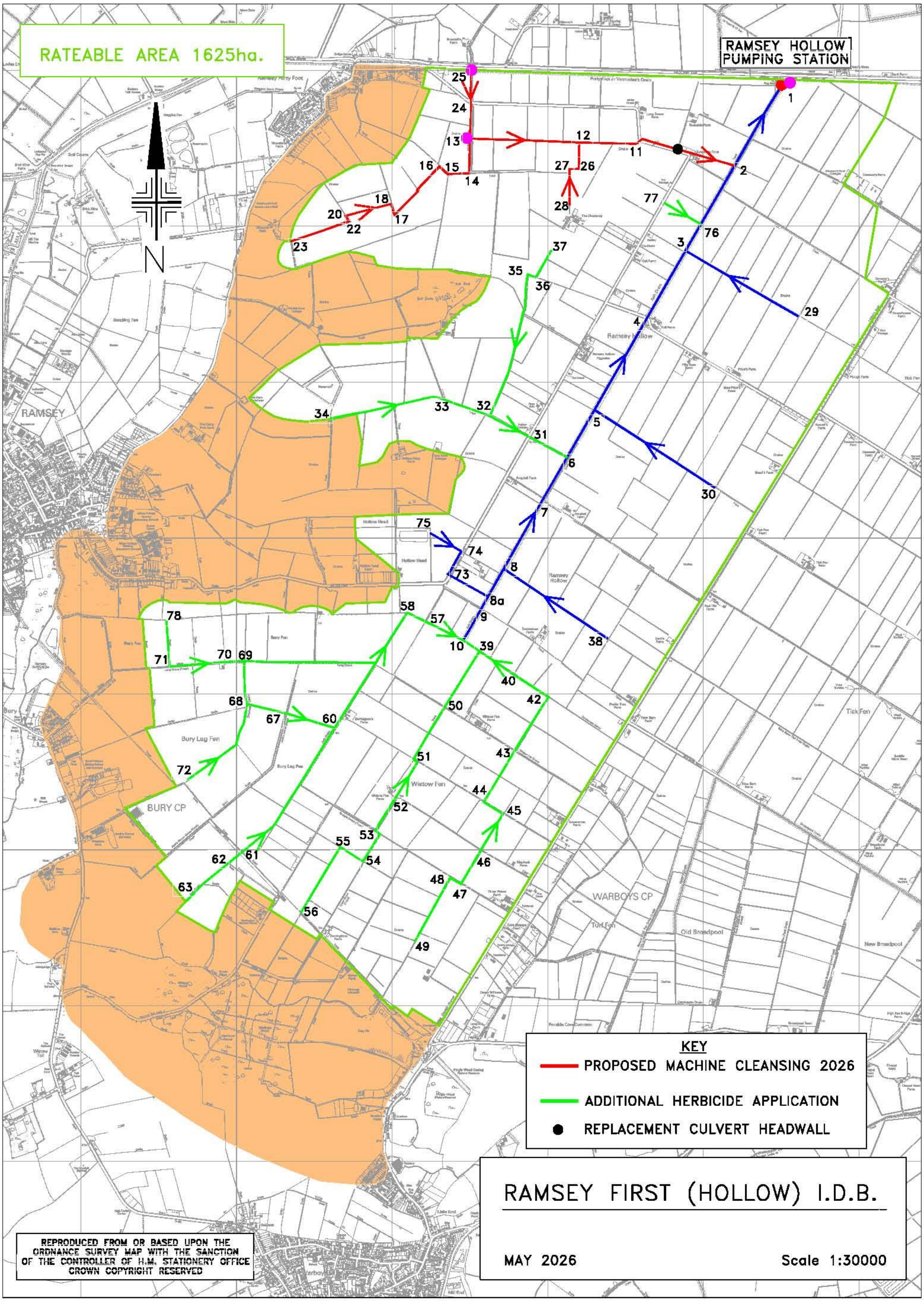
2. **Estimated Costs of Anticipated Drain Maintenance and Weed Control Programme**

The estimated cost of this year's recommended Weed Control and Drain Maintenance works follows, please refer to the previous plan for locations.

