

UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Upwell Internal Drainage Board
hosted at the Middle Level Offices, March on Monday the 18th January 2021

PRESENT

K Goodger Esq (Chairman)	R S Means Esq
P Clabon Esq (Vice Chairman)	A Quail Esq
H G Bliss Esq	J Quail Esq
S A Calton Esq	C N T Rose Esq
G W Gowler Esq	B Scott Esq
S Hartley Esq	W Sutton Esq
J Kirk Esq	P M Tegerdine Esq

Miss Samantha Ablett (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Carl Nunn (District Foreman) were in attendance. Mr R D Gladwin attended for part of the meeting.

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

Apology for absence

An apology for absence was received from N Russell Esq.

B.1898 Declarations of Interest

Miss Ablett 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.

Councillor Sutton declared an interest in all planning matters as a member of Fenland District Council's Planning Committee.

Councillor Sutton declared an interest (as a Member of the Middle Level Board) in matters concerning the Middle Level Commissioners.

B.1899 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Board held on the 18th May 2020 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1900 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED

That K Goodger Esq be appointed Chairman of the Board.

B.1901 Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED

That P Clabon Esq be appointed Vice Chairman of the Board.

B.1902 Election of Members of the Board

Miss Ablett reported that, as the number of candidates for membership of the Board did not exceed the number of persons to be elected (twenty), the following candidates were elected as Members of the Board for a period of three years from the 1st November 2020, viz:-

BLISS Harold Gabriel	HARTLEY Steven
CLABON Patrick	MEANS Roger S
GLADWIN Roger David	QUAIL Alan
GOODGER Kenneth	QUAIL Jonathon
GOTT Richard	RUSSELL Nigel Raymond
GOWLER Gregory William	SCOTT Barry
HARTLEY Christopher Fred	TEGERDINE Peter Michael

The Clerk also reported that Messrs P Russell, D Scott and N V M Walker did not seek re-election and that a letter of thanks had been sent to Mr Walker.

(NB) – Under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991, Councillors S Calton, C Crofts J Kirk and C Rose are also Members of the Board as the nominees of the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk and Councillor W Sutton is also a member of the Board as the nominee of Fenland District Council.

RESOLVED

That a letter of thanks also be sent to Messrs P Russell and D Scott.

B.1903 Amendments to the Constitution

Further to minute B.1862, Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency had advised that the Final Draft Order had been forwarded to Defra and, once approved, the consultation process would commence. Defra had subsequently advised that their lawyers were extremely busy with other matters and that the re-constitution may not be considered until after April 2021.

B.1904 Anglia Farmers

Further to minute B.1775, Miss Ablett advised that although the running of the remainder of the Anglia Farmers electricity contract had continued to be monitored it had been difficult to address some of the issues due to the restrictions caused by COVID-19.

In view of this, the Middle Level Commissioners' resolved to remain with Anglia Farmers for a further contract period post 30th September 2021 and to continue to monitor the performance of Anglia Farmers over the new contract period.

Miss Ablett reported that in addition it was proposed that quotes for 'green energy' be included, with a view to moving over to this form of power supply if the cost differential is

marginal. Miss Ablett further reported that the need to show that IDBs carbon footprint is being actively managed over future years is expected to increase with the Environment Agency setting themselves the target of being carbon neutral by 2030.

RESOLVED

That the Board remain with Anglia Farmers for a further contract period post 30th September 2021 and agree to obtaining quotations for renewable energy.

B.1905 Ouse Washes Section 10 Reservoir Middle Level and South Level Barrier Bank works

Further to minute B.1863, Miss Ablett referred to the Newsletters from the Environment Agency dated May, July, August, September, November and December 2020.

B.1906 Worlds End Farm, Nordelph

Further to minute B.1864, Miss Ablett reported that a letter had recently been received from Cruso & Wilkin, Chartered Surveyors, who were acting on behalf of the complainant.

The Vice-Chairman updated the Board on the contents of the correspondence and the Chairman reminded Members that, although the Board had agreed to mediation, this had not been taken up.

Miss Ablett enquired whether the Board wished for the Assistant Clerk to respond to Cruso & Wilkin on their behalf. Members considered this was the best course of action.

RESOLVED

That, on behalf of the Board, the Assistant Clerk respond to the correspondence received from Cruso & Wilkin; the letter to be approved by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman before being sent.

(NB) – Mr Means declared an interest when this item was discussed.

B.1907 Hales Drove, Old Croft River

Further to minute B.1865, the Chairman referred to the draft notice of entry letter in respect of the dredging works at the Old Croft.

Miss Ablett reported that letters had been sent to the occupiers asking them to accept all risks relating to vibration from piling and to property structure integrity and confirmed that the letters had been returned, signed.

She advised that the piling works had been delayed until the weather and ground conditions improved.

B.1908 Contravention of Byelaws – Maywood Bungalow (Pole and Wire Fence adjacent to Old Croft River)

Further to minute B.1866, Miss Ablett reported that, despite several letters being sent to the occupier, a consent application had still not been received.

The District Foreman advised that that fence had now been removed.

B.1909 Joint Maintenance Works – Old Croft River

Further to minute B.1867, :-

a) Rubbish and Debris at Sandgate Corner

As reported at the last meeting, a letter had been sent from Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners to the occupiers at 1-2 Sandgate Terrace. However, no response had been received.

The District Foreman reported that during the drain maintenance works the rubbish and debris had been removed and placed on the occupier's land who, he added, had been most co-operative.

b) Contravention of Byelaws – Maywood Farm

Miss Ablett reported that, despite a letter having been sent from Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners prior to the last meeting, no response or consent application had yet been received.

The District Foreman reported that although it had been possible to carry out the maintenance works, the hedge still remained and was in contravention of the Commissioners' Byelaws.

The Chairman advised that all occupiers should be treated equally and therefore considered a consent application should be made. He requested that the Clerk convey this to the Chairman of Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners and they be asked to write to the occupier again.

RESOLVED

That a letter be sent to the Chairman of Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners advising that the hedge remained in situ, thereby contravening the Commissioners' Byelaws, and request that a further letter be sent to the occupier.

[Post meeting note – 19th January 2021 – Mr Heading authorised for a letter from Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners to be sent to the occupier].

B.1910 Site of former Shrub House, 46 Church Road, Christchurch – Planning Application F/YR15/0104F)

Further to minute B.1868, Miss Ablett reported that the outstanding discharge contribution of £2,105.38 had still not been received and the Planning Engineer was pursuing payment.

RESOLVED

That the outstanding discharge contribution be pursued as soon as possible.

B.1911 Roadway to Nordelph Pumping Station

Further to minute B.1869, Miss Ablett reported that following a letter sent to Duncan Slade of Norfolk County Council, the Board had received two deliveries of planings for the repair of the roadway but due to work load and weather conditions these were yet to be laid.

B.1912 Complaint regarding the administration of the Board

Further to minute B.1870, Miss Ablett reported that, following the draft response received from the Ombudsman, no further communication has been received and the Clerk considered the matter closed.

B.1913 Structure under the Road at the Sixteen Foot River

Further to minute B.1871, the Chairman advised that, due to cropping, the work had not yet been commenced. However, having spoken with Messrs A and J Quail, he confirmed that, with their assistance, the matter would be resolved this year after harvest.

B.1914 Cock Fen Pumping Station – Tank Scout

Further to minute B.1874, Miss Ablett reported that following the Board's last meeting she had contacted Anglia Farmers advising them that daily emails from the tank Scout system were not being received by either the Chairman or the District Foreman. Having been subsequently advised that this matter had been resolved, she enquired whether this was the case to which, both the Chairman and District Foreman, confirmed that emails were now being received regularly.

B.1915 Clerk's Report

Miss Ablett advised:-

i) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That a sixth Chair's Meeting was held virtually on the 26th November 2020.

Topics discussed included the Middle Level Commissioners' Chief Executive giving an update on COVID-19 actions and responses, the change of MLC Chairman from Marc Heading to Jonathan Brown, updates on the Technical Services Department review (which aims to address the delays in responding to planning and consenting matters) and an update on the work of WRE. He also advised that Defra had commented positively on the Good Governance Guide published by ADA and that on the back of this feedback ADA were currently working on an Environmental Good Governance Guide. It was also noted at this meeting that Agricultural and Environmental Bills were passing through Parliament, the later including clauses benefiting IDBs, allowing them to expand their boundaries or for entirely new IDBs to be created, which was welcomed by the Chairmen as a positive step forward. Paul Burrows spoke on the work of the Environment Agency covering topics such as carbon baselining, national strategies, the tactical plans (which are securing much needed grant

allocation for the area) and the need to continue to grow partnership working. He also spoke for Brian Stewart, the RFCC Chairman, who unfortunately was suffering from a poor broadband connection. On behalf of Brian, he advised that following the re-shaping of the local RFCC, there were two extra EA nominated positions available and that in this respect he wanted to propose that an Ex-officio seat be created for the incumbent Chair of the Great Ouse branch of ADA. This is likely to be Marc Heading who is expected to take over from Harry Raby in the spring. The new post will inject a direct link to farming which is of course the major business sector covered by this RFCC. The meeting finally turned to the future amalgamation of IDBs which it was generally agreed are likely to increase over time as succession planning has to be addressed.

ii) Applications for byelaw consent

That the following applications for consent to undertake works in and around watercourses have been approved and granted since the last general meeting of the Board:-

<u>Name of Applicant</u>	<u>Description of Works</u>	<u>Date Consent Granted</u>
Waldersey Farms	Construction of precast concrete Inlet and pipework to allow Abstraction from district watercourse To fill adjacent reservoir – between Points 70 and 77	2 nd June 2020
Mandy Parsons	Removal of a bridge and Construction of new access Culvert – between Points 57 and 58	21 st July 2020
Mr and Mrs Darville	Piping and filling 26 metres of Private watercourse alongside 12 Fen View, Christchurch	18 th August 2020
Mr D Pearcey	Installation of one outfall and 4ft wooden post and rail fencing and gates	4 th October 2020

RESOLVED

That the action taken in granting consents be approved.

iii) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the 83rd Annual Conference of the Association had been held virtually on Wednesday the 11th November 2020.

The conference this year was held in two distinct and separate parts, with the morning session comprising of key speakers and questions and the afternoon the AGM.

