UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Administered by:

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3rd June 2026

Dear Board Members

Upcoming meeting of the Board
Wednesday 10th June 2026

Please find overleaf the agenda for the meeting of the Board to be hosted at the Lamb & Flag, Welney PE14 9RB at 5.30pm on Wednesday 10th June 2026.

Itinerary:

2.45pm – Inspection

5.30pm – Meeting

7.30pm - Meal

As you'll be aware, we administer thirty Boards that mostly all meet within similar date ranges. Thank you to the majority of Members who already confirm their attendance proactively.

Please help us manage your Board effectively by **proactively letting Gemma know as soon as possible, by telephone or email, if you can attend the meeting, or not, or if you're uncertain.** This results in less abortive time and cost to the running of all Boards.

It is important that we have early confirmation whether or not the Board will be quorate.

Yours truly

P BURROWS, FCIWEM C.WEM CEnv

Clerk to the Board

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Wednesday 10th June 2026 – 5.30pm

Lamb & Flag, Welney PE14 9RB

Agenda:

Item No	*Topic*	*Format*	*Lead*
1	Welcome & apologies	Verbal	Chair
2	Declarations of Interest	Verbal	Chair
3	Minutes of last meetings and matters arising	Pages 3 - 19	Chair
4	Constitution & Membership	Pages 20 - 22	Clerk
5	Clerk's Report	Pages 23 - 27	Clerk
6	Environment Officer's Report	To follow	Clerk
7	Consulting Engineer's Reports	Pages 28 - 35	Clerk or Engineer
8	Chairman's items	Verbal	Chair
9	Health & Safety	Pages 36 - 45	Chair
10	District Foreman's Report	Page 46	DO
11	Finance Committee Report	Verbal	Chair
12	Governance • Accounts Return for 2024/2025 • Auditors report for 2024/2025 (Link) • Annual Governance Statement	Pages 47 - 49 Pages 50 - 54 Page 55	Clerk
13	Finance Report: looking back • Payments 2025 • Annual Accounts and Finance papers 2025/2026	Pages 56 - 57 Page 58 -59 Pages 60 - 64	Clerk
14	Finance Report: looking forward • Rating Estimates for 2024/2025 • Agricultural Drainage Rates and Special Levy requirements or 2026/2027	Pages 65 - 66 Page 67 Page 68	Clerk
15	Date of Next Meeting Wednesday 20th January 2027	Verbal	Chair
16	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.)

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Upwell Internal Drainage Board
held at the Lamb & Flag, Welney on Wednesday 21st January 2026.

PRESENT

K Goodger (Chair)	P Hartley
P Clabon (Vice Chair)	S Hartley
G Bliss	A Quail
S Calton	J Quail
C Crofts	C Rose
R Gladwin	

Miss Samantha Ablett representing the Clerk and Mr Carl Nunn the District Foreman were in attendance.

The Chair enquired whether ALL Board members were happy for the meeting to be recorded. All members were in agreement.

Miss Ablett asked all Board members to sign the attendance sheet and referred to the training schedule attached, which recorded the ADA training videos that had been viewed by members. She reported that not all members who had viewed the videos had advised the Middle Level Offices and this was important as details had to be included in the IDB1 return and submitted to DEFRA. She asked all members to mark on the schedule the videos they had watched so a record could be kept.

Welcome and Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from M Fairey, Ms J French, W Gladwin, G Gowler & A Kew.

The Chair welcomed Mr Gary Roberts as a Flood and Coastal Risk Management Advisor to the Environment Agency.

B.2179 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.

The Vice Chair declared an interest in Item 6 in the agenda regarding unconsent works.

B.2180 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 22nd July 2025 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.2181 Matters Arising

Miss Ablett reported that it had been considered best to wait until the easement had been completed and all paperwork received before cancelling the electrification and requesting a refund from UK Power Networks. She advised this was to ensure UK Power Networks had no reason to cancel the easement, in view of it taking so long to be finalised.

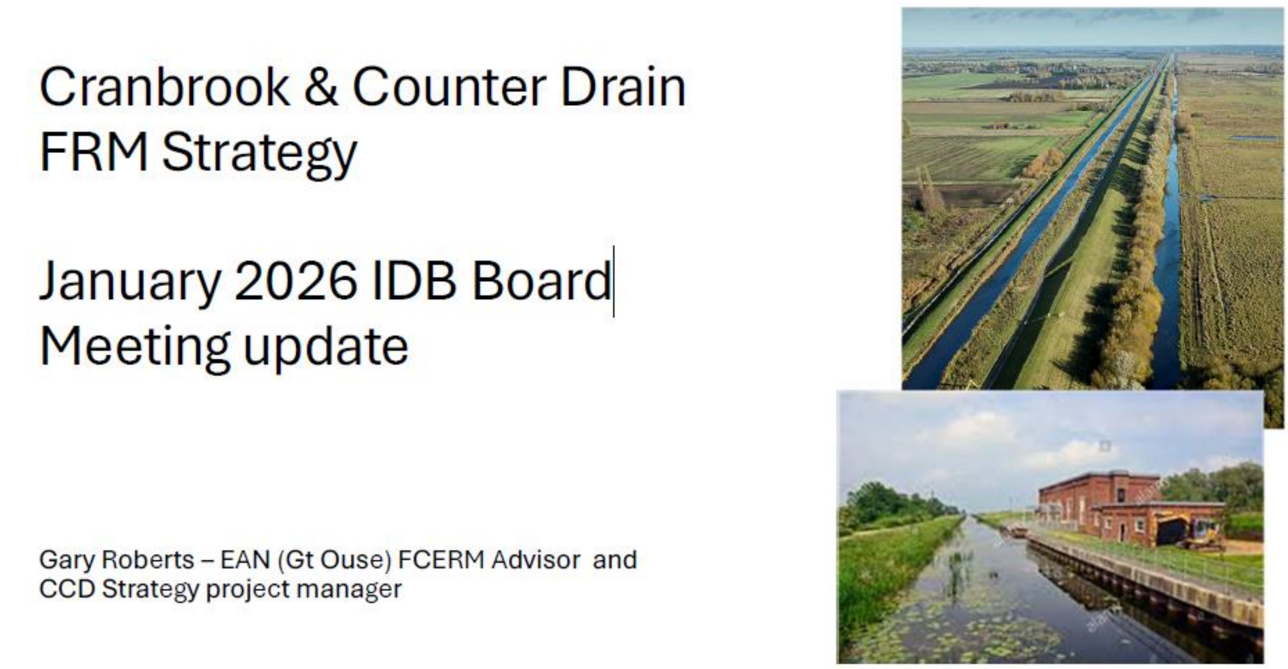
Miss Ablett reported the solicitors had been contacted again regarding the easement agreement and it was hoped the agreement would be with the Chair and Vice Chair for signature soon. She added that UK Power Networks had now been contacted requesting the refund

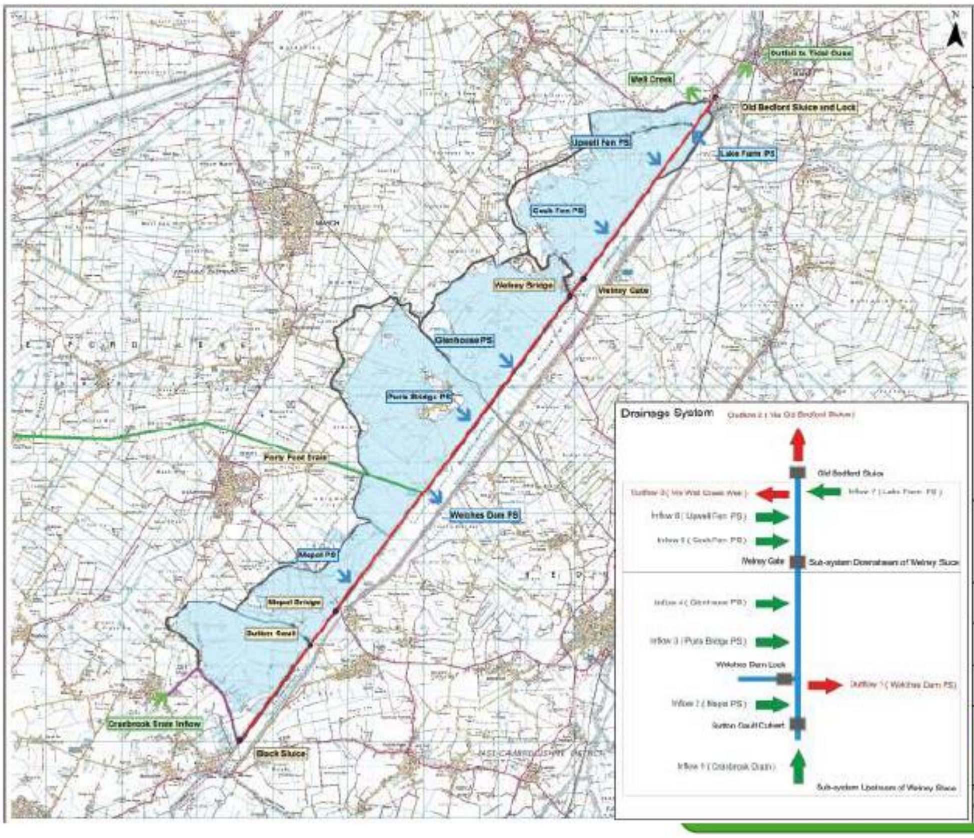
She added the M & E consulting engineer had advised that he had tried to sell the control panel but had not had any interest and considered it would have to be advertised to a wider audience. Unfortunately, with all the works under the Tranche 2b funding needing to be completed by 31st March 2026, he had not yet had the opportunity to do this.

The Chair requested that the M & E consulting engineer make arrangements for the sale of the control panel to be advertised as he knows all the specifics. Miss Ablett advised that any advertisement would not be placed until after March 2026.

B.2182 CCD Strategy

Mr Roberts made a presentation of, Viz:





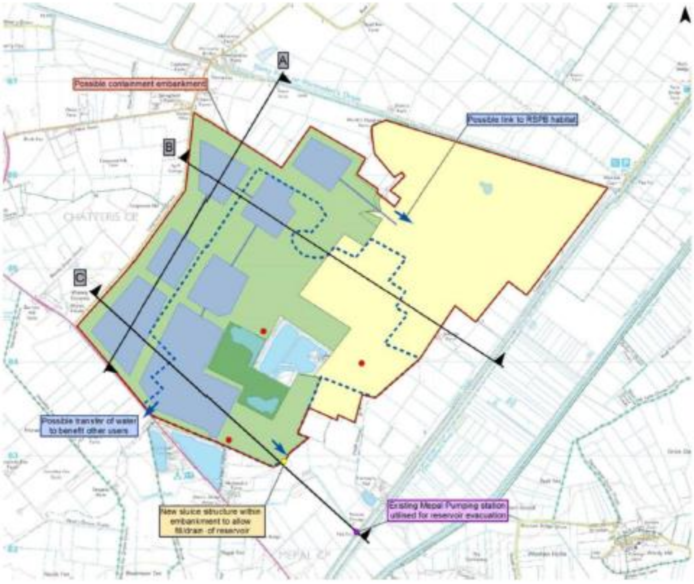
- Old Bedford Sluice

- Welches Dam

- Mepal Pumping Station

Overview of Preferred Strategic Option – Water Storage Proposals

- Following the extraction of minerals from the area the vision is to utilise the restored land for storage of water from flood events. When not flooded the land would be available for various land uses. During times of flood the land would be inundated to varying depths depending on the intensity of the flood event.
- Key objective is to create a more efficient and cost:effective **water** management system and reduce pumping to provide multi-benefits (flood risk; water resources; environmental)



Cranbrook & Counter Drain FRM Strategy

Cranbrook & Counter Drain FRM Strategy

Update on recent work – focused work on development of water storage in minerals extraction areas (Block Fen)