1	Allow sum for Roundup herbicide application where required throughout the district	Item	Sum		900.00
2	Machine cleanse Megs Drove Drains				
	i) Reach 2-11-12-13	1700m	@	1.40	2380.00
	ii) Reach 12-26-27-28	500m	@	1.40	700.00
	iii) Reach 25-24-13-14-15-16-17-18-20-22-23	2100m	@	1.40	2940.00
3	**<u>Provisional Item</u>** Cut back saplings on Ash Drain	Item	Sum		4000.00
4	Replace culvert headwall	Item	Sum		1800.00
5	Allow for flail mowing in advance of machine cleansing	Item	Sum		3500.00
6	**<u>Provisional Item</u>** Allow for emergency machine cleansing, Cott removal or culvert clearance works	Item	Sum		2000.00
7	Fees for inspection, preparation and submission of report to the Board, arrangement of herbicide treatments and machine cleansing works	Item	Sum		1400.00
			TOTAL		**£19,620.00**

Orders for the application of herbicides by the Middle Level Commissioners are accepted on condition that they are weather dependent, and they will not be held responsible for the efficacy or failure of any treatment.

Author Name: Morgan Lakey
Role: Head of Operations



RATEABLE AREA 1625ha.
RAMSEY HOLLOW
PUMPING STATION
N
RAMSEY
BURY CP
WARBOYS CP
KEY
PROPOSED MACHINE CLEANSING 2026
ADDITIONAL HERBICIDE APPLICATION
REPLACEMENT CULVERT HEADWALL
RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) I.D.B.
MAY 2026
Scale 1:30000
REPRODUCED FROM OR BASED UPON THE
ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE SANCTION
OF THE CONTROLLER OF H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE
CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED

Appendix 4

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**		**7**
Meeting:	**RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL**	
Date:	**Thursday 18th 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. 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	WSC	WSC Overhaul	Controls
Ramsey Hollow	1947(P&P) 1986(E) 2012 (D)	1974 (1E)	2014 (1)	1974	1986	2011	2011	2011
		1986 (2E)	2013 (2)	1974	1986			
		2012 (D)	2012 (D)	2012(D)	2012			

The Key Health Indicators table above shows the critical areas for concern and improvement is the pumps and control panels for the electric pumps. The pumps range from 14 to 52 years old with last refurbishments ranging from 12 to 14 years ago. The Board is advised to develop and start a pump refurbishment/replacement plan for the 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 have to be reverse engineered. Costs can be in the range £30k to £100k depending on pump condition.

1.2 Control Panels

The control panels for the electric pumps are now 50 years old, and their reliability is a concern. Consideration should be given to replacing the control panels. The condition of the roof of the old station has deteriorated allowing more water ingress into the area of the control panels which is deteriorating them quickly. They do have a cover above but water on floor is corroding panels. When replacing the control panels, it would be a good opportunity to move them and possibly the electricity meter into the same enclosure as the diesel pump control panel. This would offer them better protection and would remove all need for the old station building for the current pumps. The fibre glass control room has been designed with room to allow fitting of new panels for the replacement electric pumps control panels.

No further progress has been made of costing of the control panel replacement and relocation of mains and feed and meter.

The weed screen bars will need replacing in the next few years. The bars, excluding damming and fitting, will cost in the region of £20k. To enable them to be fitted successfully the drain will need to be dammed and desilted as there is approximately 1 metre of silt build up upstream of the bars.

The last routine inspection at Ramsey Hollow Pump Station took place 19th February 2026. Recommendations / remarks include:

Telemetry draw rope installed ready for Xylem.

The general age of the equipment makes failures more likely, consider replacing the electrical panel and relocating to the green cabinet.

Water leaking through the old station roof next to the pump panels. Requires repair to prevent splashing and corrosion of electrical panels. (socket isolated)

