

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

At a Meeting of the Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners
hosted at the Middle Level Offices, March on Thursday the 22nd April 2021

PRESENT

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| M Church Esq (Chairman) | R J Darby Esq |
| G L P Wilson Esq (Vice Chairman) | W Dennis Esq |
| I C Chambers Esq | R Flint Esq |
| T B Chambers Esq | T Hughes Esq |
| S G Cheetham Esq | A Lensen Esq |
| A W J Darby Esq | P Mappedoram Esq |
| Mrs M E Darby | R B Waddelow Esq |
| N R W Wright Esq | |

Miss Samantha Ablett (representing the Clerk to the Commissioners) and Mr David Jordan (District Engineer) were in attendance.

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

As previously resolved, the meeting was recorded.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from C H Bidwell Esq, H C Hurrell Esq, R J Lee Esq and J Smith Esq.

C.381 Declarations of Interest

Miss Ablett reminded the Commissioners of the importance of declaring an interest in any matter included in today's agenda that involved or was likely to affect any of them.

The Chairman declared interests in minute nos. C.392 and C.406.

Mr W Dennis declared an interest in minute no. C.386.

C.382 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Commissioners held on the 17th February 2021 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

C.383 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED

That M Church Esq be appointed Chairman of the Commissioners.

C.384 Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED

That G L P Wilson Esq be appointed Vice Chairman of the Commissioners.

C.385 Planning Issues

a) Garden Close/Mepal Road, Sutton

Further to minute C.377(a), the Chairman referred to the comments made by the Planning Officer in the Consulting Engineer's report.

b) 115 dwellings on land at Camp's Field, south of Stretham Road, Wilburton

Further to minute C.377(b), the Chairman referred to the comments made by the Planning Officer in the Consulting Engineer's report and advised there was nothing further to report.

C.386 Construction of Irrigation Reservoirs – Willow Hall Farm

Further to minute C.380, the Chairman reported that he had sent a further letter to Cambridgeshire County Council who had since confirmed it had been sent to the Environment Agency and that a meeting would be organised to be held on the 1st March. The Chairman advised that as he had been included in all other meetings, he had assumed he would be again.

The Chairman advised when he had not heard from Cambridgeshire County Council, he had contacted them again and was told the Council and the Environment Agency had already met and based on the information they had before them would be presenting the application to the Planning Committee on the 10th June and their report would not be available until 6 days before, at which time the Commissioners could apply to attend the meeting.

The Chairman reported that Cambridgeshire County Council had enquired whether the proposed agreement with Dennis (Haddenham) Limited covered the construction phase as well as the post construction and he had confirmed the proposed agreement was being drawn up mainly to cover the operation of the reservoirs post construction.

Mr W Dennis confirmed that nothing had changed since the last Commissioners meeting and he had spoken with the Clerk and was waiting for the draft agreement to be returned so his solicitor could draw it up.

The Chairman reported the Clerk had drawn up the heads of agreement for the Commissioners, which had been sent to Mr Dennis and it was undecided who would draw up the formal agreement, the Middle Level Commissioners or Mr Dennis' solicitor. He added that either way the agreement needed to be drawn up before the planning committee meeting on the 10th June.

Mr W Dennis confirmed his solicitor would draw up the agreement once it had been returned to him by the Clerk.

Mr Wright expressed his concern that despite the Commissioners having agreed they were satisfied with de-watering occurring between October and December, as stated by Mr W Dennis at the meeting on 3rd September 2020, the documents now put forward for planning showed the de-watering period extending from October through to February/March, which departed from that which the Commissioners had considered was fair and reasonable. He enquired whether Mr W Dennis could give the Commissioners some comfort that if there was a dry winter, he was confident that come the 1st April the land would have properly recharged ready for spring growing.

Mr W Dennis advised the proposals put forward had been those of an expert.

Mr Wright reported that his own expert had advised that if there was a dry winter, adjacent landowners could be in trouble and considered de-watering from January to March put landowners at risk and they would have no control. Mr Wright added that he considered a de-watering period from October to December was fair.

The Chairman stated that until the Commissioners had received assurance that de-watering would cease at the end of December, they would be unable to lift their objections.

Mrs Darby agreed with Mr Wright and expressed her concern that if water was not available during this extended period the crops of several farmers would suffer. She considered the Commissioners should insist on the period of de-watering only being from October to December as had previously been agreed.

The Vice Chairman suggested the Commissioners write to Cambridgeshire County Council following this meeting, advising that the Commissioners had decided at their meeting that de-watering from October to December would be acceptable and the planning committee be asked to reject the application if the period is to be extended to February/March.

Miss Ablett enquired whether the Commissioners wished for the Clerk to write the letter on their behalf. The Chairman confirmed he would write the letter in view of the timescale.

This matter was discussed further by the Commissioners and it was agreed the de-watering period must only be between October and December and a working agreement must be in place before the Commissioners' objection would be lifted. The Chairman agreed that he would attend the meeting on the 10th June 2021 and would update the Councillors on behalf of the Commissioners.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Clerk return the draft agreement to Mr W Dennis for his solicitor to draw up.
- ii) That dewatering only be allowed in October, November, December and a working agreement must be in place before the Commissioners' objection is lifted.
- iii) That the Chairman write to Cambridgeshire County Council advising that the Commissioners resolved at their meeting that de-watering from October to December would be acceptable and asks the planning committee to reject the application if the period is to be extended to February/March.
- iv) That the Chairman updates the County Council at the meeting on 10th June 2021, if possible.

C.387 Ouse Washes Section 10 Reservoir Middle Level and South Level Barrier Bank works

Further to minute C.360, Miss Ablett referred to the Newsletters from the Environment Agency dated November and December 2020 and March 2021.