Key speakers in the morning were;

David Cooper, Deputy Director for Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Policy (Defra) – who first thanked the IDBs for the work they do and then endorsed the efforts being made to improve governance through the publication of the ‘Good Governance Guide’ and

the work in hand on 'Good Environmental Governance'. He then went on to speak about the ambitious aims of government, the record investment agreed by treasury for the next six year funding cycle and the Agriculture Bill that if passed will facilitate the creation of new IDBs and allow existing IDBs to expand districts. He finished by stating that the key was to educate people and to work together to share good practice.

Chris Stoate, Head of Research (Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust) – who spoke about the Allerton Project which was a carefully implemented scheme to directly measure the impacts of controlling headwaters using measures such as leaky dams. This work consisted of schemes on similar upland sub-catchments where a direct comparison could be made between interventions and non-interventions. The results were very promising with downstream peak flows being reduced by around a quarter where the most effective measures were installed. Chris accepted that there were challenges surrounding maintenance and that the choice of natural materials and design was key. He also noted that in the locations chosen any failed leaky dam materials would get caught on stream bends well before any risk of being washed downstream into urban areas.

Toby Willson, Executive Director of Operations (Environment Agency) – who is soon to leave the EA reflected on the target to be carbon neutral in less than a decade and in doing this noted that the equivalent carbon release linked to pumping alone from the February event this year was equivalent to that of 1200 houses. He went on to point out that the onus is on us to act now and that if we fail to do so it will be our children and grandchildren who will face the consequences. He acknowledged the hugely influential role of ADA's voice in the development of national strategies and the work being done in partnership with IDBs to be more resilient. He finished by setting out three challenges.

- 1) To develop true partnerships where all organisations are working unified towards the same goals.
- 2) To achieve net zero carbon emissions, asking specifically what the IDBs were doing towards this?
- 3) To develop and implement strategies to attract young people into the industry.

Questions were taken from the floor and were wide ranging from asking why there was so little information being shared on the development of ELMs to why it was necessary in one location for the EA to undertake an environmental check before removing a dead tree from across a watercourse.

A more formal question and answer session ended the morning, the panel being made up from, Julia Beeden from Cambridgeshire County Council, Emily Clarke from Anglian Water, John Curtin from Environment Agency, David Jenkins from Wessex RFCC, Innes Thompson from ADA and David Thomas from the Middle Level Commissioners. When asked a question David Thomas, your Clerk, took the opportunity to advise of the importance and value of the work being undertaken by WRE and also to point out to Toby Wilson that he absolutely agreed with the sentiments of partnership working and also the key aims of the EA but noted that true partnership working was a two way street and that there were still areas of policy development that ADA were not being involved with sufficiently. Toby accepted that the EA were not perfect and that more work needed to be done on this.

The AGM in the afternoon followed the usual format of recording appointments and electing office holders. It was noted that Robert Caudwell would be coming to the end of the normal Chair's term of office and that this would be reviewed next year. The formalities over a lively question and answer session followed which seemed to work very well and may influence how future conferences are arranged.

b) Annual Conference

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities will be held in London on Wednesday the 10th November 2021.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk be authorised to obtain a ticket for the Annual Conference of the Association for any Member who wishes to attend.

c) That the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association will be held on Tuesday the 2nd March 2021.

d) Floodex 2021

That Floodex 2021 will be held at The Peterborough Arena on the 7th and 8th April 2021.

iv) Capital Funding Projects

That at the spring 2020 budget it was announced by Government that they would provide the Environment Agency with a settlement of £5.2billion for capital funding projects over the next 6 years, from April 2021 to March 2027, to better protect 336,000 properties. This includes both homes and non-residential properties and presents a significant increase over the current 6-year programme. It is noted that the definition of non-residential properties includes shops, businesses, industrial sites, schools, hospitals, etc. and the new arrangements also facilitate funded improvements to habitat and the environment.

In response to this the Environment Agency have issued new partnership funding rules which go alongside this increased funding programme. The new rules are considered critical to delivering the called for better protection to the target of 336,000 properties, but will also allow:

- updated payments which will now account for inflation and be based on new evidence on the overall impacts of flooding, such as mental health
- increased payments for flood protection schemes which also create a range of environmental benefits
- more funding for flood protection schemes which also protect properties that will later become at risk of flooding due to climate change
- a new risk category which will enable schemes that prevent surface water flooding to qualify for more funding

v) What is Good Governance

That Defra have provided a summary of “What is Good Governance?”:-

- Good governance is about the processes for making and implementing decisions. It’s not about making ‘correct’ decisions, but about the best possible process for making those decisions - and therefore good governance, share several characteristics. All have

a positive effect on various aspects of Boards including consultation policies and practices, meeting procedures, service quality protocols, officers' conduct, role clarification and good working relationships.

- Boards should implement decisions and follow processes that make the best use of the available people, resources and time to ensure the best possible results for their community – and try to serve the needs of the entire community while balancing competing interests in a timely, appropriate and responsive manner. A community's wellbeing results from all of its members feeling their interests have been considered by Boards in the decision-making process. This means that all groups, particularly the most vulnerable, should have opportunities to participate in the process.
- People should be able to follow and understand the decision-making process. This means that they will be able to clearly see how and why a decision was made – what information, advice and consultation Boards considered, and which legislative requirements (when relevant) Boards followed. This means that decisions are consistent with relevant legislation or common law and are within the powers of the Acts.
- Anyone affected by or interested in a decision should have the opportunity to participate in the process for making that decision. This can happen in several ways – community members may be provided with information, asked for their opinion, given the opportunity to make recommendations or, in some cases, be part of the actual decision-making process.
- Accountability is a fundamental requirement of good governance. Boards have an obligation to report, explain and be answerable for the consequences of decisions it has made on behalf of the community it represents.

vi) Smart Level System/District Wide Telemetry Bid

That a Local Levy Bid has been submitted that, if successful, will offer a contribution of half the cost of installing telemetry at pumping station sites. This will allow early warnings of pump or weedscreen failure and remote operation.

RESOLVED

That costings be provided for consideration at the next meeting of the Board.

viii) Fens Biosphere

Further to minute B.1842, Miss Ablett referred to the leaflet from Cambridgeshire Acre.

B.1916 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

The Board considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers, viz:-

Upwell I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – December 2020

Pumping Stations

Other than the matters previously reported at the December 2019 meeting and that described below, only routine maintenance has been carried out.

Bedlam Bridge

The routine inspection in April 2020 identified the need for the hoist ropes to be replaced on the weedscreen cleaner as they showed signs of fraying, the slack rope arms and trolley wheels were also in need of repair. C W Engineering (CWE) attended site in September to gather information with a view to quoting for the work, but at the time of writing this report the cleaner remains out of service and CWE has not provided any quotation. The corroded pump bolts on pump 1 have not been addressed, it is recommended these are done in summer 2021.

The issue with the electricity meter only having one rate is ongoing. MLC will continue to pursue this matter.

Cock Fen

As instructed by the Board progress is being made on the electrification of the station. The current situation is we have a suitable compliant tender and we are currently awaiting a formal quotation from UK Power Networks now that it is clear what the power requirement is. Once UK Power Networks has confirmed that it can install a 3-phase supply within the budgeted costs an order for the electrification works can be placed. It is still the target to have the works complete before autumn 2021.

During the year engine 1 developed a leak on its heat exchanger (radiator). The District Forman has swapped this for the spare on site, but this spare unit does not have a tapping for the coolant low level switch and so pump 1 is only used whilst under supervision.

As instructed the outfall flap valves underwent repairs during the summer and are now fully operational. During the repairs it became apparent that the main frames are also corroding and require attention. These works have therefore been incorporated into the electrification contract.

Nordelph

The electricity meter remains faulty. The Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) continue to try to resolve the issue with the meter operator and supplier but to date without success. MLC are

currently trying to get the relevant parties on site to resolve this matter but are being met with resistance due to the pandemic.

Padgets

As instructed the pump guide rails were replaced in June 2020, the replacements should last for the remainder of the station's life.

Upwell Fen

As instructed the outfall flap valve underwent repair during the summer and is now fully operational.

The leak detected around the thrust block in April 2020 was not apparent during the inspection of October 2020, the Engineer will continue to monitor but at this stage the Board should not be unduly concerned. During the inspection in October 2020, it was clear that the site has a significant vermin problem and whilst measures have been taken to seal up the access holes to the panel further control measures are urgently required including the laying of poison boxes.

Flood Risk Management (FRM) for the Fens [previously reported as the Future Fenland Project]

The Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer has represented both the Middle Level Commissioners and their associated Boards on the Technical Group since the last Board meeting.

Tactical Plans for the Fens

In response to the following question raised at the March East IDB meeting in June:

"Clerk to provide further information to members regarding the cost to the Board, of whether the Board has any input into the project and whether the Board is able to remove themselves from the arrangement if costs escalate."

the Environment Agency's Fenland Partnerships Advisor, FCRM, Vicky Eade, advised as follows:

"As you know, there has not been any cost to the Board in developing the plans, aside from officer time to provide data and information. The agreement to the plans is on the basis that any work in the Fens area will be to maintain the current Standard of Service (SoS) for the area, until the Flood Risk Management for the Fens project has set out the preferred direction and options for managing the flood risk infrastructure in the Fens. If the Board were to remove themselves from the Tactical Plans, then they would not be able to demonstrate they have taken a Strategic Approach in assessing options to managing risks, as set out in the Partnership Funding Guidance 2020, to avoid the double counting FCERM Grant in Aid (GiA). Which would then mean maximum amount of eligible grant available for any scheme in their Board area, would be capped at 45%.

Input to the Tactical Plans has been represented by David Thomas and Graham Moore at the Fens Technical Group.

I have noted that March East IDB do not have any capital works planned for the Tactical Plan period, so in terms of cost increases I assume you mean contribution to Phase 2 of the FRM for the Fens project. When we have developed that phase, any contributions to the project would be made with a legal agreement, which would specify how cost increases would be dealt with.”

Baseline Report & Economic Appraisal Report

The draft report documents have been the subject of an internal consultation with the Technical Group. A detailed response was issued by the MLC Planning Engineer, who represents both the MLC and their associated Boards on the Technical Group. The results of the consultation are currently being reviewed by the Agency and its consultant, Capita, and it is understood that this will be issued imminently.