- JBA/Motts Consultants (modelling work):
    - updated the Counter Drain/Old Bedford hydraulic model including some detailed representation of Sutton & Mepal IDB (Mepal Pstn and main drain to Crooked Drain). Confirmed volumes for water storage assumptions
    - Groundwater model established for analysis of storage areas (mineral company workings/restoration
- Mott Macdonald ltd:
    - Water storage area volume/capacity and engineering options for water storage
    - Land use restoration proposals
    - Water storage "enabling works" – high level options for connecting storage areas
    - Planning strategy
- Consultation and engagement with Tarmac regarding their Western Extension (Phase 2) planning application (2026)

- Old Bedford Sluice

- Welches Dam

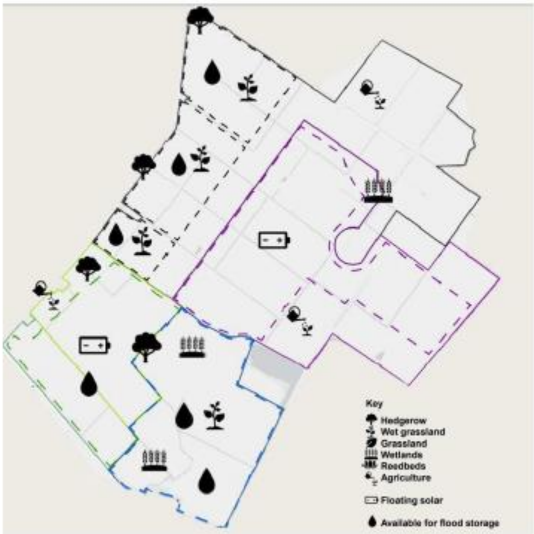
- Mepal Pumping Station

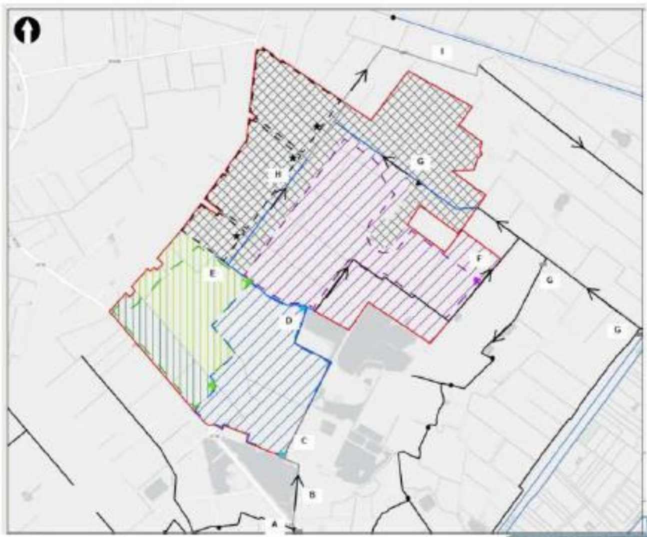
2025/26 (ongoing)

- Commenced master planning work to inform the review C&P M&W Plan update (commencing Jul 2026) – updating the EA vision and principles document
- Ongoing Pre-app consultation and engagement with Tarmac as they progress their planning application through 2026

Cranbrook/Counter Drain Strategy

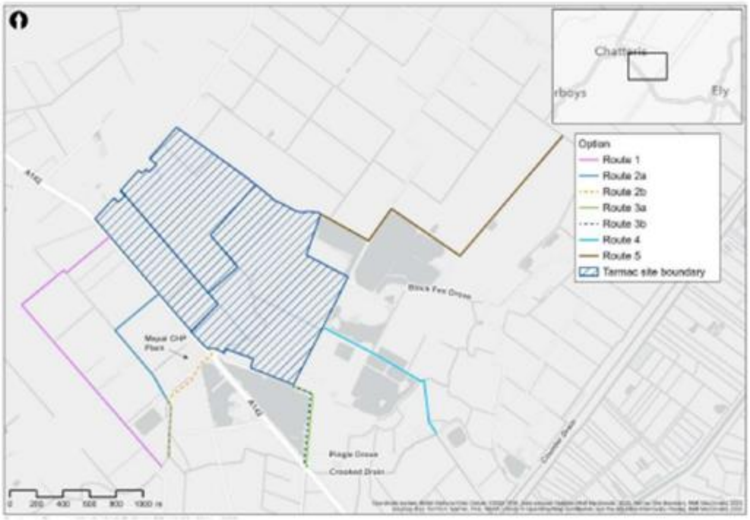
Storage options and after-use





- Storage options considering functionality and phasing of workings and water management
- Restoration and land use for multi-benefits in addition to FRM.
- Calculator tool for volumes from restoration proposals (contours)

Cranbrook/Counter Drain Strategy



Enabling works

- High level options considering connection of water storage areas with IDB system.
- Focused on Tarmac (Phase1/2) land as most developed in terms of restoration proposals for water storage.
- Appraisal as routes for water in and/or water out of storage areas.
- Links with planning strategy as these may be considered outside of minerals planning approvals as outside of developer "red-line" boundaries.

Cranbrook & Counter Drain FRM Strategy

Cranbrook/Counter Drain Strategy

Summary updates on strategy preferred option – water storage

- Storage volume needed to provide equivalent capacity of Welches Dam. Key assumption was for storage to provide equivalent to **two 4% (1 in 25) AEP** events in succession for resilience to manage risk of successive wet years. Current design standard of service of Welches Dam equivalent to 4% (1in25) AEP design flood:
  - CCD Strategy 2008 - 10.8 million cubic metres of flood storage capacity for future Climate Change assumptions
  - 2018 update (Motts) - 16 million cubic metres is needed for future Climate Change assumptions
  - 2023 modelling (Motts) – **17.4 million cubic metres** is needed for future Climate Change assumptions
- Current optioneering work (Motts 2024) has been investigating storage volumes provided by the restoration proposals of mineral extraction. To provide productive land use several restoration proposals have been considered. Whilst the assumption for land use is to be compatible with water storage, this has not been tested and only assumed. Therefore, some storage volume is lost to account for the land use and additional benefits;
- The best performing restoration after-use provides approximately **10.1 million cubic metres** of water storage capacity. All restoration options provide the equivalent design capacity for Welches Dam (8.7 million cubic metres) but the resilience/over design storage capacity (i.e. doubling);
- A benefit assessment for additional benefits (non-FCERM) has been carried out (Motts 2024) to identify quantifiable monetary benefits in addition to the FCERM benefits of providing storage equivalent to Welches Dam;

Cranbrook & Counter Drain FRM Strategy

Cranbrook & Counter Drain FRM Strategy

Overview of Preferred Strategic Option (2018 review)

- The PSO (Option 4(c)) is to maintain/improve the current service level in the long term **by developing flood storage solutions** as after use of proposed local mineral abstraction sites.
- Replacing or reducing the reliance on Welches Dam pumping station through introduction of flood storage would provide a more sustainable long term flood risk management solution for the area that can bring wider social and environmental benefits

2025 updates on wider strategy preferred option

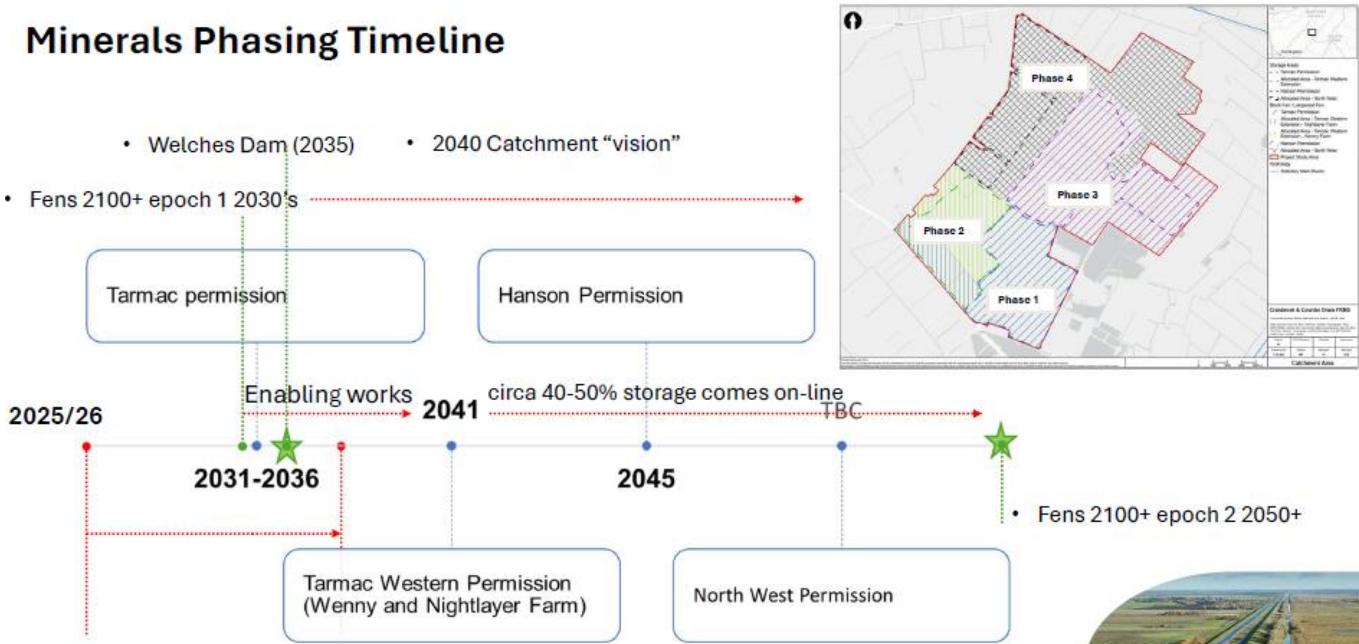
- Welches Dam PS will require significant capital investment **earlier than original strategy assumed** (<2035). Current Sustain SOS project (to 2032/33) has funding challenge (PF <100%). **Future capital replacement will affordability challenges under current PF rules;**
- Whilst there is positive communication from minerals companies that mineral extraction and restoration could happen quicker, provision of storage in lieu of Welches Dam will take **longer than originally assumed.**
- Anglian Water's Fens Reservoir introduces opportunities for CCD strategy but increases priority and requirement to deliver alternative catchment management options sooner than planned. Although not by much!
- CCD project is defining a 2040's vision for water and environmental management to incorporate the above with wider catchment interests (Old Bedford, Ouse Washes).
- Therefore, a revision to the original CCD strategy preferred option is required; introducing an interim phase (2040's CC Epoch) to account for above and align with Fens 2100+ adaptive pathways approach.