C.388 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) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the 83rd Annual Conference of the Association was 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 Commissioner who wishes to attend.

c) Meeting of the River Great Ouse Branch

That the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association was held virtually on Tuesday the 2nd March 2021.

Matters covered were that there was a change in Chairman with Harry Raby stepping down and Marc Heading taking his place. Councillor Doug McMurdo takes on the role of Vice Chairman. This maintains the balance of having upland and lowland members in key roles and also balances council and agricultural ratepayers' interests. John Heading was appointed for another three years on the ADA Board as branch representative. Robert Caudwell gave an update on ADA matters focusing in on progress of the agriculture bill through parliament and the lowland peat initiative which he considers must not negatively impact on livelihoods and the need to produce food for the nation. Next to speak was Brian Stewart who was seeking support for his initiative to create an Ex-Officio post on the FRCC for the sitting Chairman of the Great Ouse branch of ADA (EA nominated post). This was supported unanimously and Marc Heading will take up this new role with immediate effect.

Claire Jouvray and Paul Burrows gave updates on the revenue funding position, which was quite healthy with sources of money found to deliver what had been targeted and on the long-term strategy for the area including the tactical plans which are set to make access to grant in aid smoother than it might otherwise be. A warning was raised that funding may get squeezed as time passes and the financial impact of COVID-19 gets addressed.

Approximately 30 people attended this virtual meeting, which should return to its normal format at Prickwillow Hall next year.

That the date of the next meeting is Tuesday the 1st March 2022.

d) ADA response to publication of EFRA Flooding Inquiry Report

That ADA have responded to the Government EFRA report into the winters flooding, which has the headline conclusion that the lack of clear flood-resilience targets is leaving England at risk of 'playing catch-up' with climate change.

Encouragingly, in addition to recognising these challenges, EFRA have also clearly stated that in light of ever more frequent and severe storms, there is an urgent need to provide long-term funding for the maintenance of existing and new flood defences, to match capital commitment together with a need to examine the mental health impacts of severe flooding, calling for an action plan to address this alongside the economic and physical effects.

ADA's response and the full EFRA report can be found via the following link;
<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5801/cmselect/cmenvfru/170/170.pdf>

iii) Smart Level System/District Wide Telemetry Bid

Further to minute C.361(vi), when looking at the cost of telemetry there will be a number of factors that will impact upon cost. We have asked Xylem to put together a table that should cover the upper and lower bounds of all IDB pumping stations (see below). Prior to placing an order, a site survey will be undertaken, average cost for this is expected to be in the region of £200. Xylem will then assess what if any control panel modifications will be required to allow telemetry. The other defining factor will be whether there is to be an additional requirement for remote control of the station pumps and set points. The table covers this range.

The costing bands are:

| | | |
|--------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Low | £2000 - £5,000 | Minor panel modifications are required, signals are present but need work to the panel to present or make these available to telemetry. |
| Medium | £5,001 - £24,999 | Signals are not present to enable telemetry and panel modifications are quite intensive to bring the panel to a point where a telemetry unit can be installed. |
| High | £25,000 + | Signals are not present and the panel requires major modifications to give the required signals. Should this option be required it is anticipated that consideration first should be given to replacement of the control panel which would bring more value and longevity. Signals for telemetry could be more easily accommodated in a new panel. |

Note all above figures are gross and if the Board resolves to go ahead as part of the Grant funded scheme currently on offer will be discounted 50%.

Note: The telemetry access will be cloud based, increasing the flexibility in access at the appropriate level for staff and District Officers.

Miss Ablett enquired whether the Commissioners wished to be included in the arrangement for telemetry provision.

The Chairman reported that telemetry was already installed at Haddenham pumping station, but it had never worked well.

Miss Ablett advised that the new system adapted by the MLC and manufactured by Xylem Water Solutions, a multi-national company, was more reliable and customer support was perceived to be better. She advised it may be beneficial to have a survey carried out at each site at a cost in the region of £200, which would ascertain which option would be best suited to each site.

The Commissioners discussed the matter further and agreed that a site survey would be beneficial and the results should be reported to the Commissioners at their next meeting for consideration.

RESOLVED

That a survey be carried out at each pumping station and the results reported to the Commissioners at their next meeting for consideration.

iv) Fens Biosphere

Further to minute C.315, Miss Ablett referred to the leaflet from Cambridgeshire Acre.

v) Land Registry

That whilst it is a legal requirement for land occupiers to notify the Board of any change of occupation, including releasing contact details for the new occupiers, on many occasions this does not occur and time is spent trying to determine who the new occupier is. When the normal avenues fail to deliver any meaningful information, we now use our Land Registry account to gain details of the current land owner. The costs of making an application via this method are small (currently £6) but obviously this will show up on the Board accounts, hence the need to draw this new way of working to the Boards attention.

vi) National Drainage Show & Floodex 2021

That the National Drainage Show & Floodex 2021 will be held at ExCel, London on the 9th and 10th November 2021.

vii) Water Resources East (WRE)

Further to minute C.315(v), Miss Ablett reported that WRE have had a productive and fruitful year despite COVID and have managed to lever many millions of funding for studies and initiatives which in the long term should benefit this area by recognising the importance of agriculture to the water resource supply chain and by seeking ways to integrate water resources, flood risk management and environmental objective delivery together. For the 2020/2021 year (should the Board continue to wish to support the work of WRE and contribute accordingly) the calculated figure would be £125.00. Please note that ADA have developed a new band-based charging structure, hence the change from the previous year's figure.

The Chairman enquired why the contribution had more than doubled since the previous year.

Miss Ablett reported that ADA had revisited their calculations and used the same methodology as that currently used to raise ADA subscriptions, which was calculated on the basis of an IDB's area and total annual value of land holdings.