Cranbrook/Counter Drain (CCD) FRM Strategy

The Cranbrook/Counter Drain is primarily a drainage and flood protection system which drains part of the ‘Middle Level’ Fenland in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk immediately adjacent to the Ouse Washes.

The Cranbrook Drain carries water from the relatively high land around Somersham, Colne and Earith and discharges by gravity into the head of the Counter Drain at Black Sluice to the north-east of Earith. The Counter Drain then flows in a north easterly direction between the Middle Level Barrier Bank (Ouse Washes) and the Low Bank. It receives pumped flows from the lowland fens via six pumping stations along the watercourse, which are operated by Upwell IDB, Manea & Welney DDC, Sutton & Mepal IDB and a private landowner.

Fluvial evacuation of the drainage system is through the Old Bedford Sluice when tide levels in the Tidal River Ouse are favourable; but during other times it is dealt with by passage through the Old Bedford overspill at Salter’s Lode or via Welches Dam Pumping Station into the Ouse Washes. Welches Dam Pumping Station together with other associated structures; Black Sluice, Welches Dam Lock, Welney Gate, Well Creek Weir and Old Bedford Sluice are all operated by the Environment Agency (EA). These structures are used to manage flood risk as well as other EA functions such as navigation and water resources.

Members may recall that in 2008 the EA FRM Strategy for the Cranbrook/Counter Drain was approved and adopted. This included the refurbishment of Welches Dam Pumping Station to provide a further 25 years of asset life. The current standard of protection (SoP) is approximately 4% (1:25 year) Annual Equivalent Probability (AEP) of flooding in any given year.

One important component of the preferred strategy was to investigate and, if possible, develop flood storage over the medium term to replace or reduce reliance on Welches Dam Pumping Station to provide a more sustainable long term FRM solution for the area that can also bring wider

social and environmental benefits. At the time of the Strategy approval there were opportunities through restoration of current and future mineral extraction sites, as identified within Cambridgeshire County Council's Block Fen/Langwood Fen Master Plan, within the catchment of Sutton & Mepal IDB for possible flood storage attenuation. This opportunity would reduce the reliance on the pumping of flood waters thereby creating a more sustainable approach to FRM. Further information on the Master Plan can be found at [Block Fen/Langwood Fen master plan - Cambridgeshire County Council](#).

Following a long period of apparent inactivity, Mott Macdonald were commissioned in 2017 to undertake a review of the original Strategy allowing for any new information. The outcome of this review was that flood storage was still the preferred option for the area, but that taking in to account the updated climate change projections (UKCP09), the amount of flood storage would need to be close to 16.5 million m³.

The Strategy presents opportunities for a collaborative approach including the rationalisation of existing private, IDB and EA assets within the catchment which together with the proposed flood storage present opportunity to create efficiency with asset management at the catchment scale through a potential reduction in the number of FRM assets which will maximise funding opportunities and prioritise allocation of FDGIA funding.

The other potential opportunities are with carbon savings through a reduction in reliance of pumping and even the possibility of removing or reducing the size of Welches Dam pumping Station. There may also be opportunities for more water being available for water resource purposes and carbon sequestration through sympathetic restoration of the mineral quarries.

Limited progression of the Strategy however occurred until the EA internal working group was re-established and a formal Project Board was created in September 2020. Discussions have been ongoing to establish representations of stakeholders on the Project Board or the external stakeholder/users group. An invitation has been extended by the EA to the MLC Chief Executive to sit on the Project Board in a "Senior User" capacity and the Commissioners' Planning Engineer and Conservation Officer have now formally joined the Steering Group team to represent both the Commissioners and Board's interests during the development and implementation of the Strategy.

Subsequent to the above the EA has now appointed consultants to assist with the development of the stakeholder engagement over the Strategy. A draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been produced along with initial engagement mapping exercises to establish the best approach and it is envisaged that an initial stakeholder engagement workshop will be held in early 2021.

It is likely that the Board's representation on an External Stakeholders/Users Group, together with representatives from other parties including other IDBs, the mineral operators etc, will be required and it is suggested that the Board's Chairman, or Vice-Chairman when the Chairman is unavailable, would be appropriate to represent the Board's interests.

In this respect, it would be beneficial to receive the Board's opinion and further instruction, if required, on the following:

- a) **The use of the Commissioners' staff on the strategic level Project Board/Team/Steering Group and**
- b) **The Board's representation on the external Stakeholders Group.**

The EA has also recently employed consultants to develop several projects, mainly in the Block Fen area, to further the Strategy, these include the production of a Geographic Information System (GIS) Digital Terrain Model (DTM) to calculate potential storage volumes. This work has commenced and the model produced, although no results have been shared to date. Also, a stakeholder engagement plan and creation of a groundwater monitoring network are currently planned to be created within the 2020/21 financial year.

In addition to these it is the intention of the project team to develop the scope for further appraisal work in 2021/22 to develop the engineering proposals for the storage options. The EA has confirmed that some initial funding through Local Levy is allocated in 2021/22 to the Strategy, although additional funding is still likely to be required for this study. A funding bid for the Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme is currently being prepared jointly between the LLFA (CCC), MLC and the EA for the Strategy as part of a wider Fens FRM bid. This could potentially provide funding within the next six-year spending review programme for both appraisal and investigation work but also provides an opportunity for some "on the ground" enabling works.

Members will be aware that public bodies have a "Duty to cooperate" with each other when dealing with such strategic matters and, therefore, costs will be incurred by the Board for the engineer's involvement in developing and implementing the Strategy. However, efforts will be made to keep any such costs to a minimum and, at the current time, such costs are anticipated to be fairly modest.

In order to guide further discussion, it would be beneficial to receive the Board's opinion and further instruction on the following:

- 1) **Current problems with water level management in the Counter Drain.**

2) **The future abstraction of water from the Counter Drain.**

3) **Future aspirations for both Upwell Fen and Cock Fen Pumping Stations.**

4) **Any other issues.**

The integrity of corrugated steel pipes

Several Boards both within and adjacent to the Commissioners' area have experienced problems with the sudden deformation and failure of corrugated steel pipes, many of which were installed during the 1980s/early 1990s, that have needed urgent action often requiring the total replacement of the structure concerned with its unexpected costs.

The Board will be aware of the implications of a structure failure particularly during a high rainfall event. Therefore, in order to reduce the risk of the failure it is considered appropriate for the Board to investigate the integrity of such structures for which it is directly responsible.

Where an asset's condition is recorded as requiring attention but is currently in a reasonable condition, it is recommended that the Board allows for remedial, replacement or removal works in its future maintenance and funding programme.

Structures for which the Board are not responsible but which could also impact on the Board's system should also be inspected and, where appropriate, a notice issued to the responsible parties in accordance with the Board's Byelaw No 12, as detailed below:

12. Repairs to Buildings

The owner of any building or structure in or over a watercourse or on the banks thereof shall, upon receipt of a notice from the Board that because of its state of disrepair –

- (a) the building or structure is causing or is in imminent danger of causing an obstruction to the flow of the watercourse, or
- (b) the building or structure is causing or is in imminent danger of causing damage to the bank of the watercourse,

carry out such reasonable and practicable works as are specified in the notice for the purpose of remedying or preventing the obstruction or damage as the case may be within such reasonable time as is specified in the notice."

Planning Consultation

Following concerns raised by the Chuchfield and Plawfield IDB, following problems with development in the Three Holes/Outwell/Upwell area, a specific meeting with Kings Lynn & West

Norfolk Borough Council (KL&WN) was held in early March to discuss development control related issues including planning and consenting matters that had recently occurred.

The meeting was primarily in relation to a five-plot development that is progressing at Townley Close, Outwell. However, many of the issues involved will also relate to developments in the wider local area within West Norfolk.

The meeting was attended by KL&WN Senior Planner, Principal Planner & Water Management Officer and Assistant Director Environment & Planning together with the Commissioners' Planning Engineer and Steve Calton, Chairman of two (and a member of another) IDBs within West Norfolk.

During the meeting KL&WN representatives were reminded that in respect of planning applications no bespoke responses were supplied to the planning authority unless the Board has specifically instructed the MLC to do so, or if it was the subject of a pre-/post-application consultation with the MLC. However, KL&WN was advised that the MLC and associated Boards do respond to strategic planning matters and had advised KL&WN of the respective Boards' concerns on several occasions but it was felt that these had been overlooked and allocations had subsequently been made.

Due to the topography and nature of the water level and flood risk management systems in the local area these allocations often raise issues which require resolution if the development is to meet the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy, more local strategies and policies ie Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and Planning Authority, and the Boards' policies and requirements. Current national policy for resolving issues associated with new development is that "the developer pays" but the solutions can often be expensive to resolve, thus affecting the viability of the development, particularly for the minor, up to 999m² of floorspace 1-9 dwellings, and smaller major developments of, say 4,440m² between 10-40 dwellings, which is a particular issue in the local area. The solutions often require negotiation with relevant parties which can delay the delivery of the development and may have financial implications on the developer and local economy and affect the Council's "growth" targets, particularly housing. In addition, most developers, agents and consultants do not have adequate local knowledge to provide these solutions and it is often necessary for the relevant IDB to intercede or be requested to assist. This can impact on the Board's limited resources, the expense of which is ultimately paid for by the ratepayer. The funding of solutions using Section 106 and/or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was discussed and KL&WN advised that it was possible to submit a request for these but there are many parties bidding for small allocations of money.

KL&WN did point to the increased special levy rate income generated as a result of development and advised that it currently provides a large contribution to both the MLC and associated Boards in the form of Special Levy.

Planning Procedures Update

Concern has been raised by various Board members for whom the MLC provide a planning service concerning the adequacy and competency of the agents and engineering consultants employed by applicants. The submission of poor application documents has been an issue for many years not only for the MLC and its associated Boards but also for other IDBs and the planning authorities.

In order to improve submissions and reduce delays in obtaining approvals the employment of suitably qualified agents/consultants with appropriate knowledge of water level and flood risk management is encouraged but whilst it is possible to “suggest” suitable agents/consultants who may be interested in providing a service to the applicant it would not be appropriate to make recommendations.