- Old Bedford Sluice

- Welches Dam

- Mepal Pumping Station

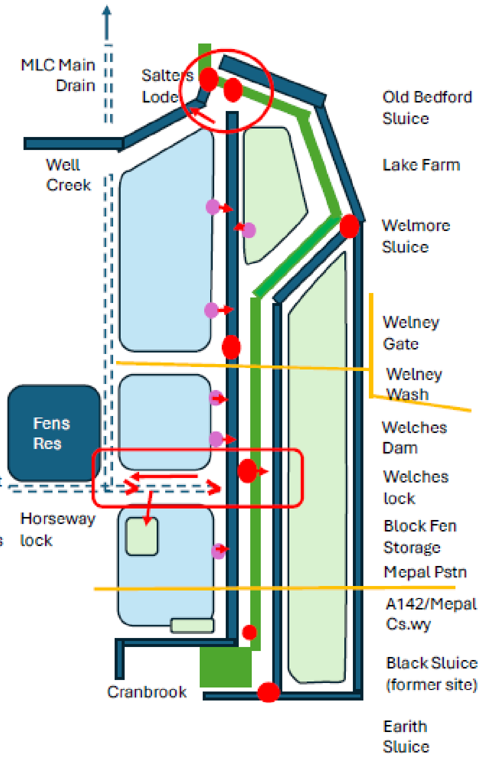
Minerals Phasing Timeline



- AWS ltd Fens Reservoir, operational by 2038

CCD Strategy – alternative pumped managed system

- Options are being considered in discussion with AP, Ops and MEICA colleagues for managing the system without Welches Dam. Consultation with the 3x IDB's (Sutton & Mepal, Manea & Welney, Upwell) over options has also been carried out (Dec 2024), **with positive feedback**.
- The emerging option includes the following: (Note: this works with/without storage options coming forward)
- **Old Bedford Sluice** – current Sustain SOS project has been identified for capital refurbishment within the capital programme (2027-2032 t.b.c). This presents an ideal opportunity to enhance Old Bedford Sluice to repair the Tidal defence (Lock/Sluice) and include pumping capacity. Key assumptions and benefits include:
  - Relocate pumped outfall replace Welches Dam PS (10 cumecs);
  - Improved navigation from Tidal River to Old Bedford – most cost-effective option. Will need to consider practicality of link to MLC navigation at Well Creek (nice to have).
  - Water resources improvements – abstraction from Tidal River for water supply to Old Bedford which currently relies on limited gravity inflow through Sluice. Also deals with siltation issues.
- **Old Bedford/Counter Drain channel conveyance.** Major desilting of Old Bedford/Counter Drain channel. Key assumptions and benefits include:
  - Restoration of channel capacity (volume) to enhance storage in system. Restoring "design" channel capacity lost due to siltation and lack of maintenance. **Needed anyway if Welches Dam retained;**
  - Improved environmental habitat management. Lack of maintenance deemed harmful to SAC designated species (Spined Loach) therefore restoration will contribute to managing designated species and improved status; Other WFD and environmental enhancements, protected species mitigation measures;
  - Maintained navigation along Old Bedford river
  - Improved water resources conveyance (summer water level management - interim & linked to longer term water storage proposals
- **Options compared with retaining Welches Dam Pumping Station and discharge to Ouse Washes**

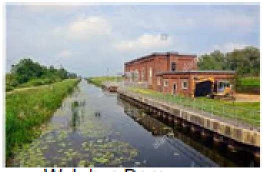


Cranbrook & Counter Drain FRM Strategy

Work planned going forward (2026 onwards)

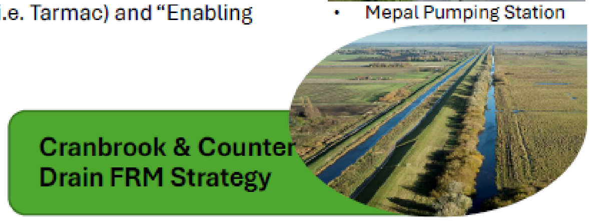
- CCD strategy (water storage):
  - Master planning and EA Water Storage "Principles" document update;
  - Consultation with Tarmac;
  - leading to C&P MW Plan review (commencing July-2026).
- Old Bedford Sluice & Pumping Station project Business Case – 2026/27 to 2027/28;
- Counter Drain/Old Bedford Restoration project Business Case – 2026/27 to 2027/28;
- Increase consultation & engagement with IDBs over:
  - Water storage proposals and system changes.
  - Linking with IDB consultations over minerals planning applications (i.e. Tarmac) and "Enabling Works"

- Old Bedford Sluice



- Welches Dam

- Mepal Pumping Station



Cranbrook & Counter Drain FRM Strategy

Thank You

Any Questions?

B.2183 Constitution & Membership

The Board considered the report and noted the Election term ending 31st October 2026.

B.2184 Clerk's Report

Miss Ablett provided a verbal report:

IDB Fund

2025/26 has begun how 2024/25 ended with delivery being the primary focus. We were successful in securing approximately £4.5m of grant for a number of IDB Fund (Tranche 2b) submissions and the administration and delivery of these commitments has been a primary focus particular for staff in M&E, Operations, Environment & Ecology and Finance, meaning some 'business as usual' activity has been impacted:

- Mobile Pumps – Phase 2 - £1.2m
- St Germans Pumping Station Resilience Phase 2 - £1m
- Bevill's Pond Resilience - £0.3m (MLC and Sawtry IDB)
- Asset Resilience – Pumps and Channels - £2m (MLC and IDBs)

This fund, coming with less constraints than FCRM grant-in-aid, is enabling us to think and invest differently. In my view we need 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. 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 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.

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.

Electricity Service

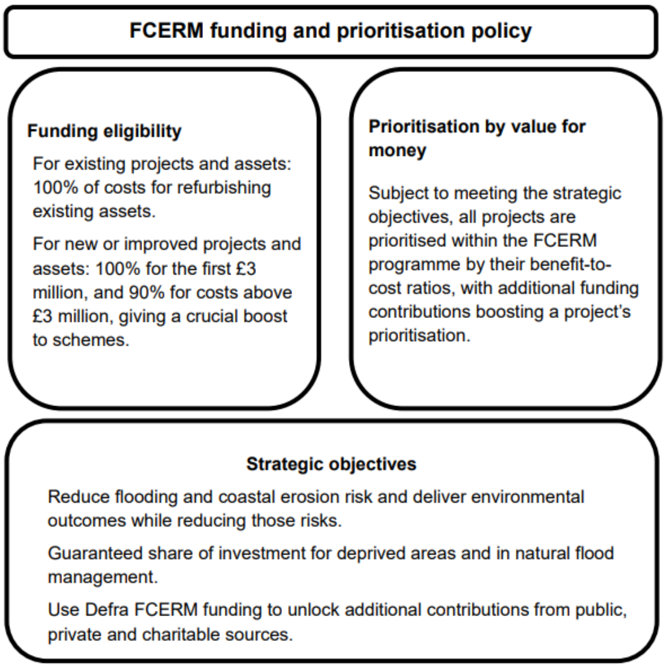
The 12-month group (MLC and IDBs) contract with EDF Energy ceased on 30th September 2025. This contract was facilitated by brokers GEAB.

A sub-Committee of MLC Board Members and IDB Chairman 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.

Defra Flood Funding Policy

Following consultation earlier in the year, Defra has finalised its new funding policy and responded to the consultation. We provided and published a comprehensive response.

This policy is for capital flood grant and goes live from 1st April 2026.



Key points for MLC and IDBs:

a) Refurbishment is a significant fix on an asset that can't be addressed by routine maintenance alone. Further guidance is expected on this aspect.
b) When applying for Defra FCERM funding for refurbishment of existing assets, asset owners will need to demonstrate that they have undertaken whole life asset management and routine maintenance.

c) As partnership contributions increase, the amount of Defra FCERM funding needed decreases, leading to higher project prioritisation. The more significant the partnership contribution, the larger the likelihood of boosting prioritisation.
d) The ‘2012’ rule has been removed meaning new development can be included within benefit assessments. We will commission an economic and benefits refresh across the Middle Level to update our base information.
e) The need to demonstrate a reduction in flood risk band as a result of works has been removed.
f) Defra acknowledge concerns from other risk management authorities that they are at a disadvantage compared to the Environment Agency. The policy states that all risk management authorities should have equal access to FCERM funding.

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. 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 we 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.

One of the key issues the research will be assessing is the impact that special levies to IDBs is having on Local Authorities. This issue is being promoted by a Local Government Association 'IDB Levey Special Interest Group'.

Around 40 councils across England are working together to lobby the Government for reform to the funding system that supports the vital work of Internal Drainage Boards. IDBs are primarily funded through drainage rates charged directly on the occupiers of agricultural land within each drainage district and a special levy on district and unitary councils on behalf of the non-agricultural land within each district. Each council primarily funds the cost of the special levy through a combination of central government grants, their share of business rates and revenue from council tax levied on local properties. Due to rising costs in such things as electricity that power the pumping stations at times of flooding and sustained heavy rain, the special levy amount has been increasingly significantly in recent years.

On the evening of Tuesday 2nd September 2025 there was a parliamentary meeting of the LGA's IDB Levy Special Interest Group. The meeting was attended by the leaders and portfolio holders from a number of special levy paying local authorities at the House of Commons alongside several members of parliament. ADA and IDBs were also represented by Robert Caudwell, Michael Sly, Daniel Withnall (Black Sluice IDB), and Paul Burrows (Middle Level Commissioners).

Reflecting on the meeting within the ADA Gazette, Paul Burrows said:

"It's pleasing that Local Authorities and MPs appreciate the criticality of the work the Internal Drainage Board sector play in enabling prosperous local communities. After all, every other Council service relies on keeping homes, business, land and infrastructure dry. We need to be mindful of potential unintended consequences within any call for funding reform, particularly the special levies that Councils raise on our behalf. It is important that the IDB Costs & Funding Research commissioned by Defra gets under the skin of the issues and makes considered and well-evaluated recommendations."

<u>IDB1</u>

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 have on us in terms of governance and responsibilities.

Whilst we can derive the majority of the financial and non-financial information on behalf of our administered IDBs, there are questions where we require information from the Boards directly. To assist Sam Ablett in preparing the form for return, please by 1st January 2026 can each Chairman respond with information covering questions:

26 for IDBs that don't use Morgan Lakey for their Operational services

27 for IDBs that don't use Morgan Lakey for their Operational services

32 -36 The H&S questions

38 – 40 The training and professional development questions

67- 75 The public engagement questions

<u>Unconsented Works</u>

Miss Ablett reported It had been brought to the Middle Level Commissioners' attention that the Vice Chair did not complete the necessary consent application for the pipework for 4 crossings across the

Board's drain when his reservoir was being constructed. She added the Vice Chair should have been aware of this and as such the matter could result in the Vice Chair being removed from the Board, as documented in the Board's Code of Conduct.

Miss Ablett reported the matter had been discussed with the Vice Chair, who had apologised and provided an explanation as to how this oversight came about. She advised that in view of this and the likelihood that consent would have been granted, the Middle Level Commissioners had recommended that no further action be taken regarding the removal of the Vice Chair from the Board.

Miss Ablett advised the work would remain unconsented as this removed the Board setting a precedent for granting consents retrospectively.

She reported the Vice Chair had attended the Chair's meeting so was aware of the enforcement procedures the Middle Level Commissioners has in place. She added that these procedures have proven successful in recovering sums for both Boards and the Commissioners, however it was very difficult to enforce matters if consents were granted retrospectively.

She advised that granting consent retrospectively could have greater implications going forward should any developers become aware of this.

Miss Ablett explained the Vice Chair would have all the risks attached to the unconsented works, should any problems arise in the future, but as the Board had been made aware of the installation of the pipes they now had the responsibility to ensure the District Foreman and any contractors were also advised of these when undertaking any works. If any damage was caused to the pipes due to negligence this would be a matter for the Board and would be at their expense.

The Vice Chair reported for clarity that the reservoir itself had full consent from the Middle Level Commissioners, the EA had granted an irrigation licence, and he had employed an agent to deal with all matters relating to the project. The problem came about when the ring main was installed for the four crossings over the Board's drain. Unfortunately, the four pipes were installed in the time it was taking the agent to complete the necessary paperwork.

Miss Ablett enquired whether members were happy to approve the recommendations made by the Middle Level Commissioners in that the works remain unconsented and the Vice Chair is not removed from the Board.

Members considered the recommendations made to be the best course of action.

RESOLVED

That the recommendations made by the Middle Level Commissioners be approved.

B.2185 Environment Officers' Report

Miss Ablett provided a verbal report:

1) The launch of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Cambridgeshire (LNRS), which formally sets the priorities for nature conservation across our region, was significantly delayed in 2025 but was finally published on the 23rd December. IDBs have a statutory duty to have regard for the objectives of the LNRS so the IDB Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPS) are necessarily centred around

the priorities the LNRS. The final drafts of the BAPS are therefore being drafted and will be available for review very soon.