Miss Ablett further reported that with ADA on the Board of Directors the needs of the agricultural sector were not ignored, but were recognised regarding water resources planning across eastern England and the condition of ADA taking a seat was linked to the provision of some financial support for the continued administration of WRE's technical and managerial staff.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners approve the requested annual contribution of £125.00.

C.389 Asset Survey of the Commissioners' Pumping Stations

Further to minute C.317, the Chairman referred to the comments previously made by the Consulting Engineer following the Asset Surveys of the Commissioners' Pumping Stations that had been carried out and to his comments concerning the condition of the sheet piling at Sutton Gault Pumping Station.

The Chairman advised that as he was not happy with the comments made, he had invited the Consulting Engineer who supervised the construction of the Haddenham Pumping Station to inspect the piling. The Chairman reported that he had been advised the only way to obtain a full report of the condition of the piling was to either dry out the chamber so that an engineer could physically inspect it or to use the services of a diver to inspect the piling at a cost in the region of £2,500 per day. The Chairman confirmed that although there appeared to be a lot of rust, the thickness of the metal piles was still sufficient for there not to be a problem in the short term and in his opinion no further action should be taken at this time.

RESOLVED

That no further action be taken at this time.

C.390 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

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

Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners

Consulting Engineers Report – March 2021

Pumping Stations

Other than the matters described below, only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant at each of the stations is mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition.

Haddenham

Over the last year there has been a small but persistent oil leak from gearbox No1, the District Officer is currently monitoring and topping the oil up, however he has requested MLC look at replacing the seals this year.

The weed cleaner hoses are cracked and require replacement this summer

Sutton Gault

In November 2018 a visual inspection of the pump (with water levels held low) revealed that the pump bolts are corroding and it was the Engineer's recommendation they be scheduled for replacement in the summer of 2023. Leakage from the top gland bush has become excessive over the period, whilst this is not an operational issue it would be advisable to renew the packing this summer.

The HMI for the weedscreen cleaner cannot be accessed, to change parameters etc, however this does not seem to be an issue. Nevertheless, it may well benefit from a thorough overhaul in the next two years.

Electrical Retesting

The periodic retest of electrical equipment, to ensure continued compliance with the Electricity at Work Regulations, was carried out on 19 March 2021 for both Haddenham station and the bungalow, Sutton Gault station is not due until March 2024.

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

Further to the last meeting report additional supporting information has been supplied to the Environment Agency (EA) and its consultants concerning the proportion of the annual cost that is due to electricity use, versus the proportion of the annual cost that is due to maintenance and inspection activities and the proportion of pumping stations that are not powered by grid electricity and rely on other energy sources. This information was provided to inform part of the Fens Carbon Baseline work that is being undertaken.

The next virtual meeting of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) has been arranged for the end of April in advance of the publishing of the Baseline Report in May.

The Integrity of Corrugated Steel Pipes

Several Boards/Commissioners both within and adjacent to the Middle Level 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 Commissioners 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 Commissioners 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 Commissioners allow for remedial, replacement or removal works in its future maintenance and funding programme.

Structures for which the Commissioners are not responsible but which could also impact on the Commissioners' system should also be inspected and, where appropriate, a notice issued to the responsible parties in accordance with the Commissioners' Byelaw No. 11, as detailed below:

11. 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.”

High Rainfall Event and Flooding Incident

August flooding Incidents

The heatwave experienced during early August resulted in an area of thundery weather moving across Essex, Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire into Northamptonshire bringing heavy downpours and localised flash flooding.

The flooding experienced in the Somersham, Colne, Bluntisham and Earith areas was considered to be particularly bad and the County Council, in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), enquired whether anyone had any useful information on the event; for example, rainfall figures, the extent of any flooding, the approximate times of the storms etc.

Thunderstorms can be very localised with some areas hit by torrential downpours while other districts nearby miss the rain altogether. This is exemplified in the rainfall figures provided by the Commissioners.

| Location | Mid-Morning | Late Afternoon | Evening | Total 24 hours |
|------------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------|----------------|
| Haddenham Pumping Station | 40mm | 20mm | 15mm | 75mm |
| Aldreth Road, Haddenham | 1mm | 1mm | 5mm | 7mm |
| Sutton Gault Pumping Station | | | | 1mm |
| Earith | | | | 90mm |

It is understood that flooding also occurred in Cottenham, March, St Ives, St Neots/Eaton Socon, Weston Colville and Woodhurst with garden flooding in a number of other locations.

Work has been undertaken by the LLFA, in conjunction with the County Highways team, to investigate and address some of the issues directly.

December flooding Incidents

Early December brought higher than average rainfall in the UK with some eastern areas exceeding their typical December rainfall by the middle of the month.

A more intense rainfall period was experienced just before Christmas which was formed from a concentrated belt of rain that extended from the Severn Estuary to The Wash. A few days later Storm Bella crossed the country on 26 and 27 December. Fortunately rainfall in the Eastern Counties was relatively low but this, and further rainfall, served to retain the saturated condition of the catchment which continued to respond rapidly to further rainfall events.

During December the Middle Level Commissioners recorded 127.5 mm of rain at their March office with 52.5mm being recorded on 23 December. A total of 10mm was recorded between 24 December 2020 and 2 January 2021.

Whilst the amount of rain that fell during this period was not as great as that experienced in August 2014, it fell on highly saturated ground that offered no sponge effect and led to significant flooding within the local area which was featured in the local media.