The use of Infiltration Devices

There has been no further progress on this.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 9 new development related matters have been received and, where appropriate, dealt with since the last meeting:

MLC Ref.	Council Ref.	Applicant	Type of Development	Location
499	19/02062/F	Mr Palmby	Change of use of agricultural field to garden land and residential garden store (Retrospective)	Flint House Road, Lott's Bridge
500	20/00437/F	Ms D Turrington	Residence (Extension)	Main Street, Welney
501	F/YR20/0426/F	Mr & Mrs Andrews	Residence (Extension)	Church Road, Christchurch
502	F/YR20/0433/PANR	R A Deptford Ltd	Change of use from agricultural building to flexible commercial use (B8 use)	Mumbys Drove, Three Holes
503	F/YR20/0533/F	Mr D Freeman	Change of use of dwelling (C3) to mixed use; dwelling (C3) and dog breeding and kennelling facility	Sixteen Foot Bank, Christchurch
504	F/YR20/0609/PNC04	R A Deptford Ltd	Residential (5 plots)	Mumbys Drove, Three Holes
505	20/01187/F	Mrs R Kemp	Agricultural (Machine Store)	Squires Drove, Three Holes
506	F/YR20/1001/F	Mr W Hufford	Residence (Extension)	Wayside Estate, Christchurch
507	20/01345/F	Mr M Reynolds	Residential (2 plots)	Main Road, Lott's Bridge,

Planning applications ending 'PNC0' relate to prior notification change of use issues

Planning applications ending 'PANR' relate to prior approval not required

From the information provided it is understood that all the developments propose to discharge surface water to soakaways, infiltration devices and/or Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The applicants have been notified of the Board's requirements.

Some of the above may discharge treated foul water effluent into the Board's system either via private treatment plants or Water Recycling Centres (WRC).

No further correspondence has been received from the applicants or the applicants' agent(s) and/or Board decision/instructions are required concerning the following development. No further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

- *Proposed residential development (4 dwellings) at former Three Tunns Public House, Main Street/Bedford Bank (East) Welney – Elgood & Sons Ltd (MLC Ref No 475)*
- *Construction of 2 dwellings at Chapel Farm, Silt Road, Nordelph – Mr D Russell (MLC Ref Nos 426, 472 & 481)*

In view of the absence of recent correspondence and any subsequent instruction from the Board it will be presumed, unless otherwise recorded, that the Board is content with any development that has occurred and that no further action is required at this time.

No applications for Infiltration Device Self Certification or the Checking Service have been received since the last meeting report.

The Croft off Church Road, Christchurch – Hazelmere Homes Ltd (Butcher & Harris)
(MLC Ref Nos 106, 167, 230, 240 & 242)

Further to previous meeting reports an enquiry was received from Anglian Water Services Ltd (AWSL) concerning the provision of information and consents associated with the private WRC that serves the estate which it is beside and discharges treated foul effluent water into Straight Drain.

AWSL was advised that:

“As you may be aware The Croft estate was developed by a company called Hazelmere Homes who, unfortunately, experienced financial problems during the site's development.

As noted in an earlier e-mail the Board's Drain, known as Straight Drain, forms the south western boundary of the site and is protected by the Board's Byelaws made in accordance with the Land Drainage Act (LDA).”

The following applications were submitted to the Board.

A. Encroachment within the Board's maintenance access strip

Applicant – Hazelmere Homes Ltd

Date of application – 5th July 2006

Statutory fee - £50.00

To provide a Grasscrete access to the treatment works and install surface and treated foul effluent water outfalls into Straight Drain.

Consent was issued subject to several conditions on 4th October 2006.

There were issues related to the erection of a close boarded timber fence in early 2007 but it is understood that this fence was subsequently removed.

B. Discharge consent for the disposal of surface and treated foul effluent water into Straight Drain

Applicant – Hazelmere Homes Ltd

Date of application – 5th July 2006

The Contribution fee of £14,804.30, based on an impermeable area of 0.3257ha and effluent of 15.73 m³/day, was not submitted by the applicant.

The contribution fee payable to the Board in respect of these discharges still remained payable and in May 2011 the Board decided to split the contribution fee due amongst the householders and appropriate invoices were issued. Some were paid.

At its May 2012 meeting the Board resolved:

“That the necessary arrangements be made to instigate court proceedings against those homeowners who had so far failed to pay their discharge contribution on The Croft, Church Road, Christchurch.”

The matter was discussed with your company's former Planning Liaison Manager, Sue Bull, in 2014 and attach a copy of an e-mail dated 14th October 2014 received from Sue.

Discharge consent for the individual plots were issued upon the receipt of the correct proportion of the contribution due. The final discharge consent associated with this development was issued on the 6th March 2018.

The Board hopes that the above satisfies your query but if you require further information please let me know.”

No subsequent correspondence has been received from AWSL.

Erection of four bedroom detached farmhouse and garage at Mill House, Boothes Road, Nordelph – Mr Denis Pearcey (MLC Ref Nos 338 & 485)

Further to the Board's December 2019 Meeting Report, a consent application for the erection of wooden fencing and a gate in the maintenance strip, and the installation of a headwall was received and following discussions with the Board's Chairman recommended for approval. The Board has been issued with a key to allow access to the land for maintenance.

An application for the disposal of both surface and treated foul effluent water has also been received and recommended for approval.

Erection of 4 dwellings with detached garages, comprising of 2 x 2-storey 4-bed dwellings and 2 x 3-storey 5-bed dwellings at the site of the former Shrub House, 46 Church Road, Christchurch – P J Farms Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 409, 412 & 414)

Discussions are continuing with the applicant's consultant in respect of the discharge consent application.

Erection of 6 dwellings at land south west of Syringa House, Upwell Road, Christchurch - Mr J Stittle & Miss R Watson (MLC Ref No 437) & Mr B Dawson (MLC Ref No 476)

An application for discharge consent and two applications for byelaw consent for the above were received in January 2020. The development proposals comprise the construction of 6 single storey dwellings plus associated access road and drainage infrastructure.

Drainage from the development is served by a main foul drain which is to be adopted by AWSL. Connection to the main public sewer is via a pipe crossing beneath the private drain adjacent to the site to the AWSL sewer located in "Fen View". This is served by the Christchurch STW and Tipps End STW which discharge to the Board's system near Point 158.

Surface water drainage is served by a partially attenuated drainage system discharging flows at 2l/s for all events up to the 100 year storm plus 40% allowance for climate change. 2l/s is close to the pre-development greenfield rate of 0.6l/s. Attenuation to the “greenfield” rate is deemed to be impractical to achieve, due to an orifice size of 6mm being required to restrict flow to this low rate. Given the practicalities of achieving this size of orifice along with the high risk of blockages and associated maintenance issues the 2l/s discharge rate is considered acceptable in accordance with current sustainable drainage guidelines. Attenuation of surface water within the development is provided via permeable driveways and within the construction of the main development roadway. The design calculations have been checked to confirm sufficient volume is provided.

Discharge of surface water from the site is to the private watercourse that forms the boundary of the site with properties in “Fen View”. This watercourse joins the Board’s Straight Drain, between Points 31 and 32. An access culvert off “Fen View” onto the site for construction access and to provide a future permanent access is also included in the development. Given the receiving watercourse will end up within the gardens of the new properties maintenance of the watercourse will reside with the relevant property owners. At the request of the Board’s Chairman the developer has agreed to carry out clearance of the watercourse and to regrade the bed to an approximate 1 in 1000 fall along its length between the new culvert and the upstream end of the drain, adjacent to 12 “Fen View”. The developer has also agreed to extend the clearance works downstream of the new culvert to the connection with the Board’s drain.

In addition to the above a separate byelaw consent application was received from the owner of 12 “Fen View” to pipe a short section of the private watercourse. This request is a result of localised subsidence of their driveway into the drain. This section of piping would connect to the existing drainage pipe off Green Lane/Upwell Road and run alongside 12 “Fen View” to the location of the new foul drain crossing the drain from the development site. This proposal was discussed with the developer who agreed to lower the invert of the foul drain to the lowest invert level possible, whilst still meeting adoptable standards and providing sufficient depth of cover over the pipe with reference to the regraded drain. The owner of 12 “Fen View” has come to an agreement with the developer to carry out the work which will ensure all elements are brought together.

The technical review has confirmed that the proposals meet the Board’s requirements therefore recommendations to grant the relevant discharge and byelaw consents have been made and passed to the Clerk.

Proposed residential development of 17 units to the north west of The Grange and south east of North Road, Welney – Loyd Homes (Client of JPP Consulting) (MLC Ref No 462)

The applications for discharge consent for both the discharge of attenuated surface water disposal into the Old Croft River and treated foul water effluent into the Board's system via the Tips End – Green Lane WRC have been recommended for approval.

The discharge contributions have been split where appropriate between the Upwell and Manea & Welney IDBs, in accordance with recommendations from the Clerk and with the agreement of the respective Boards' Chairmen.

It has been noted, in passing, that work on site has not yet commenced.

Retrospective planning application for the change of use of residential garden for use of dog kennels and runs at The Cottage, Welney Road, Lakes End – Mrs S Millington (MLC Ref No 492)

A subsequent appeal against this decision was submitted by the applicant although this appeal was rejected in November 2020.

No further correspondence or instruction has been received in relation to the above therefore it is assumed no further action is required.

Development Contributions

Contributions received in respect of discharge consent will be reported under the Agenda Item – *'Contributions from Developers.'*

Local Plan Update and Associated Consultations

King's Lynn & West Norfolk

No further consultation has occurred since the last meeting.

Fenland District Council (FDC)

FDC Liaison Meeting

The next meeting has been delayed due to the current COVID-19 working restrictions.

Issues & Options Consultation

The District Council has reviewed the comments received during the consultation and has prepared a [Key Issues Report](#) which summarises the main issues and points of view raised. The report is accompanied by full transcripts of individual's comments. Views expressed in response to the [Issues & Options Consultation Document](#) will inform the preparation of the Draft Local Plan.

Strategic Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) Addendum

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) provides evidence of the suitability, availability and deliverability of sites across the district and will inform the preparation of the District Council's emerging Local Plan, enabling the plan to identify a supply of sites to meet the district's development needs.

From July-September, the District Council held a second 'Call for Sites' exercise, providing land owners, agents, developers and other individuals and organisations with a further opportunity to submit sites to be considered for inclusion in the new Local Plan.