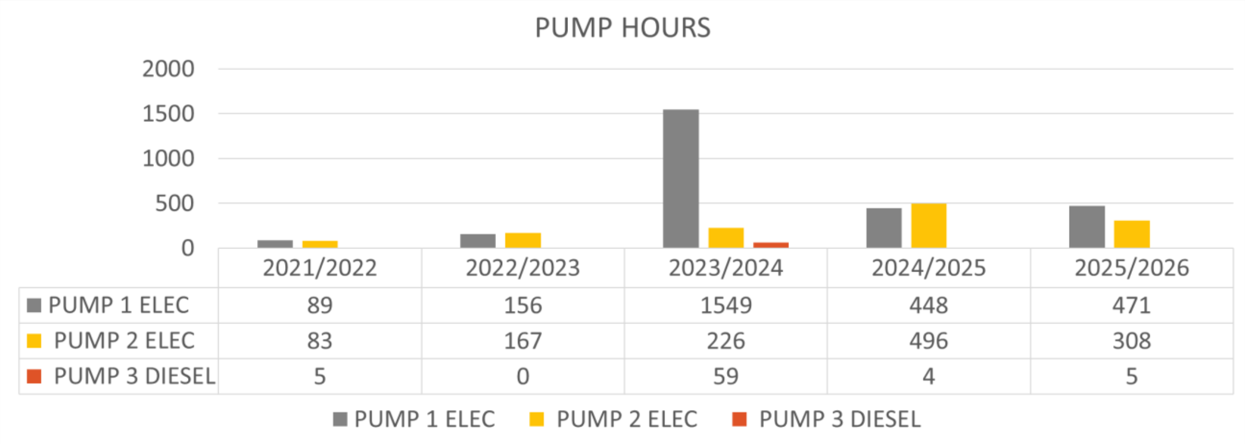
Pump pipework is corroding on Pump 1 and needs to be monitored for perforation.
WSC inspected, load rope worn but serviceable.

2. Electricity Readings

Mr T. Allen provides regular readings of pump hours and electricity usage which is greatly appreciated.

A new electricity meter was fitted in June 2024 by the meter operator (IMServ); this unit initially required multiple site visits due to communication issues (SIM Card / poor phone signal) in the local area; MLC are currently monitoring this situation.

3. Pumping summary



	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
PUMP 1 ELEC	89	156	1549	448	471
PUMP 2 ELEC	83	167	226	496	308
PUMP 3 DIESEL	5	0	59	4	5

4. Inspections

4.1 The mandatory site Electrical Installation Condition Report (due every 5 years) was carried out in March 2024 and failed due to 2 old light fittings with poor readings. Remedial works were booked in, and the work was carried out in June 2024.

EICR Date	EICR Due
24-Jun-2024	24-Jun-2029

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

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

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	8
Meeting:	**RAMSEY FIRST IDB**	**Subject:**	**HEALTH & SAFETY**
Date:	**Thursday 18th 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

Health & Safety Workplace Inspection

Ramsey (First) Hollow

carried out on

Monday, 12 January 2026

by

AW Safety Management Ltd

Key Information	
Client:	Ramsey (First) Hollow
Site:	Ramsey Hollow Pumping Station
Site Contact:	Cedric Armstrong
Site Contact E-mail:	enquiries@middlelevel.gov.uk
Inspection date:	12/01/2026
Inspected by:	Elena Spataru
Introduction:	This health and safety Inspection Report is part of the annual support programme from AW Safety Management and is designed to review the practical implementation of health and safety arrangements within the Company. The purpose of the inspection was to assess systems, management controls, working practices and identification of hazards and the controls in place. The aim was to conduct an examination to ensure that best practice is used and there has been compliance within set standards and any relevant legislation. We plan our work to ensure that we have a reasonable expectation of detecting any significant control weaknesses, however, our processes alone are not a guarantee that all operational conditions / activities will be witnessed, this is particularly relevant for any off-site activities. The responsibility for maintaining suitable controls for the safety of employees and anyone else who may be affected and safe operation of the business rests with the management of the Company. Subject areas that require action are detailed in the 'Action Plan' section of the report. Each subject is given a brief outline and the suggested remedial action required, a target completion date (based on the priority rating) and the person responsible for ensuring that the action is addressed. The person responsible listed against the action is based on our visit to site and understanding of the Company structure. Each subject area is given a priority rating, which is based on the auditor/s knowledge, understanding & judgement and is selected to highlight areas of non-compliance and provide general guidance on safe working. Where applicable, a number of key photographs are included in the report, these are referenced to the relevant subject area reference number. These can be used as a reminder of conditions at the time of inspection and provide additional guidance on the action required.