2) The Old Croft River is a real ecological asset for the Board and should be a focus of efforts for enhancements projects in the BAP. Suggestions for projects to achieve this will be sought from the Board in the coming weeks.

3) The draft Environmental Impact Assessment for the penstock opposite Delph House is now complete and will be issued for Board approval prior to publication for 30-day public consultation.

4) It is noted that the standard operating procedure for desilting and vegetation management have been provided to the current contractor which is great. Please note that adherence to SOPS is mandatory for all those working for and on behalf of the IDB.

5) We expect to be surveying some scrub around a badger sett with a view to a clearance plan soon and await the ESR to formally instruct the work.

6) From April 2026, the standard Environmental Performance Indicators will be launched consistent way. This will help to ensure that any areas of environmental risk are flagged promptly and the successes of the Board in achieving biodiversity enhancements are recognised. The following deliverables / actions are some of those that may form part of the assessment:

   - A current channel categorisation map and maintenance plan (flail mowing and desilting), with reasoning completed, for review and approval at the Board meeting
   - From 2027, the previous years' maintenance record available for review
   - The annual schedule of works reviewed by the Ecol. Dept. and survey requirements / mitigations highlighted ahead of board Approval / ESRs submitted
   - Biodiversity budget set and defined as part of Board meeting
   - Attendance at a biodiversity training / information day each year
   - Environmental review completed including BAP review with 75% or more objectives on target for completion on time
   - No net loss of open watercourse

7) We look forward to meeting with the Chair, Vice Chair and DO to discuss the above in the next few weeks

8) Please look out for the first refreshed edition of "Life on the Edge" environmental newsletter for IDBs which is in planning and will be published in March and October each year.

9) A review of Environmental and waste permits is required and will be planned with the Chair and VC in the coming months.

RESOLVED

That the Environment Report be approved.

B.2186 Consulting Engineers' Reports

The Board considered the reports of the Consulting Engineers.

Enforcement and Compliance Overview

Miss Ablett referred to the Chief Engineer's comments regarding the Middle Level Commissioners' enforcement and compliance overview.

She advised the Chief Engineer had recommended that the Board authorise the Chair and Vice Chair to take decisions on enforcement action on behalf of the Board, having taken advice from Middle Level Commissioner officers. She added it was also recommended that the Chair and Vice Chair would engage other Board members as they saw appropriate and determine whether a Special Meeting of the Board would be needed on a risk and complexity basis.

Miss Ablett enquired whether Members would approve the Chief Engineer's recommendation.

Members approved the recommendations made by the Chief Engineer and authorised the Chair and Vice Chair to take decisions on enforcement action on behalf of the Board.

Capital Works

Miss Ablett referred to the Chief Engineer's comments relating to capital work and the proposed replacement of control panels at both Cock Fen and Nordelph pumping stations, for which £50,000 had been allocated in the Environment Agency's capital programme for 2025-2026.

She advised that a business case was being completed to get the funding approved, but there was a high risk that the approval may delay the delivery of works and added that EA approval was anticipated early this year.

Miss Ablett enquired whether the Board would approve this work starting ahead of receiving grant approval so that Consulting Engineers could get orders placed but noting that in the unlikely event that the funding application was not successful, the Board would need to fund the work.

Mr Bliss hoped that if the M & E consulting engineer was able to sell the control panel this would provide the Board with further funds and the Board still had funds from the public works loan. He considered the Board should go ahead with the works.

The Chair advised that as the Board was not electrifying Cock Fen pumping station and if a new diesel engine was installed the Board would need to change the control panel. He suggested that if the Board agree to the works commencing, before approval for the grant is received, that the M & E consulting engineer should be asked to obtain an updated quote to ensure the costs do not significantly exceed the £50,000.

Members agreed this was the best course of action.

Mechanical & Electrical (M&E)

Miss Ablett referred to the M & E consulting engineer's report and his comments regarding the age of the pumping stations, pumps and control panels, which gives rise to concerns regarding reliability.

She reminded the Board that over the past couple of years the Engineer had been compiling and verifying pumping station key dates to allow easier identification of equipment age and the need for refurbishment to assist in developing an investment plan for asset refurbishment or replacement.

Miss Ablett drew the Board's attention to the key health indicators and the critical area of concern being the pumps, some of which range from 13 to 55 years old with last refurbishments ranging from 10 to 19 years ago.

She reported that the M & E consulting engineer strongly advises the Board to consider the development of a pump refurbishment/replacement plan for the pumps that are overdue refurbishment and added having a plan in place helps to secure further grant funding when it is available.

The Chair reported that he had discussed a proposed refurbishment plan with the Vice Chair and they considered it would be appropriate for the Board to develop a plan to try and refurbish one pump a year.

He advised that based on the M & E consulting engineer's report the Board should refurbish pump 2 at Bedlam Bridge pumping station this coming year and consider refurbishing the pump at either Nordelph or Upwell Fen pumping station next year. He added that by the next meeting the Board will have some idea of the costs involved to help develop a plan.

Miss Ablett referred to the M & E consulting engineer's comments relating to each of the pumping stations and of the issues he considers need addressing.

She advised the Board that the Commissioners' M & E department is extremely busy delivering all the Tranche 2b works on behalf of the IDB's and the Commissioners so it was unlikely any of the issues raised would be undertaken until the Spring, at the earliest, even if the Board wished to proceed.

Miss Ablett also referred to the problems with the electricity meter at Nordelph pumping station, which has been broken for over ten years and which energy suppliers were unable to fix due to ampage requirements. She reported this may be resulting in excessive electricity charges and it appears the only way this could be rectified was by installing a current transformer cabinet, which would be at a cost to the Board.

She added that she had spoken with the M & E consulting engineer regarding the works that he considers necessary at the pumping stations, together with the cost of a current transformer cabinet and he will update his report for the June meeting so works can be discussed in detail, if that is acceptable to Members.

Miss Ablett enquired whether the Board wished for the M & E consulting engineer to provide the details required for all M & E works for consideration at a meeting of the Board's Finance Committee to be arranged in May, in advance of the meeting in June. Members agreed this would be the best course of action.

RESOLVED

That the reports be approved.

That the Chair and Vice Chair be authorised to take decisions on enforcement action on behalf of the Board.

That the M & E consulting engineer provide the following information to be discussed at the Board's next finance committee meeting: (date to be arranged)

a) An updated cost of the control panels at Cock Fen pump 2 at Nordelph pumping stations

b) An estimate of the cost of refurbishing Bedlam Bridge pumping station and an estimate of all the other pumps at the other pumping stations, to allow a realistic plan to be developed

c) An estimate for the installation of a current transformer cabinet at Nordelph pumping station

d) An estimate of the costs relating to the recommendations for the repairs at Upwell Fen, Cock Fen and Nordelph pumping stations, shown in this his report

That a pump refurbishment plan be developed for the pumps that are overdue refurbishment. Starting with the pump at Bedlam Bridge pumping station and then with the hope of refurbishing one pump each year

That the Board proceed with the Control Panel replacements at Cock Fen and Nordelph pumping stations, subject to the costs not significantly exceeding the £50,000 allocated, accepting risk that GiA funding may not be awarded.

B.2187 Health & Safety

The Chair reported that a health and safety visit by AW Safety Ltd, had taken place the previous day and the District Foreman had taken the inspector around the district. He added that he was aware the signage was still outstanding and he had previously been advised by COPE Safety Management that the Middle Level Commissioners were dealing with this. He added that he was waiting for the report from the recent visit and assured the Board that, with their approval, any matters raised that required addressing would be dealt with.

Members agreed for the Chair to take any necessary action.

Miss Ablett advised she would make enquiries regarding the signage.

B.2188 District Foreman's Report

The Board noted and approved the District Foreman's Report.

The Chair reported that the District Foreman was completing monthly timesheets for the Middle Level Commissioners as his salary was now paid monthly, but he had asked him to continue preparing weekly reports for both him and the Vice Chair information and approval.

B.2189 Finance Committee Report

The Chair reported there had been no committee meeting since the last Board meeting.

B.2190 Finance Report

Finance officer's review and key messages

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

Budget Monitoring

The Board considered and approved the Budget Monitoring forecast up to 31st March 2026.

Fees, Remuneration & Subscriptions:

District Labour Fee

Miss Ablett reported this item was usually discussed at the summer meeting but as it related to the year from April 2026 to March 2027, she considered it better to be discussed at the winter meeting as this would prevent payment from having to be back dated.

The Board gave consideration to the District Labour fees for the Board's employee for 2026/2027.

Miss Ablett advised that the Board had previously resolved to increase the District Foreman's wages in accordance with the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award. Mr Gladwin considered the board should continue MLC pay award, this was agreed by all the members.

RESOLVED

> That the District Foreman's wages for 2026/2027 be increased in accordance with the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award.

ADA subscription

Miss Ablett reported that ADA had increased the subscription by 5% for 2026, from £1,039 to £1,091. She advised the Chair had approved the payment and enquired whether Members were in agreement with the Chair's actions.

RESOLVED

> That the Chair's actions regarding payment of the increased ADA subscription for 2026 be approved.

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. This is offset by a contribution received by Middle Level Commissioners, the nett amount paid in 2024/2025 was £44,139.

The precept for 2023/2024 was £60,520.59.

B.2191 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

> That next Meeting of the Board be held on Wednesday 10th June 2026 at the Lamb & Flag, Welney.
>
> 2.45pm Inspection
> 5.30pm Meeting
> 7pm Meal

B.2192 Any Other Business

Mr Paul Hartley advised that he had attended the meeting in July and asked for this to be recorded.

That a letter of thanks for all her work on behalf of the Board be sent to Polly Tombleson of the Middle Level Commissioners.

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**	**4**
Meeting:	**UPWELL IDB**	**Subject:**	**CONSTITUTION & MEMBERSHIP**
Date:	**Wednesday 10th 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	14			7
Actual	13	2 FDC 3KLWN	18	
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	S Calton	Nominee of ratepayer (Fred Hartley Estates Ltd)	
2	P Clabon	Ratepayer	Vice-Chair & District officer
3	R Gladwin	Ratepayer	
4	W Gladwin	Nominee of Ratepayer (Barry Scott)	
5	K Goodger	Ratepayer	Chair & District Officer
6	R Gott	Ratepayer	
7	G Gowler	Ratepayer	
8	P Hartley	Nominee of Ratepayer – (Frank Hartley & Sons)	
9	S Hartley	Nominee of Ratepayer – (Frank Hartley & Sons)	
10	A Kew	Nominee of Ratepayer - (Waldersey Farms Ltd)	
11	A Quail	Ratepayer	
12	J Quail	Nominee of Ratepayer – (Scott Oldroyd & Co)	
13	M Fairey	Nominee of Ratepayer (Alderney Livestock Co Ltd)	

14	G Bliss	Ratepayer	

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	C Crofts	BCKLWN	Councillor
2	J French	FDC	Councillor
3	J Kirk	BCKLWN	Councillor
4	C Marks	FDC	Councillor
5	C Rose	BCKLWN	Councillor

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

2. Attendance

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

Elected Members

No	Name	21/1/2026	4/6/2025	22/1/2025	31/5/2024
1	S Calton	Present	Present	Apologies	Present
2	P Clabon	Present	Present	Present	Present
3	R Gladwin	Present	Present	Present	Apologies
4	W Gladwin	Apologies	Present	Present	Apologies
5	K Goodger	Present	Present	Present	Present
6	R Gott		Present	Present	Apologies
7	G Gowler	Apologies	Present	Present	Present
8	P Hartley	Present	Present	Present	Apologies
9	S Hartley	Present	Present	Present	Apologies
10	A Kew	Apologies	Present	Present	Apologies
11	A Quail	Present	Present	Present	Apologies
12	J Quail	Present	Present	Present	Present
13	M Fairey	Apologies	N/A	N/A	N/A
14	G Bliss	Present	Present	Present	Present

Attendance at Chairs Meetings

No	Name	5/12/2025	6/12/2024	6/10/2023	13/12/2022
1	K Goodger	Apologies – VC present	Apologies	Apologies	

Appointed Members (current and previous)

No	Name (Council)	21/1/2026	4/6/2025	22/1/2025	31/5/2024
1	C Crofts (BCKLWN)	Present	Apologies	Apologies	Present

2	J French (FDC)	Apologies	Apologies		Apologies
3	J Kirk (BCKLWN)			Present	Apologies
4	C Marks (FDC)			Apologies	Apologies
5	C Rose (BCKLWN)		Present		Present

3. Elections, vacancies & appointments

3.1 To consider the appointment of a Chair and Vice Chair

3.2 In appointing the Chairman and Vice Chairman, the Board is expected to follow the principles within the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, there is a strong presumption that no individual should serve in any one post for more than ten years. The tenure of the current Chairman is 11 years, and the tenure of the current Vice Chairman is 11 years.