Flooding was reported to Cambridgeshire County Council, in its capacity as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) at several locations including Yaxley, March, Manea, Ramsey, Glatton, Swavesey, Doddington, Wimblington, Wisbech, Chatteris, Stilton, Sawtry, Conington, Wisbech St Mary, Friday Bridge, Leverington, Whittlesey, Elm, Rings End and Benwick.

The Clerk to the Commissioners attended a high level meeting with Steve Barclay MP and representatives from other organisations and both the Clerk and the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer have attended both routine and extraordinary meetings of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Flood and Water (C&P FloW) Partnership and the Fenland Flooding Sub-group which have discussed issues associated with the flooding event.

Flood Incident reporting and Investigations are currently being undertaken by the various Risk Management Authorities (RMA) involved.

As previously stated, upon initial review, it appears that the instances of reported flooding are less than experienced in August 2014. However, due to the number of incidents reported the County Council, in its role as the LLFA, is likely to prepare several Section 19 reports.

The preparation of any reports may involve the participation of the Middle Level Commissioners' staff on behalf of the Commissioners. However, no internal flooding has yet been identified within the Commissioners' district.

NB: Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) places a duty on LLFAs to undertake a flood investigation after a 'significant' flood event, to the extent that it considers necessary or appropriate. Flood events are to be classed as 'significant' when certain criteria are met, such as internal flooding to five or more properties and/or if damage and disruption is caused to critical infrastructure and buildings; such as major roads and hospitals. The purpose of the report is to investigate the:

- **Events leading up to the flooding**
- **Numbers of properties flooded**
- **Which RMAs have flood risk management functions in respect of the flooding**
- **Whether each of those authorities has exercised or is proposing to exercise those functions in response to the flood.**

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/Commissioners 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 Application

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 2 new development related matters have been received and, where appropriate, dealt with since the last meeting:

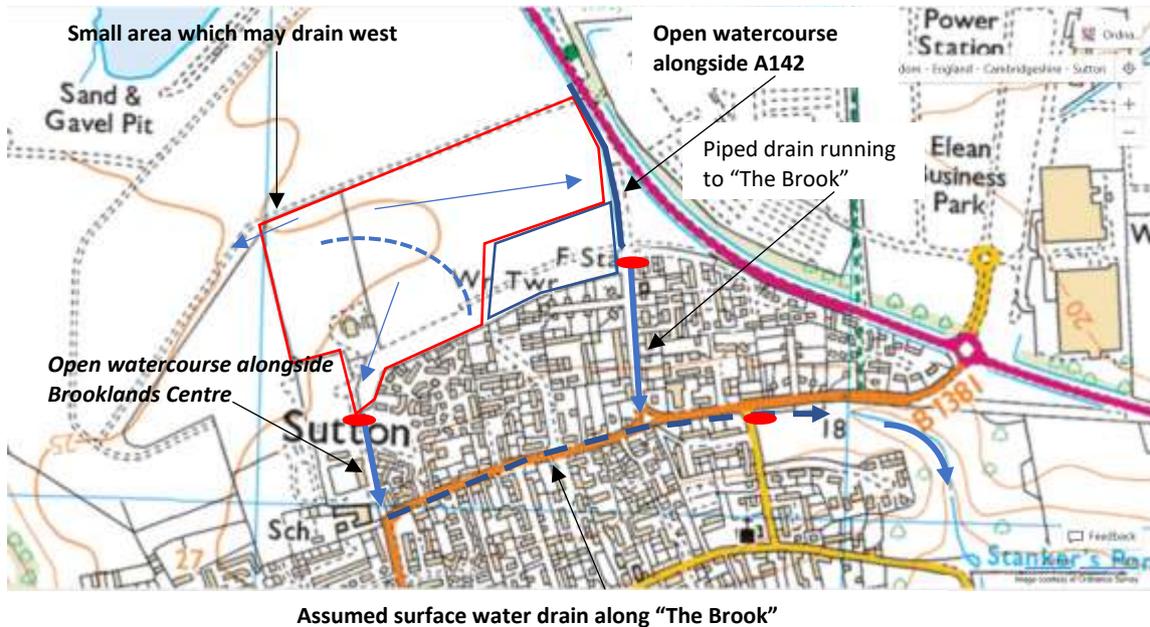
| MLC Ref. | Council Ref. | Applicant | Type of Development | Location |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 005 | 20/01766/RMM | Castlemore Properties | Residential (33 plots) | Metcalfe Way, Haddenham |
| 006 | 21/00044/FUL | CB Groundworks & Construction Ltd | Change of use of existing agricultural buildings to a mixed use of agriculture and B8 storage and (part retrospective) an area of hardstanding from open agricultural storage to open storage of contractor's plant and machinery (sui generis) | Hillrow Causeway, Haddenham |

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

Outline planning application for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of up to 173 dwellings and provision of land for community facilities (sports pitches and burial ground), including access (not internal roads), open space, sustainable urban drainage systems and associated landscaping. All matters reserved apart from access on land adjacent to 43 Mepal Road, Sutton – Linden Ltd (MLC Ref No 001)

No further correspondence has been received in relation to the above development on the old Mepal airfield and as a consequence no further action has been taken.