Priority Rating		
Priority Rating	**Effectiveness of Controls**	**Target Completion Date**
High	Serious 'material breach' of legislation and / or serious and imminent danger to persons	**0-3 Months**
Medium	Significant control weakness exposing persons to moderate degree of risk	**3-6 Months**
Low	General guidance or areas where there are opportunities to implement better practice and reduce exposure to risk	**6-12 Months**

Executive Summary / Additional Comments

The meeting was held with Cedric Armstrong.

It is understood that trespassing continues to be an issue, with access being gained from the adjacent field. The primary target appears to be the fuel tank, with access achieved by cutting the fence bolts.

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

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

Action Plan

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

Reference Number	Additional Controls / Actions / Comments	Supporting Photographs / Pictures	Person(s) Responsible	Risk Rating	Action Complete When / Who
1.	The outside fire extinguisher sign appears to be faded due to sun damage and the elements, which may reduce visibility in an emergency; replacement with clear, compliant signage is recommended. Although this action has been graded at a low risk, it is advised that this action is taken as soon as possible / 1-4 weeks.			Low	
2.	An expired fire extinguisher with an overdue inspection has been observed. This poses a risk of failure in the event of a fire, potentially resulting in injury or property damage. It is recommended that the extinguisher is replaced immediately, and that a regular inspection and maintenance schedule is implemented to ensure all fire safety equipment remains fully operational.			High	

Action Plan					
High Priority		0-3 Months			
Medium Priority		3-6 Months			
Low Priority		6-12 Months			
Reference Number	**Additional Controls / Actions / Comments**	**Supporting Photographs / Pictures**	**Person(s) Responsible**	**Risk Rating**	**Action Complete When / Who**
3.	A first aid kit was observed on site. It is recommended that the contents and functionality of the first aid equipment are checked regularly, ideally every six months, to ensure it remains fully stocked with in-date supplies. The kit should be located in a designated area with appropriate signage. Although this action has been graded at a low risk, it is advised that this action is taken as soon as possible / 1-4 weeks.			Low	
4.	Flammable substances were observed to be stored within the pumping station. This presents a risk of fire or explosion due to vapor release and potential ignition. It is recommended that unused cans are removed from site and that any remaining flammable substances are stored in an approved flammable storage cabinet to reduce fire spread and vapors exposure.			Medium	

Action Plan					
High Priority			0-3 Months		
Medium Priority			3-6 Months		
Low Priority			6-12 Months		
Reference Number	Additional Controls / Actions / Comments	Supporting Photographs / Pictures	Person(s) Responsible	Risk Rating	Action Complete When / Who
5.	Different objects were observed to be spread on the floor. Housekeeping regimes to be implemented to reduce the risk of workplace accidents such as slips, trips, and falls.			Low	
6.	The door frame shows significant wood root, compromising structural integrity and increasing the risk of collapse or injury. It is recommended that the affected section is repaired or replaced promptly, and a thorough inspection of adjacent wooden structures is carried out to prevent further decay.			High	

General Comments	
Audit Carried out on Behalf of:	AW Safety Management Ltd / IRM Safety Ltd
Contact Information (Edwinstowe Office):	Edwinstowe House High Street Edwinstowe Mansfield NG21 9PR 01623 821516
Contact Information (Brampton Office):	Low Cross Buildings 4 Low Cross Street Brampton Cumbria CA8 1NP 01697 270020
Contact Information (Boston Office):	Boston Enterprise Centre Venture House Enterprise Way Boston Lincolnshire PE21 7TW 0330 2237470
Website:	www.awsafety.co.uk / www.integratedrisk.org.uk
Note:	It is important to note that this Audit Report highlights conditions at the time of the visit at the premises detailed on the front cover of the report. It remains the responsibility of the management and staff within the business to make known to the auditor any potentially unsafe conditions or practices which were not apparent during the Audit, or that may take place at any off-site location. It is the ongoing responsibility of management to ensure that the business and its employees operate safely at all times and that any day-to-day health and safety issues are addressed immediately. Any queries or inaccuracies with this report should be raised immediately with the auditor.

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	11
Meeting:	**RAMSEY FIRST IDB**	**Subject:**	**GOVERNANCE**
Date:	**Thursday 18th 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 (eg Chair/Vice Chair) then it is important that the Board puts in place safeguards to ensure a separation of duties, particularly being clear on who is acting as lead client for the contractor.