3.3 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.

3.4 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		**Item No:**	**5**
Meeting:	**UPWELL IDB**	**Subject:**	**CLERK'S REPORT**
Date:	**Wednesday 10th June 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Paul Burrows**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Note the content of the report and feedback on items as appropriate.
B. The Board is asked to delegate the approval and publication of new and/or updated policies to the Clerk.
C. Ensure their District Officers keep records to enable completion of Questions 26 & 27 within the IDB1 Annual Report to Defra.

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

1. MLC Overview

Delivery has been the primary focus within 2025/26. We were successful in securing approximately £4.5m of grant for several IDB Fund (Tranche 2b) submissions and the administration and delivery of these commitments has been a primary focus, particularly for staff in M&E, Operations, Environment & Ecology and Finance, meaning some 'business as usual' activity has been impacted.

This fund, coming with fewer constraints than FCRM grant-in-aid, has enabled us to think and invest differently. We are starting to change gear in terms of our business model and philosophy to become more commercially minded within the boundaries of a not-for-profit public authority. At St Germans Pumping Station for example, we now are starting to gear our infrastructure, turning our assets from feeling like a financial burden into engines that drive our business more efficiently. Whilst there remains work to do within our improvement and modernisation journey, our organisational foundations are now in a much healthier position to build from, albeit our base staff capacity and capability are a constraint to what needs to be, and could be, achieved. We will need to identify and nurture partnerships not only with traditional partners but with the innovators within our local agricultural and the development sectors.

It is also clear that MLC and the IDBs need to reduce our collective reliance on government grant in aid funding and highland water payments. Whilst we remain focussed on influencing and informing policy shifts, MLC and IDB assets are of the age that we cannot avoid the scale of capital works ahead of us that will cost hundreds of millions of pounds to develop and deliver. Collectively we have a significant gap in both capacity and capability, alongside a dependence on Fens 2100+ driving a case for change in how our assets are invested in.

Thanks to the support of the Middle Level Board, we now have greater capability to press our regulatory teeth and turn the significant development pressures we face within our catchment into a risk management and financial opportunity rather than seeing it negatively. A further increase in staff capacity has been approved to better cater for the workload, increase cost recovery to further reduce costs to ratepayers. Fees from developers are also a critical source of funding to develop and deliver the capital works on the MLC and/or IDB infrastructure that serves and benefits developments.

2. MLC Services to IDBs

As previously reported, we have made the business decision to focus our clerking and technical services offer to IDBs within the Middle Level where there is water management connectivity with the Middle Level Commissioners' catchment.

Given that our focus in 2025/26 has been on establishing and strengthening our Planning, Compliance & Enforcement Service for MLC/IDBs, IDB Fund Delivery for MLC/IDBs and enabling the transfer of seven IDBs outside of the Middle Level to new service providers, the Service Guide and associated fee structure will continue to be developed during 2026 with a view to being ready to implement for 2027/28.

3. Policy Reviews

There are several new policies that need to be developed and published over the course of the next year, along with updates to existing policies. Given the nature of our catchment and our services to administered IDBs, most policies need to be consistent rather than bespoke for each IDB. Any policy also needs to come into effect at the same time across MLC and/or all relevant IDBs.

Planned new policies include:

- IT Policy
- Artificial Intelligence Policy
- Approach to CDM Regulations 2015 and the Procurement Act 2023
- Compliance & Enforcement Policy (primarily to support our regulation of consent compliance, unconsented works and associated enforcement)

The Board is asked to delegate the approval and publication of new and/or updated policies to the Clerk.

4. Waste Exemptions

Defra and the Environment Agency introduced waste exemptions in circa 2008/09 and there is a suite of exemptions available to IDBs (including D1 exemption which allows for depositing waste from dredging inland waters). We followed Environment Agency advice at the time and have one suite of exemptions that covers the MLC and all our administered IDB operations.

This approach now requires improvement and mitigation to de-risk operations for IDBs and MLC individually and collectively. Following discussion with MLC and IDB Chairs, over the next 12-months we aim to move to MLC and each administered IDB having their own suite of waste exemptions and associated implementation controls. There will also likely be a need for associated training materials for IDBs and their District Officers.

We will likely require external resources/services to deliver this improvement and the cost associated with the work will be divided equally.

5. The IDB governance future within the Middle Level of the Fens

IDBs and Board members had the opportunity to discuss and provide feedback on the outline design in Q1 of 2025/26. Members of the 'Case for Change' working group met in September 2025 to review the feedback on the Outline Design and agree next steps. The consensus is that people need something more specific to debate. We also, unsurprisingly, have people on either extreme of the spectrum between staying as we are and not seeing any need for change, and those that feel radical change is long overdue. Most are somewhere in-between.

A proposal has been conceived that the working group supports moving to 'Detailed Design'. This proposal is to move from the current 25 IDBs to 7 IDBs, in phases, over the next 15 years. The proposal aims to balance:

1 Hydrological common sense and logical alignment.
2 The Outline Design feedback.
3 Respective readiness for and need for change.
4 Likely trigger points for change.

This proposal aims to provide:

1 An option for detailed design and subsequent debate.
2 The ability to phase change and make it more bite-sized.
3 Time for IDBs to make steps to align 'standards' ahead of amalgamation.
4 A meaningful change that will enable improvements and efficiency within MLC & IDB working.
5 A middle ground between the 'go big' and 'stay small' views.
6 A platform for further and quicker change should it be needed or if the Fens Reservoir enables.

We aim to have the Detailed Design undertaken by April 2026 so we can have an IDB Chairs session on it ahead of consultation through Autumn 2026. Depending upon response and agreement, Boards would be asked to approve any final proposal (particularly any Boards amalgamating in any Phase 1) at their 2027 AGMs.

6. Data Provision

We are receiving an increasing number of data requests from a variety of sources. These can be complex and time consuming to service, sometimes for projects or purposes with little to no direct benefit to the Commissioners and our administered IDBs (where we act as their data controller).

To better protect our interests, we have developed and are now using a formal data sharing agreement with third parties. We will introduce a cost recovery approach to servicing such requests.

7. Electricity

The 12-month group (MLC and IDBs) contract with EDF Energy ceased on 30th September 2025. This contract was facilitated by brokers GEAB.

A sub-committee of MLC Board Members and IDB Chairmen reviewed options alongside MLC staff. We are now in contact with British Gas and are self-managing this within the Finance team for the 12-months to 30th September 2026.

8. IDB Funding & Costs Research

A joint Defra and MHCLG IDB funding and costs research project is now underway. It is being led by ICF, a consultancy with expertise in economic and financial analysis, particularly in evaluating the costs and benefits of environmental and regulatory policies in the water and land use sector. Supporting ICF is

Logika, a consultancy specialising in flood risk management, drainage, and sustainable development and valuable experience from the water sector. The project is scheduled to conclude by July 2026.

The overarching goal of the project is to conduct a comprehensive review of IDBs' operations, focusing on financial efficiency and value for money, with the aim of assessing whether changes are needed to ensure the long-term sustainability of IDBs. The research is structured around three core objectives:

4. Funding and Financial Review: To analyse IDB funding mechanisms, operational costs and financial pressures over the past decade and explore future funding options.
5. Benefit Evaluation: To assess the economic and social value of IDBs' work, both locally and nationally.
6. 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:	**UPWELL IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: CHIEF ENGINEER'S SUMMARY & CAPITAL PROGRAMME**
Date:	**Wednesday 10th June 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Nicola Oldfield**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. **The Board consider the recommendations for the development of an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement and grant funding and to confirm acceptance of recommendations to the Consulting Engineer.**
B. **The Board to approve up to £35k for the refurbishment of pump 2 including motor.**

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.

2. Summary of Key Planning Issues

We will, when possible, seek the Board's input, rather than wait for Board meetings. This will be done via correspondence with the Chair, Vice Chair, District Officer and any appropriate sub-committees.

3. Technical Services Overview

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. New FCERM grant funding guidance

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

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

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

Project types that are eligible for grant funding include:

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

Asset Refurbishment Projects

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

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

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

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

New or Improved Asset Projects

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

These include:

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

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

Applying for funding

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

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

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

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

<u>Timescales</u>

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

5. Capital Programme

A total of £80k FCRM grant in aid (£50k +£30k contingency which can be released if applied for and accepted) has been secured for pumping station improvements to be delivered in-year. This will fund new control panels for Nordelph and Cock Fen pumping stations.

GiA for an asset refurbishment scheme will be applied for works to the structures at Flint House Road, Horsehead Drove and Duck Puddle Drove. The business case will be produced and submitted this year, as the new funding rules and templates are clarified by the Environment Agency, with works planned for the following financial year.

As further details regarding refurbishment projects are confirmed by the Environment Agency, we will review the project scope for works currently identified on the GiA programme for £660k in both 2028/29 and 2029/30 (£1,320k total) but not yet applied for or approved.

The Board's current Capital Programme is shown as Appendix 1. Estimated pumping station replacement costs are included. Further investment will be needed in the interim and will be developed further in line with the Key Health Indicators. It is recommended that the Board considers the development of an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement. This will be used to better inform GiA funding needs.

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 Improvement Programme
Appendix 2: Applications since last report
Appendix 3: M&E Report

Appendix 1

Upwell 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
Bedlam Bridge p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5,000.0	5000.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	35.0	0.0	0.0	90.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	129.4
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment	0.0	0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Cock Fen p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10000.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	59.1	8.3	0.0	0.0	40*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	67.4
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0.0	0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Nordelph p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5000.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.4	0.0	0.0	15.0	40*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	19.4
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Padgetts p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	300.0	2300.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.4
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment	0	0	0.0	6.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Upwell fen p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5,000.0	5000.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	29.4
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
Plant	Ford Ranger - MK15 YAY	13.5	0	0.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	28.5
	New Holland Tractor AE67 BXX (March '18 - £75,000)	0.0	0	51.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	101.0
	Shelbourne Reynolds Flail mower (Sept '16 - £26,000)	0.0	0	26.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	46.0
Drainage Channels	Piling works - (Old Croft River)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Asset refurbishements	0.2	0.0	8.0	300.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	308.2
		90.4	**8.3**	**100**	**346**	**35**	**10**	**5,015**	**2,115**	**10,000**	**0**	**20**	**10,350**	**28,090**

Appendix 2

There have been 4 planning applications responded to since the last meeting.

There has been no planning, Byelaw Consent (to undertake works in and around watercourses) or Byelaw Consent (to discharge to a watercourse) applications processed since the last meeting.

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

Appendix 3

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		**Item No:**		**7**
Meeting:	**UPWELL IDB**	**Subject:**	**CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL**	
Date:	**Wednesday 10th June 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**		**Dave Bantoft**

1. M&E key messages and advice

Other than the matters described below or previously reported, 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, pumps and control panels 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. 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 (not an Upwell IDB site) 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.