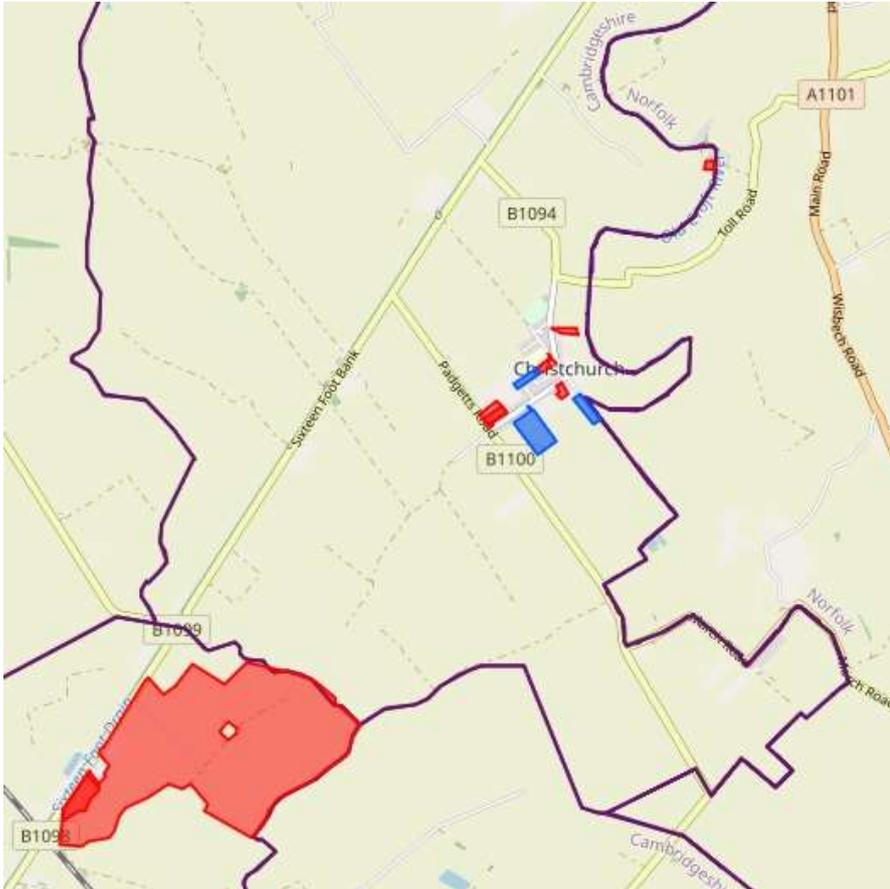
The Council has published an addendum to the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (Stage 1) report which sets out the site submissions received during this second Call for Sites exercise. An interactive map is also available on the Council's website.

The SHELAA (Stage 1) contains sites which the Council understands to be available for development. At this stage, no assessment has been carried to determine a site's suitability for development and inclusion of a site in the SHELAA (Stage 1) report does not provide the site with any additional planning status or merit.

The Council will commence assessment of the sites shown in the SHELAA (Stage 1) report, shortly. The findings of this assessment will inform the selection of sites for allocation in the new Local Plan.

Further information including the interactive map can be found at <https://www.fenland.gov.uk/shelaa>.

The contents of the SHELAA have not been considered by the MLC Planning Engineer.



*Screengrab from the District Council's Interactive map illustrating the sites that have been submitted
The sites submitted as part of the first call for sites are shown in red and those for the second call are in blue.*

Level 1 SFRA & WCS documents

With the exception of providing a response to a data request received from Royal Haskoning DHV no further contact has been received in respect of the updated Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Water Cycle Study (WCS) required by FDC as part of the evidence for the new Local Plan.

Norfolk Water Management Partnership [Norfolk County Council (LLFA)]

RMA Review of Norfolk's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (FRMS)

Members will recall that following the exceptional flooding across England in 2007 the Government commissioned Sir Michael Pitt to provide a comprehensive appraisal of all aspects of flood risk management in England by understanding the causes and consequences of the flooding and learn lessons from people's experiences.

The Pitt Review produced 92 recommendations for the government to act upon.

To fulfil these recommendations locally, Norfolk County Council (NCC), in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), is required to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a Local FRMS.

Following a public consultation, the Local FRMS was revised to reflect the responses received. The Strategy was presented to the Council's EDT Committee, with the final Strategy report being presented to full Council for adoption by the authority on 27 July 2015.

The Strategy requires that the FRMS is reviewed every five years and during the summer the relevant RMAs were requested to provide information on:

- a) Completed and current local flood risk and drainage schemes for the last 5 financial years and advise on any proposed schemes that were not delivered and the reasons why.
- b) The RMAs flood risk and drainage priorities over the next 5 years.
- c) Total maintenance spend on local flood risk and drainage assets in Norfolk for each of the last 5 financial years.

The RMAs were also asked to consider the policy review documents which proposed three new policies and included several minor word changes to other policies to ensure that the document is consistent with the National Strategy.

The following is an extract from the response issued to NCC on both the behalf of the MLC and the associated Boards administered in Norfolk.

" a) Email dated 6th August – Measures Proforma

Investigations have begun on the replacement of the gravity outfall for the Needham & Laddus IDB which is within Cambridgeshire but serves the Board's catchment within Norfolk. It is understood that this scheme is included within the Environment Agency's long term plan and will be prepared for an application for FDGiA in due course.

I am aware of a flooding problem at Upwell Health Centre and Churchfield and Plawfield IDB are currently investigating this with a view to resolving this with some assistance from a local landowner.

b) E-mail dated 24th August - Total maintenance spend

I understand that these figures have been prepared and were sent to you by my colleague, Sam Ablett, on the 9th September.

c) E-mail dated 4th September - Policy review documents

As you are aware the relationship between the Middle Level Commissioners and our associated Boards within Norfolk has, at least recently, been limited and, to date, primarily involved the resolution of localised flooding issues.

I am not aware that the other LLFAs within the area of the Middle Level Commissioners and our associated Boards, Cambridgeshire County and Peterborough City Councils, have specific policies

associated with the FRMS but note that Norfolk has several policies within their respective Local FRMS.

I have not previously been aware of these policies and my initial comments are below.

Current Local FRMS Policies

UC1: Sustainability

Should a reference to the larger water cycle process, water resources etc. be included?

Policy UC2: Flood Investigation

This policy refers to your Council's Flood Investigation Protocol. Having located this it is noted that it has not been updated since 2013. Should this document be reviewed to incorporate any changes in subsequent legislation, policies and procedures etc?

Policy UC 3: Flood Risk Asset Register

This policy refers to the Asset Register being available to view on-line. However, having viewed this it appears that only the details of the assets within Great Yarmouth are readily available. A note at the bottom of the relevant webpage (<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/rubbish-recycling-and-planning/flood-and-water-management/information-for-homeowners/flood-risk-asset-register>) advises that:

“Officers are working on assessing assets in Norwich, King’s Lynn and West Norfolk for inclusion in the Register”

Is further clarification concerning the inclusion of SuDS on the Asset Register required? Presumably, infiltration devices or small balancing devices that serve single properties or minor developments would not be included? Should the policy refer to a de minimis that would be considered appropriate?

Policy UC 4: Critical Drainage Catchments

The Middle Level Commissioners and our associated Boards within Norfolk applaud the inclusion of this policy but consider that more positive wording may be of benefit.

From experience within Upwell I would question the wording of the final paragraph. It is my understanding that your Council only provides responses to developments that contain over 100 houses. Therefore, given the sizes of the villages involved it is unlikely that this policy will be of benefit to any future development within the area of the Middle Level Commissioners and our associated Boards within Norfolk.

Policy UC 8: Risk based approach to prioritisation of resources

Should the term “return period” be replaced by “Standard of Protection”?

Policy UC 10: Planning

It is considered that all of the paragraphs should include “The Lead Local Flood Authority and other Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) ...”

In respect of the reference to “individual planning applications” included within the second paragraph I refer to the comment above that it is my understanding that your Council only provides responses to developments that contain over 100 houses.

The third paragraph advises that your Council

“... will expect planning authorities to take account of flood risk identified by Surface Water Management Plan modelling, Strategic Flood Risk Assessments and other sources of flood risk modelling (such as the flood risk mapping provided by the Environment Agency) and either avoid locating new development within areas that are at risk of flooding, or if that is not possible, ensure that designs fully mitigate for the expected flood risk”

Should this also include Critical Drainage Catchments?

Policy UC11: Securing Sustainable Drainage

It is considered that all of the paragraphs should include “The Lead Local Flood Authority and other Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) ...”

Policy OW2: Enforcement.

Presumably the LLFA will only be involved in cases outside of an IDB district?

The Land Drainage Act also refers to the President of the Institution of Civil Engineers.

Policy OW3: Consenting of works on Ordinary Watercourses.

Presumably the LLFA will only be involved in cases outside of an IDB district?

Policy OW4: Culverting

Presumably the LLFA will only be involved in cases outside of an IDB district?

The Middle Level Commissioners and our associated Boards within Norfolk support the principle of rejecting applications for culverting (other than vehicle accesses) and, wherever practicable, will seek to have culverted watercourses restored to open channels.

Should the list of inappropriate areas include areas of known flooding, Critical Drainage Catchments etc?

Is the final paragraph duplication of that contained within paragraph 2?

Policy E2: Protect habitats

Should this policy refer to “habitats and species”?

Policy E3: Water levels (habitats)

Should this policy refer to “habitats and species”?

Policy E4: Ecological Potential

The Middle Level Commissioners and our associated Boards within Norfolk have nature conservation duties under the Land Drainage Act 1991, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2003, the Eels (England and Wales) Regulations 2009, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and are competent authorities under the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc) Regulations 1994.

As a result, these RMAs do not expect but require the provision of a proper and appropriate statement outlining the environmental impact of the proposals and identifying all likely effects on the environment, including opportunities for mitigation and enhancement is required in every case. If the application does not properly consider this obligation it may be a reason for refusal of the application.

However, it is acknowledged that any request for enhancement has to be “reasonable”.

Should this policy refer to “habitats and species”?

Would it be relevant to refer to Biodiversity Action Plan (BAPs)?

Policy E5: River Morphology

Most of the rivers or ordinary watercourses within The Fens are manmade and cannot be considered as “natural”.

Policy E6: Landscaping

Should this policy precede Policy E4: Ecological Potential which refers to landscaping?