3. Risk Assessment and Insured Values

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

RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) IDB
INSURED VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS

PUMPING STATION AND BUNGALOW

	As At 1st April 2026	
Hollow Pumping Station	3,219,876.00	Index linked
Bungalow	350,000.00	
	3,569,876.00	

4. IDB1 (Annual Report to Defra)

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

5. Exercise of Public Rights

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

5.2 In order to warrant a positive response to this assertion 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

Ramsey First (Hollow) 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 Ramsey First (Hollow) 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 Ramsey First (Hollow) Internal Drainage Board

The Clerk
Ramsey First (Hollow) 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

RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

WWW.MIDDLELEVEL.GOV.UK

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

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

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

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: 09/06/2025 12/06/2025 23/06/2025

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

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: G. [illegible] – WHITINGS LLP

Date: 23/06/2025

***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:

RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) 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:

19/06/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

B.1051

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

Chair [signature]

Clerk RMartin

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) 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	134,528	111,570	*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	97,264	110,707	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	20,118	152,934	*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	13,205	14,469	*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	13,963	13,963	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	113,172	171,287	*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	111,570	175,492	*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	184,573	200,207	*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	1,424,991	1,424,991	*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	126,110	117,527	*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

AHDool

Date 09/06/2025

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

19/06/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

B.1052

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

[signature]

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

In respect of **Ramsey First (Hollow) Internal Drainage Board - DB0077**

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: 12/09/2025

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

We acknowledge as the members of:

RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) 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' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*		
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓			prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓			made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We 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:	11
Meeting:	**RAMSEY FIRST INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING BACK**
Date:	**Thursday 18th 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

For 2025/2026 the estimated expenditure for the Board was £110,707 and a rate of 42.50p was set to raise this through Agricultural Drainage Rates and Special Levy.

Net Expenditure in 2025/26 was lower than the budget. Drain works was under the original budget. Fuel costs were also lower than budget, following a dry summer and below average year for pumping volumes.

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. Other Improvement costs relating to the Watercourse Repairs completed in the year at a cost of £133,753 and Access Improvements as part of the Mobile Pumps Package at a cost of £4'036, these works carried out was fully funded from the Storm Recovery Grant Trance 2B

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

This will leave the General fund balance as of 31st March 2026 at £135,022. The Developers fund balance as of 31st March 2026 is £11,583. The Asset Replacement Fund balance as of 31st March 2026 is £46,531. This position is reflected in the Boards financial statements and Annual Return which they are requested to review and approve.

1. **Budgeting**

1.1 The budget comparison of the forecast out-turn and the actual out-turn for the financial year ending 31st March 2026 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 £18,111.72.

Following the submission of claims for contributions the net sum of £518.73 (£21,420.93 less £20,902.19 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 £18,107.83 in respect of 80% of the Boards' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2025/2026.

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	Value	Penny rate equivalent
Watercourse Repairs	£133,753	50.95p
Access Improvements – Mobile Pump Deployment	£4,036	1.54p
	£137,789	52.49p

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

RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET MONITORING 2025/2026

		Approved budget 2025/2026 £	Actual to 31/12/2025 £	Forecast To 31/03/2026 £	
1	Rates, insurances and telephones	3,500	3,407	3,857	A
2	Repairs and renewals	8,000	3,259	8,000	
3	Fuel (oil and electricity)	36,500	10,095	36,500	
4	Drainworks (including District Officer's fee and environmental measures)	24,000	4,234	24,000	
5	District labour	15,810	11,869	15,810	
6	Administration charge, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising etc	9,750	4,604	9,750	
7	Improvement Works	-	-	125,000	B
8	Environment Agency Precept	7,089	7,089	7,089	
9	Public Works Loan Board - Loan Repayment	13,963	13,963	13,963	
10	Reinstatement of balances	3,050	-	3,050	
	Future works funding	7,769	-	7,769	
		129,432	58,521	254,789	
	LESS Government grant, Deposit Accounts interest etc	18,724	19,639 C	144,939	D
		110,707	38,882	109,849	

Remarks

A -	Increased premiums	
B -	Culvert Enlargement	125,000
C -	Includes:	
	Highland Water Claim	18,627
D -	Includes:	
	Highland Water Claim	18,627
	Storm Recovery T2B	125,000

