RAMSEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Board held on the 12th May 2026 at 7 pm at the Old Nene Golf and country Club, Muchwood Lane, Ramsey, Huntingdon, Cambs PE26 2XQ.

PRESENT: Mr D R Abblitt (Chairman) (DA), MR L R Smith (Vice Chairman) (LS), Mr P H Wagstaffe (PW), Mr A H Wagstaffe (AW), Mr D R Smith (DS), Mr Leo Butler (District Officer) and Mr J Chrisp (the Clerk).

AGM 26.1

APOLOGIES None were received. It was pointed out that the 3 members appointed by the Huntingdonshire District Council had not been re-elected and their terms of office as members of the Board had expired and we were awaiting appointment of new members by the Council.

AGM 26.2

DECLARATIONS of INTEREST.

There were none.

AGM 26.3

THE APPROVAL of the MINUTES of:-

AGM 26.3.1 The AGM held on the 20th May 2025 and

AGM 26.3.2 The EGM held on the 26th March 2026

both proposed by AW and seconded by LS with all members present voting in favour, was given.

AGM 26.4.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were none which were not on the Agenda for this meeting.

AGM 26.5

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT AUDITOR

It was proposed by DS and seconded by PW that Whitings LLP Accountants of March be appointed as Independent Internal Auditor and this was passed by all members present voting in favour.

AGM 26.6.1 CONSIDERATION and APPROVAL of the STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS and ANNUAL GOVERNANCE and ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) for the Year ending 31st March 2026.

The Clerk apologised but neither of these documents were ready so that this agenda item would have to be adjourned to a later meeting.

AGM 26.6.2 DIRECTION of the CHAIRMAN and CLERK to sign the same.

This will need to await subsequent approval.

AGM 26.6.3 CONFIRMATION of cheques drawn as per LIST OF CHEQUES for the Year ending 31st March 2026 attached.

This had been discussed at the EGM on the 25th March 2026 but did not at that time include a full List of the cheques drawn up to the 31st March 2026. The remaining cheques had now been entered and after further discussion it was proposed by DA as Chairman and, with all Members present voting in favour, the List of payments made was confirmed.

AGM 26.7

AGM 26.7.1 TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT OFFICER'S REPORT and MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME for the current year.

Last year, flailing and cleaning of the drains in Stocking Fen had been carried out. This year, under the biannual biodiversity plan to preserve the environment it is the turn of Lodes End district.

AGM 26.7.2 TO CONSIDER the NOTES of the ANNUAL DRAINAGE INSPECTION on the 31st March 2026.

These were circulated prior to the meeting and are now attached to these Minutes. They were discussed and the action points noted. The Board will ask Elliott Engineers to test and replace the RCD in the in the electric cupboard at Stocking Fen Pumping Station. Once the District Officer has raised the automatic level sensor fitting at Stocking Fen, the Middle Level's Engineering Department will be asked to recalibrate the level monitor.

AGM 26.7.3 TO CONSIDER the REPORT of DAVID BANTOFT MLC Engineer dated 5th May 2026 attached.

This was circulated prior to the Meeting and came to be discussed.

The proposal by Mr Bantoft that the Lodes End Pump should be inspected and refurbished was discussed at length. It had not been overhauled for over 20 years and the pump is 48 years old, fast approaching the point when it may have to be renewed or replaced after a life of 50 years. It was considered that it would be appropriate to consider a possible expenditure of up to £40,000 to refurbish the pump. Before making a decision, Mr Bantoft should be asked to obtain some comparative quotations for lifting the pump out and removing it for inspection. Only when it has been inspected and tested will the Board know what repairs and renewals will be required.

Mr Bantoft had not answered the request to provide the Safety Warning Signs for both pumping stations and he will need to be reminded.

AGM 26.8

APPOINTMENTS for the current year ending 31st March 2027:

AGM 26.8.1 Chairman -Mr D R Abblitt proposed by PW and seconded by LS

AGM 26.8.2 Vice Chairman – Mr L R Smith proposed by DA and seconded by AW.