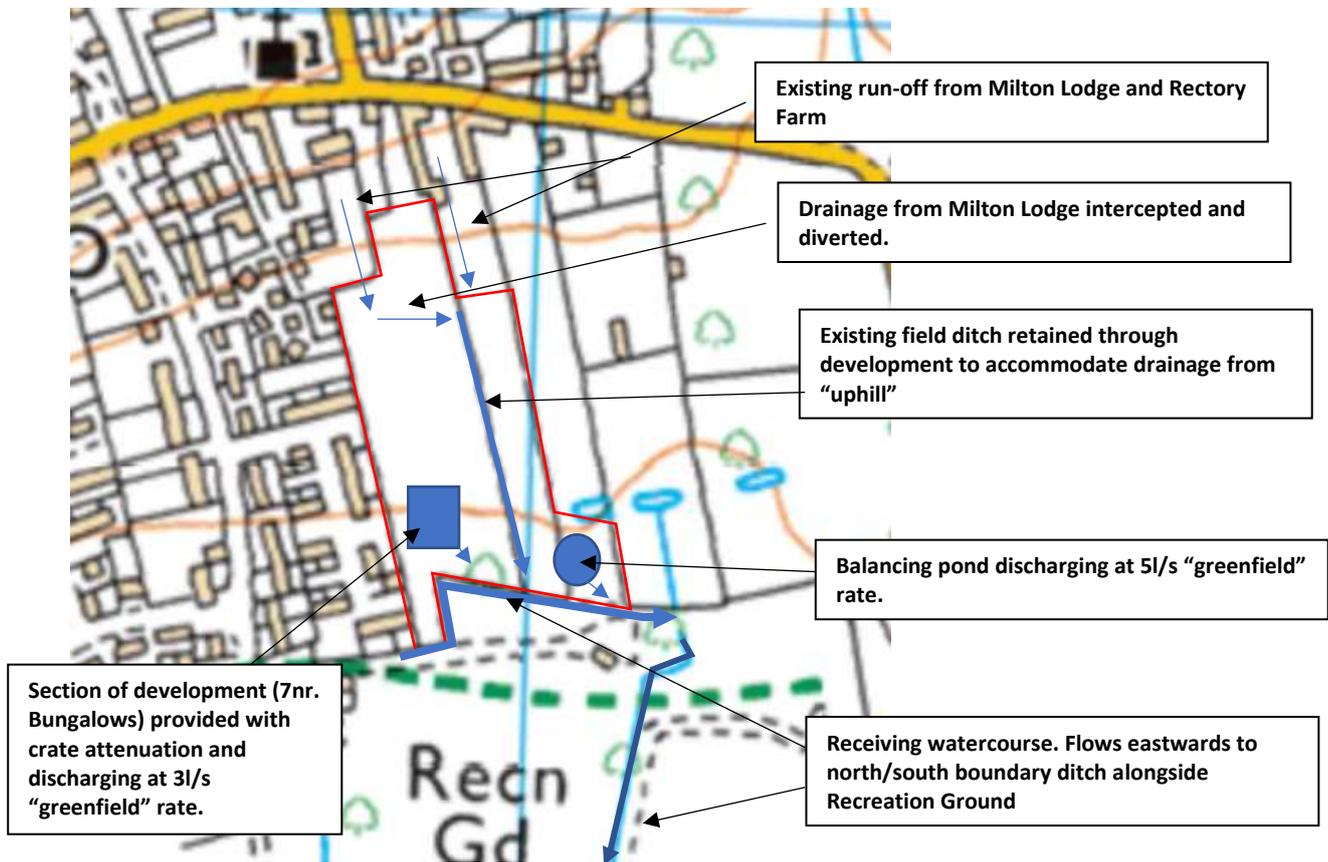
According to the District Council's Public Access webpage a decision on this planning application is pending.



Reserved matters for Outline planning application 17/01445/OUM for erection of up to 53 houses to include public open space and details relating to access on land rear of Garden Close Sutton – Abbey Developments Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 002 & 004)

Further to the entry in the previous meeting report a response was submitted to the District Council outlining the concerns identified and objecting to the planning application on the basis of insufficient drainage consideration. In addition to the objection the response highlighted the requirement for the developer to consult with the Commissioners over their drainage proposals to show that the proposals would result in no increased run-off from the development and that suitable measures would be undertaken in respect of the receiving watercourse. This response to the planning authority prompted correspondence from Cotswold Transport Planning Ltd, acting on behalf of the applicant, who raised an initial enquiry over consent requirements.

Subsequent to the Consulting Engineer’s response to the Planning Officer, a local resident made contact with our office regarding the development proposals. A site meeting was held with the resident, the Commissioners’ Chairman and the MLC Consulting Engineer to discuss the proposals and input some local knowledge of the drainage of the area impacted by the development. This site meeting was most informative and confirmed the earlier concerns raised.



The re-submitted Reserved Matters application (ECDC Ref No 20/01169/RMM MLC Ref No 004) for this development was refused permission in January. As part of the consultation held with the local resident the Planning Officer expected that an appeal against the decision would be made by the applicant but this has not happened as yet.

The planning application was primarily refused on issues relating to the failure to comply with the Sutton Neighborhood Plan and District Council Policies relating to landscape and settlement characteristics, Design and Biodiversity. However, the Decision Notice also includes the following:

"6 The applicants have failed to take a precautionary approach to the Riparian Ownership rights and responsibilities of new occupants of Plot Nos 22-31 and 40-46 by locating development within a watercourse on land between the rear of these dwellings which if not properly managed and maintained could lead to flooding of the site and adjoining land to the detriment of their living environment and that of adjoining occupiers contrary to Policies ENV2 and ENV8 of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 and the Flood and Water SPD."

Members will be only too well aware of the importance of riparian watercourses in the larger flood risk and water level management system within the fenland environment and the workload and financial burden that dealing with riparian issues can cause. The importance of these "assets" are often overlooked or ignored when considering

planning applications where planning authorities are under pressure to reach growth targets. Therefore, it is considered that the position taken is an unusual but appropriate one which should be applauded and considered as an example of best practice for all the planning authorities in the “fenland” environment.