Should the opening sentence be amended to “Landscape proposals accompanying applications for works to an ordinary watercourse shall be designed, where appropriate, to:”

Draft Additional Policies

The Middle Level Commissioners and our associated Boards within Norfolk generally support the principles included within the additional draft policies.

Draft Policy 2: Biodiversity and Environmental Net Gain

The content of this policy is acknowledged but it needs to be appreciated that any request for enhancement has to be “reasonable”. In addition, some areas of the County are more affluent than others and developers may be able to provide more extensive Biodiversity and Environmental Net Gain but viability may be an issue for some less affluent areas.

Growth has a large role within the economy and it is considered that this will be the prime driver behind any development and without “a planning system that supports beautiful design; and meets the challenges of climate change” any enhancements may be limited in some areas.

Draft Policy 3: Flood Resilience and Adaption

Could this policy be re-written as the following?

“The Lead Local Flood Authority and Risk Management Authorities, will:

- Provide support, where possible, to communities, other services and Risk Management Authorities through the process of planning and developing local flood risk adaption and resilience activities.
- Support other Risk Management Authorities in providing information and advice on property level preparedness, resistance and resilience improvements to property owners and occupiers at risk of local flooding.

- Encourage communities at local flood risk to develop community led and focused flood action plans and support groups to improve community resilience.”

The Middle Level Commissioners and our associated Boards within Norfolk look forward to further consultation and involvement in relevant issues in the future.”

No further correspondence has been received and the current status of the review is currently unknown.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Flood and Water Management (FloW) Partnership

The Middle Level Commissioners’ Planning Engineer has represented both the Middle Level Commissioners and their associated Boards since the last Board meeting.

The main matters that may be of interest to the Boards are as follows:

Fenland Flooding Issues Sub-group

The next meeting was delayed due to COVID-19 working restrictions but an enquiry has recently been received for the sub-group to re-connect to hold a meeting in January.

No “wet spots” have been identified within the Board’s district within the area covered by Fenland DC.

Staffing Updates

There have been several changes of staff both through retirement, internal re-assignment and seeking alternative employment at both the City and County Councils together with other RMAs.

National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Strategy for England.

The Strategy together with the results of the consultation were reviewed by defra before being issued to the Secretary of State. Problems experienced have included the transposing of comments received and the differing opinions on the content of the final document. The text being carefully worded to enable it to be deliverable.

The revised Strategy was “laid before Parliament” during July.

Note: The revised Strategy was subsequently adopted by the Government in late September.

Local FRM Strategy

Both the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Strategies are due to be reviewed soon and may be replaced by a joint Cambridgeshire and Peterborough response. The updates will be undertaken once the National Strategy details are finalised.

Property Flood Resilience (PFR) Pathfinder Project

This is a national project funded by the EA that promotes awareness, working with insurance companies, business etc.

Further details on the project can be found in the Flood Resilience Community Pathfinder Evaluation Final Evaluation Report October 2015 and the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/29-million-extra-funding-to-boost-action-on-making-homes-more-resilient-to-floods>

A successful £700k Grant-in-Aid (GiA) bid was made by a consortium of six LLFAs across the region, including Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC), Peterborough City Council (PCC) & Northampton County Council (NCC), in respect of The Oxford–Cambridge Arc (formerly the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor).

Five workstreams included:

1. Engaging with communities to inspire behavioural change to include community engagement in our area.
2. Creation of a demonstration property to highlight how PFR is installed and works, likely to be in Oxfordshire.
3. Training materials and information online including videos from the demonstration property.
4. A register of PFR installations and an interactive map that could be used to help provide more competitive insurance cover.
5. Evaluation of the project and areas of success.

Riparian Responsibilities

In order to raise awareness of and instigate discussion on an issue that causes difficulties for RMAs, including the Boards, primarily due to increased workload and costs, the County Council's Flood Risk and Biodiversity Team prepared an "Issues and Options Briefing Note" seeking

changes to current practices that are inefficient and create inconsistency across the county in the use of public resources to address the issues associated with riparian assets. The document has been considered by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) and was subsequently presented to the RFCC Chairman Group.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) & Water Cycle Study (WCS) documents

Most of the current SFRA and WCS documents are considered to be old, most dating from circa 2010, and have not been updated as initially intended. All will require reviewing as supporting evidence when the respective District Council's Local Plans are updated.

A 'joint' county-wide document was suggested but was not considered possible due to the differing states of the various Local Plans across the county.

No reference was made to the funding arrangements for the provision of the updated documents.

Note: See elsewhere in this report for further information on the Fenland SFRA.

Major Flood Response and Recovery document

This is a comprehensive document prepared jointly by the County Council's Flood Risk and Biodiversity team in consultation with the emergency planners.

Two of the problems discussed include the difficulty that most watercourses are riparian owned and how to convey the information contained within the document without increasing stress and anxiety during or following times of flood.

A consistent approach was requested concerning the provision of sandbags. This is hard to achieve, given the desire and need to reassure communities during flooding. The problems associated with the use of sandbags are recognised and it is considered by some people that they do provide reassurance to landowners who consider that it is "better than nothing". Political decisions often take precedence about the use of sandbags.

Rain Gauges Project

The rain gauge project which is providing a network of gauges across East Anglia funded by Anglian Central RFCC, AWSL and RMAs has been delayed due to the lack of resources but will recommence when new officers have been employed.

Peterborough City Council is not part of this project; it already has a rain gauge network which is largely on school sites.

Cyber Security for Flood Assets

Following the highlighting of this potential issue by the Partnership's Chairman, Cllr Wotherspoon, a report has been prepared by the County Council's Flood Risk and Biodiversity Manager which primarily advises that most partners have policies and training in place.

The group discussed concerns around cyber security, data security and the vulnerability of flood risk assets now that there is greater use of mobile technology, automatic telemetry etc to manage assets.

Lessons learnt from recent flood events elsewhere

(a) Environment Agency (EA)

It was difficult for the EA to advise positively on any lessons learnt following higher than average rainfall in June 2019.

The EA was still collating data from the Lincolnshire flooding where more than double the monthly rainfall (130mm compared to the normal 50mm) caused a significant incident (breach) at Wainfleet but reference was made to community engagement, asset data collection etc. A recovery programme is in place looking at locating and fixing defects but also community engagement and data gathering.

With the exception of three days between mid-October to the end of December, strong stream advice had been in place restricting navigation on the River Nene due to the persistent high flows.

(b) Cambridgeshire County Council - Flood Risk and Biodiversity

Following the flooding experienced in Milton Keynes in May 2018 an independent review was undertaken in 2019, identifying a 1 in 800 event, 419 internally flooded properties, 4 schools, a hospital and £7m economic impact estimated. A major incident was not declared which has resulted in data sharing issues. The report can be viewed at <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/environmental-health-and-trading-standards/emergency-planning/flood-and-water-management-drainage?chapter=5>

It was reported that there were 58 recommendations.

Note: The County Council Flood Risk and Biodiversity team provide a service to Milton Keynes Council.

CCC and PCC Climate Change Strategy/Plan

(a) Peterborough City Council (PCC)

Following the councillors of the City Council's unanimous decision, in July 2019, to declare a climate emergency and agreement to make the Council's activities net-zero carbon by 2030, the City Council has prepared a Carbon Management Action Plan (CMAP).

A copy of the CMAP can be found at the following web page:

<https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/campaigns/climate-change>

PCC has launched a Climate Action Management Plan with 20 actions for 2020, the intention is then to write a Climate Change Adaptation Plan by the end of 2020, which, it is hoped, will align with the local strategy.

(b) Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)

The County Council's Climate Change and Environment Strategy was out to consultation from 20 December 2019 to 31 January 2020. There was a good response to the consultation. The document was due to be presented to the Council in the Spring but the meeting was postponed due to COVID-19.

The strategy is split into Mitigation, Adaptation and Natural Capital. The related action plan will remain live. Some of the key areas of interest politically include removal of CCC buildings and schools from oil heating, degradation of peat in the Fens, tree planting and biodiversity net gain.

Further details can be found at <https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/climate-strategy>

Anglian Water Services Limited (AWSL)

(a) Price Review 2019 (PR19)

Whilst Ofwat liked what was being proposed by AWSL within its Business Plan for 2020-2025 it did not want customers' bills to be increased within the Asset Management Plan (AMP) period. AWSL contends that it is thinking in the longer term and trying to deal with wider issues such as climate change.

AWSL together with Bristol Water, Yorkshire Water and Northumbrian Water have appealed against Ofwat's decision in respect of submission by referring this to the Competition Markets Authority (CMA). However, Thames Water has not done this but has made significant redundancies.

There is now some uncertainty for AWSL as the CMA can review everything and this can take up to a year to complete.

Note: In order to reduce charges on its customers AWSL currently appears reluctant to incur any unnecessary additional costs beyond what it is obliged to accept.

(b) Flooding Partnership Funding Programme

The Partnership Funding Programme had been removed from the Business Plan for 2020-2025 but after AWSL supplied more information Ofwat agreed that the programme could go back into the Plan.

The Partnership funding programme is now a performance commitment with a penalty for under delivery. Ninety-two schemes are to be delivered. Funding is restrained and there will be considerable scrutiny to ensure good value to customers. It is essential that partners are open about deliverability to ensure that the programme can adapt accordingly.

(c) Drainage & Wastewater Management Plans (DWMPs)

See the separate item later in this report.

Cambridgeshire County Council – Highways

Highway Gullies

The CCC mapping work on its highway gullies is complete and will be published soon.

Environment Agency (EA)

Great Ouse catchment

a) *Flood storage and conveyance study*

A successful workshop has been held.

b) *Middle Level & South Level Barrier Bank works*

Progress Update - As the works have increased a greater volume of material has been needed than originally thought. As a result, the cost of the project has risen from £27m to £35m and the programmed completion date has been extended by two years.

c) *A1101 Welney Wash Road*

Local residents are concerned about a demountable barrier being installed on the South Level Barrier Bank Wash Road at Gold Hill. A meeting attended by Liz Truss MP and Stephen Barclay MP was due to be held in March but was delayed as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions.

Highways England (HE)

Organisational Changes

The former Areas 6 and 8 now form the East Region and the new term contractor is Ringway. The previous short-term Asset Support Contracts (ASC) have been replaced by a 15-year Road Investment Strategy (RIS) contract in order to ensure a consistent long-term approach.