AGM 26.8.3 District Officer – Mr Leo Butler proposed by LS and seconded by DS at an annual fee of £3.250 together with mileage expenses raised to 60p per mile and other approved expenses.

AGM 26.8.4 Clerks – Mr John Chrisp to the 30th September 2026 proposed by DS and seconded by DA at a fee of £3,250 together with mileage expenses raised to 60p per mile and other approved expenses.

- Mr Paul Burrows of the Middle Level Commissioners from the 1st October 2026 to the 31st March 2027 at a fee to be agreed together with Mileage Expenses of 60p per mile and other approved expenses. All members present voted in favour of these appointments

AGM 26.9

BIODIVERSITY PLAN UPDATE.

No Report had been received from the Middle Level's Environment Officer.

Since nothing had been heard it was assumed that no changes had been made to the provision made within the Board's district.

AGM 26.10

AGM 26.10.1 RAMSEY COLTS FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT: The obstruction to the maintenance access strip had been removed so no formal application for a Byelaw Consent to maintain the structure at the Car Park is now necessary.

AGM 26.10.2 RAMSEY TOWN COUNCIL: The application to maintain the Skate Park at the Recreation Ground at Mill Lane was granted last year and Byelaw Consent was signed and dated the 2nd December 2025.

AGM 26.11

REGISTER OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Forms were signed by Members present.

AGM 26.12

RE-CONSTITUTION of BOARD MEMBERSHIP and ELECTION of MEMBERS for the 3 years beginning the 1st October 2026.

There are currently 6 Elected Members and no Members appointed by Huntingdonshire District Council since their periods of appointment expired at or about the last public election date on the 7th May and none of the Appointed Members have been re-elected. The Clerk has asked the Council for 3 newly Appointed Members likely to be the 3 newly elected local District Councillors for Ramsey and Bury, but the Board awaits the appointments.

The Clerk is pursuing the Legal Department of the Environment Agency who have produced and publicly advertised the new Scheme for the Re-Constitution of the Board and have recently pointed out to DEFRA, who must make the Statutory Order endorsing the Scheme, that the long awaited Order needs to be sealed very soon since the Board will otherwise need to comply with the Election Timetable beginning in July to put Members in place on the 1st October. There appears no good reason to do this if the first Elected Members will be appointed under the Order for a period of 3 years. The Clerk will continue to pursue the Environment Agency who in turn will pursue DEFRA.

All of the current serving ElectedMembers with the exception of Mr Peter Wagstaffe will be the 5 named Members under the Order. The HDC have agreed to appoint Mr Peter Wagstaffe as an Appointed Member after the Order is made.

The Council need to appoint 6 Members after the Order is made; normally, 3 locally appointed District Councillors. They will add Mr Peter Wagstaffe to the appointments, but this will leave them 2 short.

Mr Eric Butler who lost his seat on the Council recently has written to the Clerk asking whether he could be put forward to the Council as a person of good standing within the community to be appointed by the Council for 3 years and the Clerk has emailed the Council.

It was mentioned at the meeting that Mr Michael Smalley, a farm manager of Abbots Ripton Farming Ltd could become an Appointed Member. The Clerk will now contact the Council to see whether they will consider him as well.

AGM 26.13

INVESTMENT of SURPLUS on RATEPAYERS ACCOUNT.

No action should be taken in case we have to use part or all of this money for the Refurbishment of Lodes End Pump. The Board decided to await the response from Mr Bantoft of MLC before putting the money on deposit.

AGM 26.14

SERVICE AGREEMENT and TRANSITION of CLERKSHIP

The following management functions have been taken over by MLC:

(1) Financial administration.
(2) Insurance
(3) Electricity
(4) Website.

Since the Board has resolved not to pass the Clerkship to the MLC until the 1st October 2026, the above functions will be charged by the MLC under the ongoing service agreement for which bills will be raised appropriately. The MLC will bring to the EGM on the 23rd June the documents to be signed by the Board in relation to the fees and expenses to be paid by the Board for the services of the Clerk from the 1st October.

AGM 26.15

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There being no other business the meeting having commenced at 7 pm ended at 8.15 pm