Outline application comprising access and landscaping to provide up to 115 dwellings comprising 35 CLT houses and 80 market houses (including 5no. self-build plots), commercial units - (Use Class B1(Business) and/or D1 (Non-residential Institutions - day nursery) - in the alternative), substation, multi-functional community building and football pitch, together with landscaping (including public open space) and associated infrastructure (with all other matters reserved) on land at Camp's Field south of Stretham Road Wilburton – Stretham & Wilburton Community Land Trust & Laragh Homes Developments Ltd (MLC Ref No 003)

Further to the entry in the last report no further correspondence has been received in relation to the above development and as a consequence no further action has been carried out.

According to the District Council's Public Access webpage, a request to formally agree to extend the period for deciding the application until 31 May has been made. It is understood that this is to allow finalisation of a S106 Agreement.

Approval of the details for reserved matters for appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale of planning application 18/01041/OUM erection of 33 dwellings, associated public open space and landscaping, with all matters reserved except for access on site east of 12 - 18 Metcalfe Way Haddenham, 20/01766/RMM – Castlemore Homes (MLC Ref No 005)

Following the high rainfall events experienced during the Christmas period a concerned neighbour, adjacent to the above development, contacted the Middle Level Commissioners' offices to raise concern over the impact of drainage and potential flood risk from the development.

Whilst the site is located outside of the Commissioners' district it ultimately drains to the Catchwater Drain. In discussion with the Commissioners' Chairman, the Consulting Engineer was instructed to review the proposals and provide a response to the District Council highlighting concerns in relation to drainage and flood risk as there is a high probability that the new development would overwhelm the receiving drainage system

located in Hod Hall Lane. A response was submitted to the District Council on 4 February.

At the time of writing the status of the application is under consideration.

Change of use of (1) an existing open-sided agricultural shed from agriculture to a mixed use of agriculture and B8 storage, (2) an existing agricultural building from agriculture to a mixed use of agriculture and B8 storage, and (3) (part retrospective) an area of hardstanding from open agricultural storage to open storage of contractor's plant and machinery (sui generis) at Tree Farm, Hillrow Causeway, Haddenham, 21/00044/FUL - Mr Kevin Johnson – CB Groundworks & Construction Ltd (MLC Ref No 006)

Following a request from the Commissioners' Chairman a review of the above planning application has been carried out and subsequent to the review a response to the District Council regarding the proposals has been made.

The Commissioners' consent is required for any increase in surface water run-off resulting from the development. It is understood that the application is for a change of use so the majority of the area may well be already impermeable, however, it is not clear from the information supplied if this development would result in an increase in impermeable area. It was also noted that the existing drainage serving the site may not meet the latest design criteria in respect of surface water systems which should be designed to accommodate, for example, the worst case 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP), a 1 in 100 year storm. It was noted in the response that this development may therefore present an opportunity to improve the existing drainage to safeguard the site and meet the current design requirements.

In addition to the above the response given commented on the requirement to ensure suitable maintenance of the receiving watercourse which runs alongside the site and that a maintenance strip should be retained to allow for access to the watercourse. Potential concerns over contaminated run-off were also highlighted due to the proposed change of use to store plant and machinery. Suitable interception should be provided within the site drainage to ensure no contaminated run-off enters the receiving watercourse.

Finally, the response outlined the relevant consenting requirements and that the Commissioners would need to be satisfied that the existing drainage system is sufficient to accommodate the proposals and supporting information would need to be provided to advise whether a consent to discharge is required, or not.

At the time of writing the status of the application was pending consideration, although it was noted that an extension of time from the 19 March decision date had been requested by the Planning Officer.

Erection of 55 new dwellings, new access, estate roads, driveways, parking areas, open space, external lighting, substation and associated infrastructure at site south and west of The Bungalow, Brick Lane, Mepal - Havebury Housing Partnership

An enquiry was received from the applicant's agent/contractor, Lovell Partnerships Ltd, concerning a potential residential development site.

Lovells was advised that although the development site was not within the Commissioners' district, the surface water from the development will discharge into the Catchwater Drain via the culvert beneath the A142 which is maintained by the Commissioners on behalf of the EA.

Lovells was also advised that due to the critical nature of the watercourse, surface water disposal would need to be attenuated to greenfield rates, and while consent in respect of surface water discharge would not therefore be required, the Commissioners would need to be consulted on the drainage proposals to ensure they are satisfied the proposals are acceptable.

In order to guide further discussion, it would be beneficial to receive the Commissioners' opinion and further instruction on the above planning matters and other planning applications which may arise which are outside of the Commissioners' district but have the potential to impact on the Catchwater Drain.

East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) Local Plan

No further correspondence has been received from ECDC concerning Policy Planning issues and no further action has been taken in respect of the Commissioners' interests.

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/Commissioners since the last Board meeting.

The main matters up to November 2020 that may be of interest to the Commissioners are as follows:

Future Meetings

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic meetings have been, and are likely to continue to be, held virtually. Whilst this does have some benefits the number of participants attending and the restraints that holding a virtual meeting presents restricts open discussion and meetings can be constrained by time limits.

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.

Local FRM Strategy

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

The Oxford–Cambridge (OX-Cam) Arc Property Flood Resilience (PFR)

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).

A request for an extension and additional funding as a result of the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic was submitted to defra.

The Baseline Report has been completed but is not currently in the public domain.



Plan showing the extents of the Ox-Cam ARC

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 with the hope that it would actively support a national information campaign. Unfortunately, this did not happen but the information has been fed into the national strategy via the EA and the action plan is likely to contain actions related to riparian owners.

Flood and Coast Resilience Innovation Programme

In response to the availability for funding as part of the Government’s Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme, the County Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority, working with partners, including the Middle Level Commissioners and associated Boards, and other key stakeholders submitted an expression of interest for several workstreams which offered innovative approaches to improve resilience to flooding and coastal change, including the ability to adapt to future climate

change. Unfortunately, the bid was unsuccessful and other sources of funding are currently being investigated.