Key Health Indicators

Station	Built	Pump	Pump Overhaul	Motor O/H	Controls
Bedlam Bridge	1948	1980(1) 2006 (2)	2015(1) 2006(2)	2015 (1) 2006 (2)	2006
Cock Fen	1975	1975	2013(1) 2012 (2)	2010 (1) 2010 (2)	1975
Nordelph	1932/1970	1970	2011	2011	1970/1991
Padgetts Corner	1980	2012	2012	2012	2015
Upwell Fen	1967	1976	2011	2011	2018

	Weedscreen			
Station	Bars	WSC	WSC O/H	Controls
Bedlam Bridge	1980	2006	2006	2006
Cock Fen	2018	2018	2018	2018
Nordelph	1991 / 2020	N/A	N/A	N/A
Padgetts Corner	1980	N/A	N/A	N/A
Upwell Fen	2018	2018	2018	2018

The Key Health Indicators table above shows the critical area for concern and improvement is the pumps. The pumps range from 14 to 56 years old with last refurbishments ranging from 11 to 20 years ago. The Board is advised to develop and start a pump refurbishment/replacement plan for the pumps that are overdue 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.

Submersible pumps are often not cost effective to repair and lead time on new pumps can be up to a year. 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 **Padgetts Corner**

The last routine inspection at Padgetts Pump Station took place 14th January 2026 and no remarks or recommendations were made at that time. The level controller has been replaced with a modern Pulsar unit and the ultrasonic head raised further above normal water levels to prevent the head “blinding” in times of high rainfall events which caused intermittent running of pump.

1.3 **Upwell Fen**

The electricity meter has failed at Upwell Fen which is causing issues with billing, in a similar way to historical issues at Nordelph. We will attempt to get the relevant parties onsite this summer to plan the best way to rectify the issue for the long term. Ultimately the station will need to go to CT metering which would be difficult due to the size of the station building and the way the control panel is laid out.

The last routine inspection at Upwell Fen took place 14th January 2026 and the following recommendations / remarks were made:

1. Leak around thrust block now requires remedial work. Continuously leaking and crack opened up since last inspection – coupling now corroded.
2. Pump bolts need replacing for corrosion, contact D Bantoft to action.

3. Telemetry level reading is incorrect.
4. Weedscreen cleaner drum is heavily corroded. This should be removed and recoated before it becomes irreparable.
5. Felt needs rework on roof

Weed Screen Cleaner inspected. Grab not closing, increased time from 8-10 seconds.

1.4 **Cock Fen**

The diesel engine control panel replacement works are being finalised and the GiA submission is in the final stages of approval.

The last routine inspection at Cock Fen took place 14th January 2026 and the following recommendations / remarks were made:

1. Alternator on engine 2 is not charging.
2. Rev counter faulty on Pump 2.
3. WSC hrs: 3989
4. WSC Drums Corroded & need Recoating
5. Exhaust on Pump 1 Rusting Away – district officer has this in hand.

1.5 **Nordelph**

The control panel replacement works are being finalised and the GiA submission is in the final stages of approval. The control panel has been designed so that space is made available in the station for future CT metering upgrade.

The electricity meter issue is still ongoing.

The last routine inspection at Nordelph Pump Station took place 14th January 2026 and the following recommendations / remarks were made:

1. Siphon Breaker valve in good order, (flap door missing)
2. Level probe bracket needs replacing, severely corroded.
3. Soft start is obsolete and unsupported, consider installing a complete replacement electrical panel. Quotes are being obtained for control panel replacement.
4. Electricity meter faulty.
5. Motor Bearings Noisy – Monitor for Deterioration

1.6 **Bedlam Bridge**

The last routine inspection at Bedlam Bridge took place 13th January 2026 and the following recommendations / remarks were made:

1. Pump 2 Insulation Resistance very low.

The low resistance needs to be investigated further to determine if it is cable or motor related, if it is the motor an overhaul is likely to cost c£3k.

Pump 2 is now 20 years old and due for inspection and refurbishment, initial planning and quotes for the works have been started in conjunction with the Chairman.

Please approve up to £35k for the refurbishment of pump 2 including motor.

2. Pumping summary

The main pumping report will be provided by the District Officer.

3. Inspections, maintenance and minor works

3.1 HSB Engineering annual inspections for insurance were carried out during September 2025.

3.2 The mandatory site Electrical Installation Condition Reports (due every 5 years) are in date.

	EICR	
Station	**EICR Date**	**EICR Due**
Bedlam Bridge	21-Jul-2022	21-Jul-2027
Cock Fen	21-Jul-2022	21-Jul-2027
Nordelph	20-Jul-2022	20-Jul-2027
Nordelph Bungalow	18-Aug-2022	18-Aug-2027
Padgetts Corner	21-Jul-2022	21-Jul-2027
Upwell Fen	20-Jul-2022	20-Jul-2027

4. Water level Management

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

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

Author Name: Dave Bantoft
Role: M&E Engineer

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	9
Meeting:	**UPWELL IDB**	**Subject:**	**HEALTH & SAFETY**
Date:	**Wednesday 10th June 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Paul Burrows**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

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

1. Introduction

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

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

2. Clarification of H&S accountabilities

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

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

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

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

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

3. Strengthening IDB H&S governance

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

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

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

Author Name: Paul Burrows
Role: Clerk

Site Safety Inspection

Upwell

carried out on

Tuesday, 20 January 2026

by

AW Safety Management

Key Information	
Client:	Upwell
Site:	Norfolk Essential Oils, Wisbech, PE14 (SQ
Site Contact:	Ken Goodger
Site Contact E-mail:	enquiries@middlelevel.gov.uk
Inspection date:	20/01/2026
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
High	Serious 'material breach' of legislation and / or serious and imminent danger to persons	Immediate Action Required
Medium	Significant control weakness exposing persons to moderate degree of risk	Planned Action Required
Low	General guidance or areas where there are opportunities to implement better practice and reduce exposure to risk	Actionable Comment

Purpose of Inspection / Executive Summary

The opening meeting was held with Ken Goodger and Carl Nunn and 5 pumping stations were visited.

The name of each specific station will be specified in the recommendations below, as required.

It was noted that none of the Upwell pumping stations have been provided with the new type of signage that has been observed at all previously visited stations, as in the below pictures.

If you have any queries, please contact us at support@awsafety.co.uk.

Action Plan					
High Priority		Immediate Action Required			
Medium Priority		Planned Action Required			
Low Priority		Actionable Comment			
Reference Number	**Additional Controls / Actions / Comments**	**Supporting Photographs / Pictures**	**Person(s) Responsible**	**Risk Rating**	**Action Complete When / Who**
01	**Cock Fen** It was observed that a door is obstructed and cannot be freely opened. It is unclear whether this door is a designated fire door; however, the obstruction may impede safe access or egress. It is advised that the door is checked to confirm its purpose and that any obstruction is removed to ensure it can be opened easily when required.			Low	
02	**Upwell Fen** It was observed that a narrow slab is being used as a step. This creates a potential slipping and stability hazard, particularly in wet or icy conditions. It is advised that a suitable, purpose-designed step or access solution is provided to ensure safe footing and reduce the risk of slips or falls.			Medium	

Action Plan					
High Priority			Immediate Action Required		
Medium Priority			Planned Action Required		
Low Priority			Actionable Comment		
Reference Number	**Additional Controls / Actions / Comments**	**Supporting Photographs / Pictures**	**Person(s) Responsible**	**Risk Rating**	**Action Complete When / Who**
03	**Nordelph** It was observed that wild vegetation is growing inside the building, originating from outside near a window. This indicates damage or gaps in the building structure and may lead to further deterioration, as well as creating housekeeping or pest risks. It is advised that the vegetation is removed and that the affected area of the building is repaired and sealed to prevent further ingress and associated damage.			Medium	
04	**Nordelph** It was observed that a slab is missing at the beginning of the bridge. This creates a potential trip and fall hazard for anyone accessing or crossing the bridge. It is advised that the missing slab is replaced or that temporary measures are put in place to clearly highlight and control the hazard until permanent repairs are completed.			Medium	

Action Plan	
High Priority	Immediate Action Required
Medium Priority	Planned Action Required
Low Priority	Actionable Comment

Reference Number	Additional Controls / Actions / Comments	Supporting Photographs / Pictures	Person(s) Responsible	Risk Rating	Action Complete When / Who
05	**Nordelph** It was observed that an old concrete structure filled with stagnant water is uncovered. This presents a hygiene risk, may attract pests, and creates a potential drowning hazard, etc. It is advised that the water is drained and the structure is either securely covered, filled in, or removed if no longer required, to eliminate the risk and prevent unauthorized access.	 		Medium	
06	**Padgetts Corner** It was observed that fly tipping waste materials are present within the premises. This may create hygiene issues, attract pests, and increase the risk of slips, trips, or fire. It is advised that waste is removed promptly, and that suitable waste management and housekeeping arrangements are maintained to ensure the premises remain clean and safe.			Low	

Action Plan

High Priority	Immediate Action Required
Medium Priority	Planned Action Required
Low Priority	Actionable Comment

Reference Number	Additional Controls / Actions / Comments	Supporting Photographs / Pictures	Person(s) Responsible	Risk Rating	Action Complete When / Who
07	**Bedlam Bridge** It was observed that a metal cover is missing and has been temporarily replaced with a wooden panel, with a cone used to highlight the hazard. It is advised that the correct metal lid is reinstated as soon as practicable and that the area is made fully secure, with temporary controls removed once a permanent solution is in place.			High	
08	The majority of safety signage on sites has become faded due to prolonged exposure to sunlight and weather conditions. It is recommended that a survey of all safety signage on site be undertaken, with any faded signage replaced, or removed where it is no longer required, to ensure that the visual impact and effectiveness of existing safety signage is maintained.	    		Medium	

Contacts & Addendum	
Contact Information:	**AW Safety** **Nottingham Office:** Edwinstowe House, High Street, Edwinstowe, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG21 9PR **Lincolnshire Office:** Boston Enterprise Centre, Venture House, Enterprise Way, Lincolnshire, PE21 7TW **Cumbria Office:** Low Cross Buildings, 4 Low Cross Street, Brampton, Cumbria, CA8 1NP **Tel:** 0330 223 7470 **E-mail:** Support@awsafety.co.uk
Website:	www.awsafety.co.uk / www.irmconnect.co.uk
Note:	It is important to note that this Inspection 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 inspector any potentially unsafe conditions or practices which were not apparent during the Inspection, 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.
AW Group	**AW Safety is a core division of the AW Group, designed to deliver end-to-end health, safety, and compliance solutions as part of our fully integrated service model.** **The AW Group also includes AW Human Resources, AW Training, and AW Facilities Management. Each division specialising in a critical area of organisational support. Together, we provide a holistic 360° service offering that helps you manage risk, improve performance, and maintain operational resilience across all aspects of your business.**

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

Pumping undertaken during the year

	Total No. of Hours to date	Hours run in 2025/26	Hours run in 2024/25
Cock Fen			
No.1 Perkins	0 (3605)*	21	369
No.2 Perkins	5074	389	124
Weedscreen	4593**	818**	1589**
Upwell Fen	2255	206	304
Weedscreen	473	48	63
Nordelph	5071	119	116
Bedlam Bridge			
No.1 Old Electric	2407	1	216
No.2 New Electric	5894	246	183
Weedscreen	2139	63	67
Padgetts Corner	3680	247	285

*** Cock Fen Engine 1 had a new rev/hour counter fitted, hours in brackets were hours before change.**
****Cock Fen weedscreen cleaner has a slight issue which has been reported which is if there is a fault and it stops working the hours continue to add up even though it's not working.**

Oil Stocks on the 31st March 2026 were: -

Cock Fen	-	**3100 litres of Diesel Oil**	**10 litres of Engine Oil**
Nordelph	-	**3000 litres of Diesel Oil**	**0 litres of Engine Oil** **10 litres of Hydraulic Oil**

Plant and vehicle

The Massey Ferguson tractor has worked **887** hrs during the year and to date has worked a total of **2757** hours, it was delivered to us in July 2024 with **1121** hours on the clock.