Former Kier staff have been “TUPED” into Highways England under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006. The Technical Drainage Lead is Jenni Stout, in the Asset Team, and Claire Parsons remains the Environment Management Lead.

(a) Highway Schemes

A10

The Combined Authority are identifying opportunities for a project between Ely and Cambridge.

A47 - Guyhirn Junction Improvements

The improvement works are within the existing land boundary thus negating the need for a Development Consent Order (DCO). Therefore, the works can be achieved under existing permits and could start before the Wansford/Sutton section.

Ground Investigation has recently been undertaken by Galliford Try, the appointed contractor for the A47 Corridor Improvements.

(b) Environment Designated Fund

The next round commenced in April with a larger fund anticipated for Road Investment Strategy (RIS) 2 than RIS 1. Water quality and flood risk are now listed as separate elements.

Drainage & Wastewater Management Plans (DWMPs)

Commissioned by Water UK in collaboration with defra, the Welsh Government, Ofwat, the EA, Natural Resources Wales, Consumer Council for Water, ADEPT and Blueprint for Water, Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans are the new way for organisations to work together to improve drainage and environmental water quality.

The DWMP Framework provides the basis for more collaborative and integrated long-term planning by water companies, working with other organisations that have responsibilities relating to drainage, flooding and protection of the environment. It makes use of the tools and approaches to enable investment to be targeted more effectively, provide customers and stakeholders with better information about the UK’s drainage and wastewater services and

will set out how water and wastewater companies intend to extend, improve and maintain a robust and resilient drainage and wastewater system.

Whilst AWSL has a direct regulatory focus in relation to providing evidence in support of its strategic business plans, it is important to recognise that the responsibility for developing the drainage and wastewater plan is shared between all stakeholders and collaborative engagement is essential.

The framework follows a clear five step process which culminates in the identification of risk and the appropriate solution to mitigate this. The key focus is on co-creation to ensure the plan joins up the approach and considers all risks from growth, climate change, customer behaviours and that there is not a water company bias approach.

1. Strategic context.

This document forms the first step in the process. Which includes outlining the background to the DWMP, identifying the key concerns of the stakeholders, and establishing the method of tracking the level of risk.

2. Risk Based Catchment Screening (RBCS).

Initially an Anglian Water exercise, this identifies which of the ~1,100 water recycling catchments are triggered to go through the DWMP process based on a prescribed process using historic data. This list is then shared with stakeholders for comment. Any catchments previously excluded can be brought in at this point if required.

3. Baseline Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (BRAVA).

A collaborative exercise to identify the level of risk in each water recycling catchment and how complicated it may be to mitigate. A variety of future design horizons are considered to understand the progression of risk over time.

4. Options Development and Appraisal (ODA).

Where joint opportunities are possible, a collaborative exercise will identify the potential solutions to address the risk. Where joint opportunities are not possible, Anglian Water will identify their appropriate solution.

5. Programme appraisal.

Taking a regional view, the programme will have to balance the cost and risk of current and future customers, ensuring services are provided for both and must reconcile the need to keep bills affordable with the need to plan for future challenges, whilst meeting the expectations of our customers as understood through extensive customer engagement.

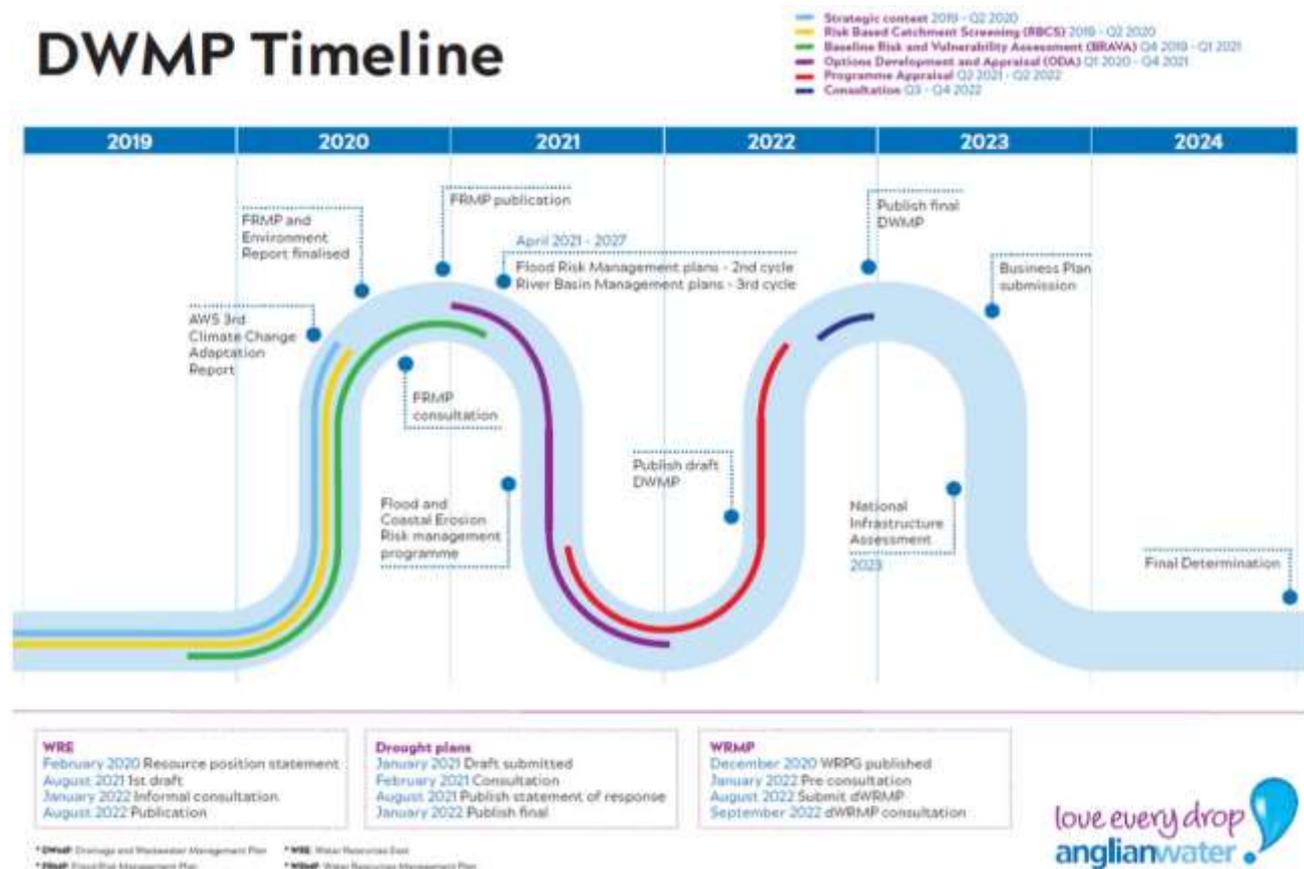
To be published in 2022, the DWMP will cover the period 2025-2050 and will be framed around AWSLs [Strategic Direction Statement](#), its new co-created 25 year forward vision for the region, which will follow on from the [Water Recycling Long-Term Plan \(WRLTP\)](#) published in 2018.

Further details can also be found at <https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/about-us/our-strategies-and-plans/drainage-and-wastewater-management-plan/>.

Of its approximately 1,130 WRC assets, AWSL progressed 573 of its catchments through to the Baseline Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (BRAVA). This equates to 51% of the catchments and covers almost 97% of the population served. It is hoped that the BRAVA results will be available by the end of December 2020.

The Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer has represented both the Middle Level Commissioners and their associated Boards and has identified that there are currently twenty five WRCs which are of "interest" to the Middle Level Commissioners and associated Boards, either directly or indirectly.

It is acknowledged that the assets do not necessarily discharge directly into the Board's system but this could occur if the WRC was to fail.



In order to more readily identify the issues and catchments that are of concern, AWSL requested that a rating of the relevant assets was provided. The comments issued for the assets within the Board's catchment area are detailed in the following table.

AWSL Ref	WRC Site	2019 Reported Population	Q1		Q2		Notes
			Concern about the Facility Rating		Concern about the Managed Watercourse Rating		
			Short Term 0-15 years	Long Term 15-25 years	Short Term 0-15 years	Long Term 15-25 years	
NOCASC	Nordelph – Coronation Avenue	82	0	1	1	2	Small catchment that is unlikely to see significant growth. Concerns about the adverse impacts on the receiving watercourse system including the current and future outfall/catchment extents, potential first-time sewerage scheme, the capacity and maintenance of the receiving watercourse, flood risk implications, volumetric flow and water quality permits/consents.
TEGLSC	Tipps End - Green Lane	195	0	1	1	2	This is a relatively new WRC which the Board was involved with and has its consent. It serves a reasonably large catchment with only limited future growth and is unlikely to reach its design limit. Concerns about the adverse impacts on the receiving watercourse system including the future capacity and maintenance of the receiving watercourse, flood risk implications, volumetric flow and water quality permits/consents
UPTRSC	Upwell – Tointons Road	28	0	1	1	2	Small catchment that is unlikely to experience significant growth. Concerns about the adverse impacts on the receiving watercourse system including the future capacity and maintenance of the receiving watercourse, flood risk implications, volumetric flow and water quality permits/consents.
CHCFSC	Christchurch – Fen View	324	2	2	2	2	Small catchment that is unlikely to see significant growth with any flows being encouraged to the Tipps End - Green Lane system. Concerns about the adverse impacts on the receiving watercourse system including capacity and maintenance of the receiving watercourses, flood risk implications, volumetric flow and water quality permits/consents.

Upwell Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2038

Subsequent to the last Board Meeting, a report prepared by an Independent Examiner was submitted to the Borough Council in June and the Borough Council's subsequent decision on the Examiner's recommendation for the Upwell Neighbourhood Plan was issued in October.

The contents of these documents have not yet been considered by the MLC Planning Engineer.

General Advice

Assistance has been given, on the Board's behalf, in respect of the following:

- (a) Mandy Parsons – An application for byelaw consent for the replacement of a culvert at Mill Cottage, Nordelph with a 900mm pipe and concrete bagged headwalls in the district watercourse between Points 57 and 58 was recommended for approval.
- (b) Mr and Mrs Darville – An application for bylaw consent to pipe and fill 26 metres of private watercourse with 600mm diameter plastic pipes including the installation of a manhole and a concrete bagged headwall alongside 12 Fen View, Christchurch to prevent property subsidence was recommended for approval.
- (c) Site visit to investigate a complaint of problems with a septic tank at Two Ways, Welney Road, Lakes End due to the piping and filling in of a watercourse by an adjacent property owner. The piping and filling had been consented by the Board. It was noted the drainage from the septic tank should not be dependent on a nearby watercourse.