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.

Guidance from the County Council's Emergency Planning Team concerning the publication and management of the document is on hold due to the workload generated by COVID-19.

Lessons learnt from recent flood events elsewhere

(a) Environment Agency (EA)

A debrief exercise originally planned for April 2020 on the flooding experienced at Wainfleet during the winter of 2019/20 was postponed.

(b) Cambridgeshire County Council - Flood Risk and Biodiversity

August flooding in Cambridgeshire - see separate item elsewhere in this report.

CCC and PCC Climate Change Strategy/Plan

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate

An initial public consultation sought the views of residents and organisations between 26 October and 13 November to help shape their areas of focus. This will be followed by a six week "call for evidence" and following consideration of the submission a recommendation report is planned to be issued in the spring.

The County Council was keen to ensure that water and flood management are a key focus and are planning on submitting a RFCC response and will be highlighting the evidence gathered as part of our Future Fens project in particular.

Anglian Water Services Limited (AWSL)

Drainage & Wastewater Management Plans (DWMPs)

Further consultation with Anglian Water is currently awaited.

Environment Agency (EA)

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

See separate item elsewhere in this report.

Highways England (HE)

Environment Designated Fund

The next round has commenced 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.

Simon Baldrey has replaced Claire Parsons as the Environment Management Lead.

Consulting Engineer

31 March 2021

e:\ES\Word\Reports\Haddenham\March 2021

Miss Ablett referred to a persistent oil leak from gearbox no. 1 at Haddenham pumping station, and that, having monitored the situation, the Chairman recommended the Commissioners look at replacing the seals this year. This was discussed and Members agreed that a quote should be obtained before any work is commenced.

Miss Ablett reported the Consulting Engineer had advised the weedscreen cleaner hoses at Haddenham pumping station were cracked and would require replacement this summer.

The Chairman reported that as CW Engineering carried out all the repairs of the weedscreen cleaner and as they normally have parts in stock, they are able to undertake any repairs quickly. He enquired whether the Commissioners were happy to wait until the hoses required replacement and for CW Engineering to undertake the necessary work at that time. The Commissioners agreed this was the best course of action.

Miss Ablett referred to the Consulting Engineer's comments regarding Sutton Gault pumping station where a leakage from the top of the gland bush had become excessive. She advised that whilst this was not an operational issue, the Consulting Engineer considered it would be advisable to renew the packing this summer.

The Chairman recommended that the gland packing should be replaced and this was agreed by the Commissioners.

Miss Ablett referred to the Consulting Engineer's comments regarding the weedscreen cleaner at Sutton Gault pumping station and that he considered it may be beneficial for the weedscreen cleaner to be overhauled within the next two years; the cost of which would be in the region of £20,000.00.

The Chairman considered the cost to be excessive and advised that since the District Engineer had been maintaining the cleaner very few faults or problems had arisen.

Miss Ablett advised that the cost provided by the Consulting Engineer was an estimate and that, should an overhaul be required, the engineer would obtain several quotes for the Commissioners consideration. Miss Ablett further advised that this expense had been included in the Commissioners' capital programme and although the overhaul may not be required now the Commissioners did need to consider how this would be funded in the future.

The Chairman considered that the operation and condition of the weedscreen cleaner should be monitored for the time being and Members agreed this was the best course of action.

Miss Ablett referred to the Planning Officer's comments regarding the proposed erection of 55 new dwellings at Brick Lane, Mepal, where the surface water from the development would discharge into the Catchwater Drain, which is maintained by the Commissioners on behalf of the Environment Agency.

The Commissioners agreed that the Consulting Engineer should continue to deal with all planning matters outside of the Commissioners' District, but which impact on the Catchwater Drain.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) That the Consulting Engineer obtain quotations for the repair of No. 1 gearbox at Haddenham pumping station and send to the Chairman and that he be authorised to take any action required.

- iii) That the Consulting Engineer arrange for the gland packing to be renewed at Sutton Gault pumping station.
- v) That the Consulting Engineer continues to deal with all planning matters outside of the Commissioners' District, but which impact on the Catchwater Drain.

C.391 Capital Improvement Programme

The Commissioners considered their future capital improvement programme.

Miss Ablett referred to the Capital programme which showed potential future capital expenditure that may be necessary and when funds may be required.

She highlighted the Sutton Gault Pumping Station replacement shown in year 6, 2026/2027 at a cost of £750,000, which had previously been discussed under the Consulting Engineers Report.

The Chairman reported on the condition of the Sutton Gault Pumping Station and advised that, in his opinion, the pump should be removed in 2-3 years for the pump and motor to be overhauled, at which time the wet well chamber should be inspected further, but he considered the building, inlets and weedscreen cleaner were in a satisfactory condition.

RESOLVED

That the Capital Programme be approved in principle and kept under review.

C.392 District Work Report

- i) The Chairman reported on the programmed drain maintenance works that had been carried out.

He stressed the importance of the work carried out by the Commissioners on behalf of the Environment Agency, in view of the development in all villages, especially Sutton, which continued to increase the pressure on the Catchwater Drain, particularly in periods of excessive rainfall.

RESOLVED

That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved and the Chairman in conjunction with the District Engineer be authorised to arrange for the District's work programme to be undertaken.

- ii) District Work Arrangements

The Chairman declared an interest and the Vice Chairman took the Chair.

The Commissioners gave consideration to the District Officer's fee for 2021/2022.