The Board's Ford Ranger Pick Up truck was purchased second hand in September 2022 and to date has a mileage of **104805.**

Carl Nunn

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	12
Meeting:	**UPWELL IDB**	**Subject:**	**GOVERNANCE**
Date:	**Wednesday 10th 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 to consider the comments of the auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2025 (Appendix 1)

1.4 The Board are reminded that Whitings LLP were appointed as internal auditor for a five-year period commencing 1st April 2023 (financial years 2023/24 to 2027/28). The Board is asked to act on the advice of the Auditor within its decision making.

1.5 The latest report of the Internal Auditor is available on the MLC website for the consideration. This report covers the MLC and all administered IDBs.

2. Internal Controls

2.1 Within the financial operations at the Middle Level offices there are a series of controls in place to ensure the segregation of duties, so as far as practical within a small workforce, that no one person has control of a single operation from start to finish. The Internal Controls are available via the website within the 'Governance' section on the Board's page.

2.2 Note the Financial Regulations for the Board is also available on its page via www.middlelevel.gov.uk

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

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

2.5 If the Member also has a lead role for the Board (e.g. Chair/Vice Chair) then it is important that the Board puts in place safeguards to ensure a separation of duties, particularly being clear on who is acting as lead client for the contractor.

3. Risk Assessment and Insured Values

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

UPWELL IDB
INSURED VALUE OF FIXED ASSETS

PUMPING STATIONS & BUNGALOW

	As At 1st April 2026	
Cock Fen Pumping Station	2,790,507.00	
Padgetts Corner Pumping Station	633,180.00	
Bedlam Bridge Pumping Station	2,253,861.00	
Upwell Fen Pumping Station	1,502,557.00	
Nordelph Pumping Station	1,717,215.00	
	8,897,320.00	Index linked
Nordelph Bungalow	130,000.00	
	9,027,320.00	

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

Upwell 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 Upwell 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 Upwell Internal Drainage Board on application to:

The Clerk
Upwell 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

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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

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

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

O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

28/05/2025 29/05/2025 20/06/2025

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

WHITINGS LLP

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: G. BEECH - WHITINGS LLP

Date: 20/06/2025

***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:

UPWELL 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	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.*

	Yes	No	N/A	
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.				*has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.*

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

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

04/06/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

B.2170

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

Chair

Clerk

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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

UPWELL 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	358,899	317,228	*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	253,978	313,386	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	5,914	125,514	*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	41,127	43,024	*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	30,318	30,318	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	230,118	286,373	*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	317,228	396,413	*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	385,913	420,255	*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	3,540,347	3,570,742	*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	465,712	446,906	*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

AHWood

Date 28 05 2025

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

04/06/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

B.2171

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

R Goodey

Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2023/24

In respect of **Upwell Internal Drainage Board – DB0116**

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 2024; 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 2023/24

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 2023/24

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 2024.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature	PKF Littlejohn LLP	Date	14/09/2025

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

We acknowledge as the members of:

UPWELL 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	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 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:	13
Meeting:	**UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING BACK**
Date:	**Wednesday 10th June 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Andrew Wool/Sam Ablett**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

A. Consider and approve the payments detailed within Appendix 1.
B. Consider and approve the Annual Accounts & Finance Papers 2025/2026 within Appendix 2.

Finance Officer's review and key messages

Actual Expenditure against Budget

For 2025/2026 the Board had estimated expenditure for the year of £313,148 and set a rate of 33.25p to raise this through Agricultural Drainage rates and Special Levies. Included in the estimated expenditure was £30,610 to be raised to reinstate balances following the events of 2023/24.

Net Expenditure in 2025/26 was lower than the revised budget. General Maintenance 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. As part of the Mobile Pump package Access Improvement works were carried out at a cost of £7,248. This was 100% funded from the Grant.

Also included in the year was a refund of £91,542 from UK Power Network following the abortive electrification of Cock Fen Pumping Station.

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 £430,579. The Developers fund balance as of 31st March 2026 is £47,099. The Asset Replacement Fund balance as of 31st March 2026 is £199,246. This position is reflected in the Boards financial statements and Annual Return which they are requested to review and approve.

1. Payments for 2025/26

1.1 Payments are detailed within Appendix 1

2. Annual Accounts and Finance papers 2025/2026:

2.1 Annual Return 2025/2026:

To consider the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st of March 2026 and the completion of Section 2 of the Annual Return as required in the Audit Regulations. Appendix 2

3. Storm Recovery Grant – T2B

3.1 During the year and prior 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
T2B – Access Improvements – Mobile Pump Deployment	£7,248	0.77p
	£7,248	0.77p

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

Appendix 1 Payments for 2025/26
Appendix 2 Annual Accounts & Finance Papers 2025/26

Appendix 1

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

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

Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - Oil filters and 25 litres of Endurol	118.66
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning and development applications)	347.10
Anglia Farmers - Supply of 7,000 of gas oil	5,562.74
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	3,629.41
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	4,819.59
Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration renewal	52.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Court costs	1.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Board ID cards	22.12
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply remedial Health & Safety signage (Account from 3B Design & Print)	348.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply thunder bolts at Cock Fen pumping station (Account from Outwell Timber)	4.40
Middle Level Commissioners - Repairs to automatic weedscreen cleaner and fit new level controllers at Bedlam Bridge pumping station (Account from Pulsar)	2,868.06
Middle Level Commissioners - Telephone charges (Account from Anglia Farmers)	73.37
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply rat bait and V belts (Accounts from Hutchi9nsons and Thurlow Nunn)	107.63
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for MK15 YAY (Account from Allstar)	308.86
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of land search at Cock Fen/Hen Meadow	7.00
Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd - 1,800 hour service of tractor AY21 BHK	2,426.08
Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd - Repairs to flail mower	424.46
Environment Agency - Precept	30,865.50
Upwell Charities - Bounced cheque	134.66
EE - Mobile telephone charges	34.60
Miss S Ablett - Expenses in connection with Board meeting (Account from The Lamb and Flag Inn)	340.00
EE - Mobile telephone charges	21.70
EE - Mobile telephone charges	21.70
Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd - Supply air blow gun, flails and filter element	539.32
Outwell Timber - 6 x 18mm buffalo board	792.00
H & H Farms - Refund of draiange rates	162.25
EE - Mobile telephone charges	29.38
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	6,709.78
Rates paid to Middle Level Commissioners as rates paid to Upwell IDB in error	1,179.57
Fenland Fire Appliance LLP - Servicing of fire extinguishers	212.10
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,263.58
Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd - Cable tie pack and 20 litres of WD40	101.82
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - Coach bolts, nuts, repair washers and 205 litres of Adblue	235.70
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance	6,105.00
Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd - Bolt pack and washers	57.22
EE - Mobile telephone charges	25.74
Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd - 4 bearings, 4 lip seals and carriage	294.64
Watson Fuels - Supply of 3,999 litres of gas oil	3,282.38
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance	3,267.00
Mr C Nunn - Lock for pump at Padgetts Corner pumping station (Account from UK Signs & Promotions)	35.00
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - Complex cartridges, hydraulic hose assembly, wire brush for drill, tube of hylomar and adhesive	244.49
EE - Mobile telephone charges	70.39
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance	2,997.00
Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd - Bearings, setscrews, circlips, gaskets and carriage	409.88
Hunt & Coombs Solicitors - Legal fees to bring Swan Fen Farm easeement to a conclusion	3,413.40
Mills & Reeve - Legal fees relating to Swan Fen Farm Easement	1,719.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Grant in aid storm recovery T2a scheme works	3,342.78
Middle Level Commissioners - Grant in aid received for storm recovery T2a scheme	-6,245.74
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Discharge consent application - Fountain Food Machinery)	2,181.96
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, correspondence regarding FDGiA funds, planning and development applications)	447.90
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages, telephone charges and internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2024-2025 accounts)	15,948.98
LW Vehicle Services Limited - MOT and service to MK15 YAY	1,231.05
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance	1,974.00
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit fee (2024-2025 accounts)	1,260.00
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	3,629.41
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	4,819.59
Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd - 2,400 hour service of tractor AY21 BHK	2,484.43
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel and road tax for MK15 YAY, tools in transit insurance and insurance premium for increase in pumping station valuations (Accounts from Allstar and Towergate)	1,172.32
Middle Level Commissioners - Repair inlet slacker at Bedlam Bridge pumping station	282.49

Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	8,728.58
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance	1,638.00
Environment Agency - Precept	30,865.50
EE - Mobile telephone charges	21.70
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - Bolts, washers, nitrile gloves, brake cleaner, hydraulic hose assembly, 5 litre oil jug and 205 litres of Adblue	733.61
Watson Fuels - Supply of 4,302 litres of gas oil	3,505.27
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance	618.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, correspondence regarding FDGiA funds, planning and development applications)	340.80
EE - Mobile telephone charges	21.70
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - Hydraulic hose assembly, security chain, washers, brake cleaner and scews	602.21
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for MK15 YAY (Account from Allstar)	97.28
EE - Mobile telephone charges	26.22
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance	1,182.00
Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd - Repairs to tractor AY21 BHK	1,848.83
Association of Drainage Authorities Great Ouse Branch - Subscription 2026	1,309.20
LW Vehicle Services Limited - Repairs to MK15 YAY	1,487.47
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - Hydraulic hose assembly	433.01
The Lamb & Flag Inn - Expenses in connection with Board meeting	308.90
EE - Mobile telephone charges	21.70
Public Works Loan Board - Loan repayment	6,709.78
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,262.38
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for MK15 YAY, seals and bearings (Accounts from Allstar and BRT Bearings)	514.24
Richard Askew Supplies Ltd - Oil filters and 25 litres of engine oil	159.83
Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd - Repairs to tractor AY21 BHK	773.78
EE - Mobile telephone charges	21.70
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance	555.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of diesel for MK15 YAY (Account from Allstar)	101.28
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of signage	40.25
Gordon Harrison Agri. Eng. - Repair to hydraulic pipe	58.19
Russell Fowler - Drain maintenance	654.00
Kings Lynn Auto Electrical Ltd - Tachometer alternator pick-up 0-4,000 rpm hour meter	200.40
EE - Mobile telephone charges	21.70
EDF Energy - Electricity supply (Bedlam Bridge pumping station)	10,869.36
EDF Energy - Electricity supply (Cock Fen pumping station)	795.15
EDF Energy - Electricity supply (Nordelph pumping station)	7,733.26
EDF Energy - Electricity supply (Padgetts Corner pumping station)	1,170.00
EDF Energy - Electricity supply (Upwell Fen pumping station)	9,388.29
British Gas - Electricity supply (Bedlam Bridge pumping station)	6,012.13
British Gas - Electricity supply (Cock Fen pumping station)	226.87
British Gas - Electricity supply (Nordelph pumping station)	4,538.06
British Gas - Electricity supply (Padgetts Corner pumping station)	299.60
British Gas - Electricity supply (Upwell Fen pumping station)	3,946.49
AGCO Finance	20,009.64
District Labour	46,637.95
	294,704.76