Appendix 2

RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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

British Telecom - Telephone charges	107.56
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply remedial Health & Safety signage (Account from 3B Design & Print)	69.60
Middle Level Commisssioners - Fees (Weed control and drain maintenance 2024-2025, planning and development applications)	1,280.40
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery, travelling, health & safety contract, public works loan application and storm recovery - tranche 1 claim	5,149.96
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station Maintenance	393.96
Middle Level Commissioners - Istallation of IP rated boxes (Account from CMS Electrical)	150.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Board ID card	7.37
British Telecom - Telephone charges	114.46
Environment Agency - Precept	3,544.73
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station Maintenance	2,245.92
W T Allen - Weed removal and road maintenance	1,300.00
Mrs R Martin - Expenses in connection with Board meeting (Account from Ramsey Golf & Bowls Club)	27.70
W T Allen - Derv	50.00
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2025	813.60
British Telecom - Telephone charges	114.46
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station Maintenance	393.96
Oakfields - AG Ltd - Husqvarna TC38 Mower c/w collector including delivery	2,340.00
Wave - Metered water	64.09
British Telecom - Telephone charges	114.46
C C Armstrong - Cleaning culverts	180.00
C C Armstrong - District Officer's Fees 2023-2024 and 2024-2025	7,770.00
IMServ -Site visit from meter operator	240.00
L R Boon & Sons Ltd - New slacker key	23.57
British Telecom - Telephone charges	114.46
Middle Level Commissioners - Grant in aid storm recovery T2a scheme works	108,949.09
Middle Level Commissioners - Grant in aid received for storm recovery T2a scheme	-92,662.51
British Telecom - Telephone charges	114.46
L R Boon & Sons Ltd - A93 Vee belt	17.63
Middle Level Commisssioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	473.70
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station Maintenance	411.96
IMServ - Annual half hourly electricity data collection to 21st October 2026	201.22
Wave - Metered water	69.90
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit Fee (2024-2025 accounts)	756.00
British Telecom - Telephone charges	130.00
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	6,981.55
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance (Weedscreen cleaner HSB insurance check)	108.24
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, storm recovery tranche 2A claim, and internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2024-2025 accounts)	5,220.22

Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of Insurance	2,531.89
Environment Agency - Precept	3,544.72
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	6,981.55
Middle Level Commissioners - Refill automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment with oil	203.98
Middle Level Commisssioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	290.40
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station Maintenance	411.96
G Ashman - Flail mowing	1,846.00
Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal	52.00
British Telecom - Telephone charges	95.54
British Telecom - Telephone charges	67.34
British Telecom - Telephone charges	124.97
G Ashman - Flail mowing	260.00
Ramsey Upwood & Great Raveley IDB - Refund of VAT on flailmowing	2,002.00
British Telecom - Telephone charges	124.07
Wave - Metered water	52.01
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2026	854.40
B J Plant Hire Ltd. - Drain maintenance	5,520.00
British Telecom - Telephone charges	124.07
Middle Level Commissioners - Chemical weed control of District drains	1,027.26
Middle Level Commissioners - Insurance policy for bridge	1,211.26
Middle Level Commissioners - Health and safety remedial works	156.22
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of safe working signs for automatic weedscreen cleaner	13.42
British Telecom - Telephone charges	124.07
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges, stationery, health & safety, storm recovery tranche 2b claim, health & safety, ecological and environmental services	7,329.19
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to automatic weedscreen cleaner and service of diesel pump (Accounts from HGV Direct and HTS)	2,078.29
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	411.96
Wave - Metered water	59.38
EDF Energy - Electricity supply - (Ramsey Hollow pumping station)	29,314.82
Britisg Gas - Electricity supply - Payments on account	16,596.78
District Labour	15,793.56
	156,584.83