Consulting Engineer

21 December 2020

Upwell (331)\Reports\December 2020

Miss Ablett reported that the Chairman had received a quotation from CW Engineering regarding the repairs to the automatic weedscreen cleaner at Bedlam Bridge pumping station and, having been accepted by both the Chairman and Vice Chairman, CW Engineering had been instructed to carry out the work.

The Chairman reported that the quotation received for the repairs was in the region of £3,000-£4,000 and as the cleaner had to be put back into operation, as soon as possible, he and the Vice Chairman had approved for CW Engineering to carry out the repairs. He also advised that it was considered beneficial to have an annual maintenance contract, also with CW Engineering, under which they would service the automatic weedscreen cleaner once a year. He confirmed that the cost of the maintenance contract was £1,400.00 per annum but the cost of any subsequent repairs would be in addition to this.

Miss Ablett reported that during an inspection last October at Upwell Fen pumping station a significant vermin problem had been identified. Although measures had been taken to seal up points of access further controls were urgently required.

She reported that the District Foreman was unable to deal with the problem unless he held the appropriate certificate for pest control and he had spoken with both the Chairman and Vice Chairman regarding him attending a rat bait course which, when completed, would enable him to carry out pest control on behalf of the Board. She advised that this had been agreed by the Chairman and Vice Chairman as it was considered the most cost-effective way of dealing with the problem.

Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency had re-established an internal working group and a formal project board was created in September 2020 regarding the Cranbrook/Counter Drain Flood Risk Management Strategy.

She further reported that the Middle Level Commissioners' Chief Executive had been invited by the Environment Agency to sit on the project board in a "senior user" capacity and both the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer and Conservation Officer had joined the steering group team to represent all Boards and Commissioners interests.

Miss Ablett enquired whether the Board were happy for the Middle Level Commissioners' Chief Executive, Planning Engineer and Conservation Officer to sit on the project board and steering group team, respectively, on behalf of the Board.

She advised it was likely that the Board's representation on an external stakeholders/users' group would also be required and it was suggested the Board's Chairman or Vice Chairman would be appropriate.

Miss Ablett highlighted that public bodies have a duty to co-operate with each other when dealing with strategic matters and therefore costs would be incurred by the Board for the Planning Engineer's involvement in developing and implementing the strategy. She advised that efforts would be made to keep these costs to a minimum and at the current time such costs were anticipated to be fairly minimal.

She enquired whether the Chairman or Vice Chairman would be willing to represent the Board on the external stakeholders group.

Miss Ablett advised that the Planning Engineer had confirmed that it would be beneficial to receive the Boards' opinion and further instruction regarding water level management in the Counter Drain and with future abstraction of water from the Counter Drain, together with future

aspirations for both Upwell Fen and Cock Fen pumping stations. She enquired whether the Chairman and/or Vice Chairman would be able to assist the Planning Engineer with this matter.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) Weedscreen at Bedlam Bridge Pumping Station
That the actions of the Chairman and Vice Chairman be approved.
- iii) Upwell Fen Pumping Station – Pest Control
That the actions of the Chairman and Vice Chairman be approved.
- iv) Cranbrook /Counter Drain (CCD) FRM Strategy
 - a) That the Board approve the use of the Middle Level Commissioners' staff on the Strategic Level Project Board and Steering Group, on behalf of the Board.
 - b) That the Chairman, and when unavailable, the Vice Chairman be approved to represent the Board on an External Stakeholders Group, on behalf of the Board.
- vi) Counter Drain
That the Planning Engineer contact the Chairman to discuss matters relating to the Counter Drain.

B.1917 Finance Committee Report

The Vice Chairman reported that, since the last Board meeting, the Finance Committee had met to discuss further the electrification of Cock Fen pumping station. He confirmed a quotation had finally been received from UK Power Networks in the region of £85,000.00 for the installation of a 3 phase electricity supply and added this also included legal costs for obtaining permission for the installation from the Environment Agency.

The Vice-Chairman stated that he had hoped the work would have been completed and the pumps operational by next Summer, ready for the winter. However, as UK Power Networks had advised they were unable to commence works until March 2022, this was now unlikely to be the case.

Miss Ablett reported that an email had been received from the contractor, Rand & Sons Ltd, advising that although the project was unable to commence until March 2022, they could still progress with the MCC Panel and motors/frames which would enable the Board to retain the price quoted per the tender.

She advised that the contractor would require an order to be placed before the end of January 2021 and would submit invoices for the work being undertaken and completed throughout 2021. The invoices would be in the region of £75,500.00 payable between February and July 2021.

Miss Ablett further advised that at the last meeting the Board had resolved to approve option 3, estimated at £233,000.00. However, since then, having spoken with the Consulting Engineer, and after due consideration of the pros and cons, the Chairman and Vice Chairman had opted to proceed with option 2 instead.

She reported that, following receipt of a formal tender from Rands in the sum of £121,184.00 and a quotation from UK Power Networks in the sum of £85,000.00, the total project costs would be in the region of £252,000.00. Miss Ablett enquired whether Members were happy to accept these quotations and proceed with option 2 as agreed by the Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Finance Committee.

Miss Ablett confirmed that, following the last Board meeting, approval to borrow £300,000.00 over 30 years from the Public Works Loan Board had been approved by the Environment Agency and Defra and that this approval would expire in June 2021. She enquired when and how much of the loan the Board would wish to draw down.

RESOLVED

- i) That the actions of the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and the Finance Committee in proceeding with option 2 at a provisional cost of £252,000.00, be approved.
- ii) That a purchase order in the sum of £121,184.00 be raised to Rand & Sons Ltd.
- iii) That the Public Works Loan of £300,000.00 be drawn down in full immediately.

B.1918 District Foreman's Report

The Board considered the Report of the District Foreman.

The Chairman expressed his thanks, on behalf of the Board, to Carl for his hard work that had been necessary over the Christmas period due to the excessive rainfall and had ensured the Board were pumping when they could.

RESOLVED

That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.

B.1919 Conservation Officer's Newsletter

Miss Ablett referred to the Conservation Officer's Newsletter, dated December 2020, which had previously been circulated to Members.

B.1920 District Labour Board's Employee Wages

The Board gave consideration to the Board's employees' wages for 2021/2022.

Miss Ablett referred to the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award indicator which was likely to be in the region of 2.7%.

RESOLVED

That the wages of the Board's employee be increased by the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award formula for 2021/2022 from 1st April 2021, as indicated on the Supplementary Schedule.

B.1921 Association of Drainage Authorities
Subscriptions

Miss Ablett reported that the Clerk had been advised that subscriptions for 2021 will remain unchanged at £866.

RESOLVED

That the requested ADA subscription for 2021 be paid.

B.1922 Flint House Road Culvert

Miss Ablett reported on the options for remedial works required on the Board owned bridge structure located on Flint House Road and confirmed that the Highway Authority had surveyed the structure and that the problems identified with it were detailed in their report.

Miss Ablett reported that the culvert had been inspected by the Clerk and the Middle Level Commissioners' Operations Engineer and they were of the opinion it would require attention at some point in the next 5 to 10 years.

B.1923 Asset Refurbishments – Grant-in-Aid

Miss Ablett reported that the Clerk had spoken with the Chairman as there were other IDB structures in a similar condition to that of the Flint House Road culvert. She advised that Gary Roberts, Middle Level Commissioners' Engineer, had been asked whether there might be any scope for grant application relating to asset refurbishments and he had confirmed there was.

Miss Ablett reported that it was thought a proposal could be put together for remedials to a series of assets that could then be refurbished under a Grant-in-Aid scheme, hopefully within the next few years

She advised that the estimated cost for preparing a business case would be in the region of £3,000-£5,000. However, if the application was successful, these costs would be recoverable.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Chairman and Vice-Chairman identify the Board's structures that were in need of refurbishment to include in any Grant-in-Aid application.
- ii) That the Clerk be requested to provide the Chairman with further information relating to a potential Grant-in-Aid application.
- iii) That the Clerk be requested to advise when a decision to commit to a Grant-in-Aid application would be required and, should a decision be required before the next Board meeting, the Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to take such action as they consider appropriate.

B.1924 Determination of annual value for rating purposes

The Board considered the recommendation for the determination of annual value for rating purposes.

RESOLVED

- i) That the determination recommended be adopted by the Board.
- ii) That the Clerk be empowered to serve notices and to take such other action as may be necessary to comply with statutory requirements.
- iii) That the Chairman and the Clerk be empowered to authorise appropriate action on behalf of the Board in connection with any appeals against the determination.

B.1925 Rate arrears

Consideration was given to writing off rate arrears amounting to £267.32.

RESOLVED

That the arrears be written off.

B.1926 Contribution from Developer

With reference to minute B.272(b), Miss Ablett reported that a contribution towards the cost of dealing with the increased flow or volume of surface water run-off and treated effluent volume had been received.

B.1927 Health and Safety Report

Further to minute B.1888, the Vice-Chairman reported that COPE Health & Safety Management had carried out two inspections of the Boards pumping stations and assets and advised the Board of the various works that had been carried out as highlighted at the last inspection.

B.1928 Special Circumstance Policy on Tendering

Miss Ablett referred to the policy that had been produced and advised Members that there had been issues for some IDBs during the COVID-19 pandemic in respect to meeting their normal policy on numbers of valid tenders or quotations. It was intended that this policy would only apply in special conditions such as these and that to invoke the policy the Chairman would need to record what the special circumstance was before it could be used.

RESOLVED

That the Board formally adopt this policy.

B.1929 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2019/2020

- a) The Board considered and approved the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2020.

b) The Board considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2020.

B.1930 Defra IDB1 Returns

Miss Ablett referred to the completed IDB1 form for 2019/2020 which the Board noted and approved.

B.1931 Expenditure/ Estimate Update

The Board considered the Estimate Update for 2020/2021.

RESOLVED

That the update be approved.

B.1932 Date of next Meeting

Miss Ablett reminded Members that the next Meeting of the Board will be held on Monday the 17th May 2021.