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

Appendix 2

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2026
GENERAL FUND

2026				2025			
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year			Mar-31	Balance Brought Forward		278,944.50
	Precept		45,021.36	2026			
	Insurances, Telephones etc	9,201.30		Mar-31	Rate Income & Special Levies		312,871.04
	Repairs & Renewals (Mechanical)	15,707.01			Interest on Deposit Accounts		2,400.42
	Fuel	40,020.99			Private Works		7,632.00
	Drainworks	19,620.49			Development Charges Account		1,675.00
	Contractors Charges	5,423.00					
	District Labour	46,025.55			Refund of Electrical Connection Works (UK Power Networks)		91,542.44
	Administration charge, Audit fee,						
	Printing, Stationery, Advertising etc	35,494.11	171,492.45		Asset Replacement Fund		
					- Depreciation (Plant)	25,274.17	
					- Cock Fen Pumping Station - Easement	1,719.50	26,993.67
	Loan Repayments:						
	Principal	19,373.14			Storm Recovery Grant - T2b		7,248.45
	Interest	10,944.42	30,317.56				
	Improvement Works						
	Storm Recovery Tranche 2B Works		7,248.45				
	Depreciation charge		25,274.17				
	Transfer from Asset Replacement Fund						
	- Raised 2025/2026		19,375.00				
	Balance Carried Forward		430,578.53				
			729,307.52				729,307.52

BALANCE SHEET
Capital Section

Liabilities			Assets		
Capital Provisions		2,986,467.22	Pumping Stations	3,304,000.00	
			Nordelph Pumping Station-Bungalow	110,000.00	
Public Works Loan (Outstanding)		427,532.78	Heavy Plant	94,480.70	
			Light Plant	7.00	
			Small Tool & Equipment	2.00	
			Oils & Greases	4,559.09	
		3,414,000.00			3,513,048.79

Revenue Section

General Fund			Ratepayers Account - Arrears		29,196.34
- Revenue balance	430,578.53		Value Added Tax - Refunds due		6,836.89
- Asset Fund (plant)	79,359.92		Sundry Debtors		9,256.66
- Asset Fund (capital)	119,886.29	629,824.74	Private Works Account		1,382.40
Sundry Creditors		68,362.09	Balance In Hand -		
			Barclays -Treasurer's Account	100,002.79	
Development Charges Account		47,098.61	Barclays -Business Premium Account	493,566.54	
			National Savings - Treasurer's Account	5,995.03	599,564.36
		4,159,285.44			4,159,285.44

Upwell Internal Drainage Board

Summary of Bank Reconciliations as at 31st March 2026

Barclays - Treasurers Account 2025/2026

1st April 2025			31st March 2026		
Balance brought forward		414,318.86	Payments made during the year	294,704.76	
			Rates payments returned	0.00	
31st March 2026					294,704.76
Receipts during the year					
Clerk's collection account	469,572.70				
Interest on deposit accounts	4,382.53	473,955.23	Balance carried forward		593,569.33
		888,274.09			**888,274.09**

National Savings - Treasurers Account 2025/2026

1st April 2025		31st March 2026	
Balance brought forward	5,935.67	Payments made during the year	0.00
31st March 2026			
Interest on deposit accounts	59.36	Balance carried forward	5,995.03
	5,995.03		**5,995.03**

Barclays Bank PLc

Current Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2026	100,002.79
Less unpresented cheques	0.00
Add outstanding lodgements	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	**100,002.79**

Cash balances as at 31st March 2026

Barclays Bank PLc

Current Account	**100,002.79**
Business Premium Account	**493,566.54**

National Savings

Investment Account per passbook	**5,995.03**
Total reconciled cash balances per accounts	**599,564.36**

Financial year ended 31st March 2026 — **Annual Return**

				Annual Return
Line 1	**Balances brought forward**			
	General Fund	305,206.96		
	Development charges account	32,132.40		
	Asset replacement fund	59,073.59		
			396,412.95	**396,413**
Line 2	**Rates and Special Levies**			
	Agricultural rates	236,582.04		
	Special Levies	76,564.00		
	Penalty	0.00		
	Costs	-275.00		
	Write-off	0.00		
			312,871.04	**312,871**
Line 3	**Total other receipts**			
	Interest			
	General fund	2,400.42		
	Development charges account	276.51		
	Asset replacement fund	1,764.96		
	Private works	7,632.00		
	Consent applications	0.00		
	Recoverable Costs	0.00		
	Grant in Aid	0.00		
	Refund of electrical connection works	91,542.44		
	Discharge contributions	18,183.00		
	Write Back of Provision	0.00		
	Sale of Assets	0.00		
	Storm Recovery Grant	7,248.45		
			129,047.78	**129,048**
Line 4	**Staff costs**			
	Wages/salaries	37,976.86		
	National insurance contributions	4,987.33		
	Pension costs	3,061.36		
	Travelling expenses	0.00		
			46,025.55	**46,025**
Line 5	**Loan repayments**			
	PWLB - Principal	19,373.14		
	PWLB - Interest	10,944.42		
			30,317.56	**30,318**

Upwell IDB
Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return

Financial year ended 31st March 2026

Line 6	**All other payments**			
	Precept	45,021.36		
	Rates, insurances, telephones	9,201.30		
	Repairs and renewals	15,707.01		
	Fuel	40,020.99		
	Drainworks	19,620.49		
	Administration	35,494.11		
	Development charges fees	1,818.30		
	Contractors charges	5,423.00		
	Inprovements	7,248.45		
	Purchase of Asset	0.00		
			179,555.01	**179,555**
Line 7	**Balances carried forward**			
	General Fund	482,115.16		
	Development charges account	47,098.61		
	Asset replacement fund	53,219.88		
			582,433.65	**582,434**

Reconciliation
Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6 582,433.65

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

UPWELL 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	317,228	396,413	*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	313,386	312,871	*Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.*
3. (+) Total other receipts	125,514	129,048	*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	43,024	46,025	*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	30,318	30,318	*Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).*
6. (-) All other payments	286,373	179,555	*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	396,413	582,434	*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	420,255	599,564	*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	3,570,742	3,570,742	*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	446,906	427,533	*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.

AWool

Date 02/06/2026

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

as recorded in minute reference:

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

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	14
Meeting:	**UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**	**Subject:**	**FINANCE REPORT: LOOKING FORWARD**
Date:	**Wednesday 10th June 2026**	**Officer Responsible:**	**Andrew Wool/Sam Ablett**

RECOMMENDATION

The Board is asked to:

A. Consider the Finance Officer's summary
B. Fees, remuneration and subscriptions
C. Note the Precept to the Environment Agency
D. Review & Approve Rating Estimates for 2026/2027
E. Consider & Approve the Agricultural Drainage Rates and Special Levy requirements for 2026/2027
F. Note that we will be introducing a consistent naming convention for MLC and IDB reserves during 2026/27, this will include some rationalisation of funds.

Finance Officer's summary and key messages

For the rating estimates for 2026/2027 standard provisions have been made for general expenditure with specific items included where known. Standard figures have been reviewed and approved by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

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

The engineer identified these works are still likely to be required during the year:

<u>Upwell Fen pumping station:</u>

Repairs to discharge pipework - £5,000

It is proposed to utilise £5,000 from the Asset Account for the works at Upwell Fen pumping station.

The budget proposal is a small decrease on the rate set for 2025/2026. 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.

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

1. Fees, Remunerations and Subscriptions

1.1 To consider the District Labour fees for the Board's employees

The Sum of £46,026 was expensed for services of the District Employee for 2025/26 and a provision of £49,150 has been included in the budget for 2026/2027.

1.2 To consider the District Officer's fees

The Sum of £5,423 was expensed for services of the District Officers for 2025/2026 and a provision of £5,800 has been included in the budget for 2026/2027.

1.3 Consider charge for hire of plant when engaged on private work for 2026:
The present charges are: -

Flail mower

Present charge - £48 per hour (inclusive of operator's wages etc)

(NB – Travelling time being charged in addition to working time.)

2. Estimates for 2026/2027

2.1 The estimated budget for 2026/2027 is shown in Appendix 1.

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

3. Precept to the Environment Agency

3.1 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.

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

The precept for 2025 was £44,138.59.

4. Rate Requirements for 2026/2027

4.1 Appendix 2 details the rate requirement that needs to be set and approved by the Board to raise sufficient rate and special levy income to cover the budget estimate.

4.2 Board Members are welcome to propose alternative rate requirements and invite these for consideration by the Board along with their supporting rationale and proposed mechanism for catering within the budget estimate and/or the Board's investment strategy.

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

Appendix 1 Estimates for 2026/2027
Appendix 2 Rate Requirements for 2026/2027

Appendix 1

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
BUDGET PROPOSAL 2026/2027

		Approved budget 2025/2026 £	Actual to 31st March 2026 £	Proposed Budget 2026/2027 £
1	District Labour	47,105	46,026	49,150
2	Insurances and Telephones	8,250	9,201	10,150
3	Repairs and Renewals	11,000	15,707 A	17,150
4	General Maintenance	29,500 B	19,620 C	31,000
5	Fuel (Oil and Electricity)	50,000	40,021	50,000 D
6	District Officers' Fees etc	5,600	5,423	5,800
7	Administration Charge, Health and Safety Contract, Audit Fees, Printing, Stationery, Advertising etc	32,200	35,494	33,675
8	Plant Replacement Funding	19,375 E	19,375 E	19,375 F
9	Public Works Loan	30,318	30,318	30,318
10	Environment Agency - Precept	45,021	45,021	45,922 F
11	Tractor / Flail Mower Replacement	25,274 G	25,274 G	23,305 G
12	Improvement Works	5,000	7,248	55,000 H
13	Reinstatement of Balances	30,610 I	-	-
		339,253	298,729	370,845
	LESS Deposit Accounts interest, Fishery Rent etc	26,105	137,492 J	76,534 K
		313,148	161,237	294,310

Estimated General Fund:			
Open balance at 01.04.2024	278,945	278,945	430,579
Rates Raised - 33.25p	313,146	236,582	294,310
Costs		(275)	
Special Levy		76,564	
Rates W/Off		-	
Net Expenditure	313,148	161,237	294,310
Storm Recovery/Balances	30,610		0
(Estimated) Closing balance	309,553	430,579	430,579

Remarks

A -	Includes:	
	Service/Repair Tractor-Mower	6,507
	Service/Repair Works Truck	2,888
	Pumping Station Maintenace and Repairs	4,673
B -	Includes for Contractor Hire: Slubbing	20,000
C -	Includes for Contractor Hire: Slubbing	15,825
D -	Provision based on 3 year average plus increase in rates of 20% from October 2026	
E -	Funding for plant replacement strategy	
F -	Environment Agency Precept	61,731
	Middle Level Contribution	(16,710)
		45,021
G -	Asset replacement fund (Annual Depreciation)	
H -	Upwell P/S - Discharge Pipework Repairs	5,000
	Cock Fen - Control Panel Replacement	30,000
	Nordelph - Control Panel Replacement	20,000
I -	Provision for Reinstatement of Balances Reduced By Winter 23/24 Pumping (not to a 'year-in-hand')	
J -	Includes:	
	Interest	2,400
	Private Work	7,632
	UK Electrification Refund	91,542
K -	Includes:	
	Grant In Aid	50,000
	Asset Depreciation	25,274

Appendix 2

Upwell 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 COMMISSIONERS MUST BE BORNE FOR 2026/2027 IS: -

a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 75.55%

b) Proportion to be borne by Special levies issued to Councils: -

Borough of Kings Lynn & Norfolk	14.74%
Fenland District Council	9.71%
	24.45%

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £7,115.

In 2026/2027 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levies would raise £9,418

Revenue balance in hand on 31st March 2026 - £430,579

The estimated net expenditure of £294,310 in 2026/2027, which includes provision for funding for future capital/plant replacement funding is equivalent to: -

a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 31.25p

b) a Special levy on the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk of £43,368 and

c) a Special levy on Fenland District Council of £28,590

In 2025/2026 a rate of 33.25p in the £ was raised together with a Special levy of £30,420 on Fenland District Council and £46,144 on Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk.

Members should consider future capital investment and cash flow requirements when setting the rate.

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Board

June 2026