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2026
GENERAL FUND

2026				2025		
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year			Apr-01	Balance brought forward	107,331.18
	Precept		7,089.45	2026		
	Rates, Insurances, Telephones	5,099.96		Mar-31	Rate income and Special levy	112,172.47
	Repairs & Renewals	5,475.97			Interest on Deposit Accounts	1,289.16
	Fuel	22,883.65			Highland Water Contributions	18,626.57
	District Labour	15,783.26			Storm Recovery Grant - T2b	137,789.36
	Drainworks (including District Officer's fees)	17,278.47				
	Administration charge, Printing,				Consents	50.00
	Stationery, Advertising, Association					
	of Drainage Authorities Subscriptions	9,594.42	76,115.73		Write Back of Provision	489.97
	Public Works Loan Repayment					
	Principal	8,957.31				
	Interest	5,005.79	13,963.10			
	Improvement Works					
	Culvert Enlargement *	133,752.86				
	Access Improvements - Mobile Pumps *	4,036.00	137,788.86			
	Asset Replacement Fund					
	Funds Raised - 2025/2026		7,769.00			
	Balance carried forward		135,022.07			
			377,748.21			377,748.71

BALANCE SHEET
Capital Section

Liabilities		Assets		
Capital Provisions	1,316,421.43	Bungalow	124,991.00	
Public Works Loan Board -		Pumping Station	1,300,000.00	1,424,991.00
Loan outstanding	108,569.57			
	1,424,991.00			1,424,991.00

Revenue Section

General Fund	135,022.07	Ratepayers' Account - Arrears		5,996.36
Fenside Waste Management Account	12,686.06	Sundry Debtors		534.00
Development Charges Account	11,582.99	Value added Tax - Refunds due		31,042.37
Contributions Holding account	5,727.07	Stock		4,455.60
Pumping Plant Replacement Fund	46,530.93	Balance in hand -		
		Treasurer's Account	30,121.18	
Sundry Creditors	44,207.27	Business premium Account	183,606.88	213,728.06
	1,680,747.39			1,680,747.39

Ramsey First (Hollow) IDB
Financial year ended 31st March 2026
Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return

				Per Annual Return
Line 1	**Balances brought forward**			
	General Fund	107,331.18		
	Development charges account	11,445.52		
	Fenside Waste management account	12,686.06		
	Pumping plant replacement fund	38,301.88		
	Contributions Holding Account	5,727.07		
			175,491.71	**175,492**
Line 2	**Rates and Special Levies**			
	Agricultural rates	104,849.47		
	Special Levies	7,323.00		
	Penalty	0.00		
	Costs	0.00		
	Write-off	0.00		
			112,172.47	**112,172**
Line 3	**Total other receipts**			
	Interest			
	General fund	1,289.16		
	Development charges account	137.47		
	Pumping plant replacement fund	460.05		
	Storm Recovery Grant	137,789.36		
	Highland Water	18,626.57		
	Consents	50.00		
	Write Back of Provision	489.97		
			158,842.58	**158,842**
Line 4	**Staff costs**			
	Wages/salaries	12,787.80		
	National insurance contributions	1,443.86		
	Pension costs	551.60		
	Travelling expenses	0.00		
			14,783.26	**14,783**
Line 5	**Loan repayments**			
	PWLB - Principal	8,957.31		
	PWLB - Interest	5,005.79		
			13,963.10	**13,963**

Line 6	**All other payments**			
	Precept	7,089.45		
	Rates, insurances, telephones	5,099.96		
	Repairs and renewals	5,475.97		
	Fuel	22,883.65		
	Drainworks	17,278.47		
	Administration	9,594.42		
	Development charges fees	0.00		
	Improvement works	137,789.36		
			205,211.28	**205,211**
Line 7	**Balances carried forward**			
	General Fund	135,022.07		
	Development charges account	11,582.99		
	Fenside Waste management account	12,686.06		
	Pumping plant replacement fund	46,530.93		
	Contributions Holding Account	5,727.07		
			211,549.12	**211,549**

Reconciliation

Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6 212,549.12

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) 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	111,570	175,492	*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	110,707	112,172	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	152,934	158,842	*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	14,469	14,783	*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	13,963	13,963	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	171,287	205,211	*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	175,492	211,549	*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	200,207	213,728	*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	1,424,991	1,424,991	*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	117,527	108,570	*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 AHDool

Date 09 06 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:	12
Meeting:	**RAMSEY FIRST INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING FORWARD**
Date:	**Thursday 18th 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. Note the Precept to the Environment Agency
D. Review & approve Determination of land for rating purposes & Rate arrears
E. Review & Approve Rating Estimates for 2026/2027
F. Consider & approve the Agricultural Drainage Rates and Special Levy requirements for 2026/2027
G. Note that we will be introducing a consistent naming convention for MLC and IDB reserves during 2026/27, this will include some rationalisation of funds.

Finance Officer's summary and key messages

For the rating estimates for 2026/2027 standard provisions have been made for general expenditure with specific items included where known. The engineers' 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.

A provision of £5,503 has been included in the Budget to raise funds for future improvement works. The Board are asked to consider likely future capital investment requirements at the pumping stations and determine whether this amount is sufficient.

The budget proposal also includes for the full recovery of the highland water contributions due, the total being £16,010.

1. Fees, Remunerations and Subscriptions

1.1 Consider the District Officer's fee.

The Sum of £4,193 was expensed for services of the District Officer for 2025/26.

1.2 Consider the Pump Attendants salary.

The Sum of £15,783 was expensed for services of the Pump Attendants Salary for 2025/26.

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 £7,089.45.

3. Determination of land for rating purposes, rata arrears and contributions from developers

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

RAMSEY FIRST IDB

Determination of Annual Values for Rating purposes

April 2026

2026-2027

Location	Transfer value to Special Levy - £382.594 per hectare	Area (Hectares)	Agricultural Land	Special Levies Hunts DC	Special Levies TOTAL	Rate W/Offs
	Opening Values (£)	1577.277	241,834	17,130	258,964	
	Opening %		93.39%	6.61%	100.00%	
Location	Reason for change.					
Hollow Lane Ramsey	Change to domestic dwelling	0.613	-96	235		-82.08
	GIS Mapping review	22.167	3,428			1465.47
					0	
					0	
					0	
	Total determinations	1599.444	3,332	235	0	
	Closing Values (£)		245,166	17,365	262,531	
	Closing %		93.39%	6.61%	100.00%	
						£1,383.39

Appendix 2

RAMSEY FIRST (HOLLOW) INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET PROPOSAL 2026/2027

		Approved budget 2025/2026 £	Actual to 31/03/2026 £	Proposed Budget 2026/2027 £
1	Rates, insurances and telephones	3,500	5,100	5,700 [A]
2	Repairs and renewals	8,000	5,476	8,000
3	Fuel (oil and electricity)	36,500	22,884	34,500 [B]
4	Drainworks (including District Officer's fee and environmental measures)	24,000	17,278 [C]	28,500 [D]
5	District labour	15,810	15,783	16,664
6	Administration charge, Audit fee, printing, stationery, advertising etc	9,750	9,594	10,750
7	Improvement Works	-	137,789 [E]	-
8	Environment Agency Precept	7,089	7,089	7,231
9	Public Works Loan Board - Loan Repayment	13,963	13,963	13,963
10	Reinstatement of balances	3,050	-	-
	Future works funding	7,769	7,769	5,503
		129,432	242,727	130,811
	LESS Government grant, Deposit Accounts interest etc	18,724	158,245 [F]	16,611 [G]
		110,707	84,482	114,201
	Rate Raised/Rate Requirement	42.50		43.50

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:	
	District Officers Fee	4,234
	Slubbing	4,750
	Flail Mowing	2,106
	Weed Clearance and Control	2,156
	Engineering, Environmental and Other Fees	4,032
		17,278
D -	Includes:	
	Engineers Items	19,620
	District Officers Fee	4,413
E -	Includes:	
	Culvert Enlargement *	133,753
	Access Improvements - Mobile Pumps *	4,036
		137,789
F -	Includes:	
	Highland Water Claim	18,627
	Storm Recovery T2B *	137,789

Appendix 3

Ramsey First (Hollow) Internal Drainage Board

Rate and levy requirements

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

a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 93.39%
b) Proportion to be borne by Special levy issued to Huntingdonshire District Council – 6.61%

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £2,451.

In 2026/2027 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levy would raise £2,625.

Revenue cash balance in hand on 31st March 2026 - £135,022.

The estimated net expenditure for the Boards Revenue and Capital Programmes in 2025/2026 is £114,201 and equivalent to: -

a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 43.50p and

b) a Special levy on Huntingdonshire District Council of £7,554.

In 2025/2026 a rate of 42.50p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £7,323 on Huntingdonshire District Council.

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Board

June 2026