Miss Ablett reported that the Chairman had enquired whether the telephone line could continue to be paid by the Commissioners and that he makes a contribution towards the cost for any private use, considering the phone/internet was predominantly used for business.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Chairman be re-appointed District Officer.
- ii) That the Commissioners agree that the sum of £2,000.00 be allowed for the services of the Chairman for 2021/2022, together with all legitimate expenses.
- iii) That the Chairman submit half yearly invoices to the Commissioners in respect of his fees.
- iv) That the Commissioners agree that 45p per mile be allowed for travelling expenses incurred on behalf of the Commissioners by Mr Church.
- v) That the telephone landline remains in the name of the Commissioners and that the Chairman reimburse the Commissioners for 5% of the net telephone costs.
- vi) That the service agreement be amended to reflect this.

The Chairman resumed the Chair

(NB) - The Chairman declared an interest when this item was discussed.

C.393 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Miss Ablett referred to the Conservation Officer's Newsletter, dated December 2020, previously circulated to the Commissioners.

The Commissioners considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

C.394 Charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work

Consideration was given to whether any revisions were necessary in the Commissioners' charges for hiring plant for private work (last reviewed – April 2020).

Atlas 360 Wheeled Excavator

Present charges - £26.00 per hour in the District) inclusive of operator's wages and
£38.50 per hour outside the District) travelling time

RESOLVED

That no change be made to the hire charges.

C.395 State-aided Schemes

Consideration was given to the desirability of undertaking further State-aided Schemes in the District and whether any future proposals should be included in the capital forecasts provided to the Environment Agency.

Miss Ablett reported the Middle Level Commissioners agreed to produce Tactical Plans to look at all Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management assets for all sources of flooding, that would better present the short-term programme of works required. She advised this would clearly set out what maintenance and capital works were required over the next 12 years, what benefits this work would deliver and it would also highlight the apportioned Outcome Measures (benefits) and the likely Grant-in-Aid funding each scheme could attract.

Miss Ablett reported that £850,000 had been identified as being required for the pumping station at Sutton Gault for the year 2024/2025 and this had been included in the Environment Agency's partnership funding schedule. She advised the maximum eligible Grant-in-Aid for investment had currently been calculated at £2,009,054 for each pumping station, however a business case would have to be developed for each scheme, which would be at a cost to the Commissioners, however if a GIA bid was successful the costs of the business case would be included.

Miss Ablett enquired whether the Commissioners wished to proceed with any schemes.

RESOLVED

That, before the next meeting of the Commissioners in November, a Special Meeting be called, which the Chief Executive/Engineer be requested to attend, to discuss further the potential replacement of Sutton Gault pumping station.

C.396 Environment Agency – Precepts

Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2021/2022 in the sum of £35,953.00 (the precept for 2020/2021 being £35,953.00).

C.397 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

Miss Ablett reported that the sum of £1,277.93 (£10,132.08 less £8,854.15 paid on account) (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency based on the Commissioners' actual expenditure on maintenance work for the financial year 2019/2020 together with the sum of £8,783.50 in respect of 80% of the Commissioners' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2020/2021.

C.398 Association of Drainage Authorities Subscriptions

Miss Ablett reported that the Clerk had been advised that subscriptions for 2021 will remain unchanged at £642.

RESOLVED

That the requested ADA subscription for 2021 be paid.

C.399 Contravention of Commissioners' Byelaws – Tree on Catchwater Bank and Review of Watercourses

The Chairman reported that an email had been sent to the Middle Level Commissioners from a resident at Aldreth regarding a large ash tree, growing on their bank side of the Catchwater bank. He advised that although the resident did not want to see the tree removed, they were concerned that it could fall towards the rear of their property causing significant damage and they had enquired whether the Commissioners, or any other body, would be able to significantly reduce the height of the tree.

The Chairman reported the Clerk had advised that if the Commissioners did not own the land they were not responsible for the tree however, the Commissioners could write to the landowner advising that it was their responsibility to maintain the tree and if it fell into the watercourse and required the Commissioners to remove it, as emergency works, the cost of this would be passed on to them.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk respond to the resident's email of 21st December 2020 advising of the Commissioners position.

C.400 Review of District Watercourses

The Chairman referred to an email and map forwarded to Commissioners prior to the meeting enquiring whether they would consider adopting some line dykes, where maintenance had not been carried out for a number of years, the proposal being to maintain only those dykes that would improve the movement of water.

The Chairman enquired whether the Commissioners would approve for him, together with the District Engineer, to review the watercourses and maintain those line dykes in most need of maintenance.

This was discussed and agreed by the Commissioners, some of whom agreed to maintain some of the dykes identified themselves.

Mr T Chambers referred to the number of culverts between Hoghill Drove and Lakes Drove where the pipes were too high and required lowering. He considered the Commissioners should inspect the culverts and consider lowering the pipe through at least one of them. This was discussed by the Commissioners and the action agreed.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Chairman and the District Engineer carry out a further review of the watercourses within the District and maintain those line dykes in most need of maintenance.
- ii) That the culverts between Hoghill Drove and Lakes Drove be inspected and the pipe through at least one should be lowered, if needed.

C.401 Health and Safety

Further to minute C.368, the Chairman reported that the last inspection had been carried out on the 20th September 2020 and there were no matters of concern to report.

C.402 Review of Internal Controls and appointment of Internal Auditor

The Commissioners considered and expressed satisfaction with the current system of Internal Controls.

Miss Ablett reported that the agreement with the Commissioners' Internal Auditor ended in 2021 and that, due to restrictions caused by COVID-19 and increased workloads from the winter rainfall events, it had not been possible to properly tender for a new agreement. Following discussions with Whiting & Partners it had therefore been agreed that the current arrangements would be extended by one year to allow sufficient time for the tender process to be carried out.

RESOLVED

That the Commissioners approve the one-year extension of the appointment of Whiting & Partners as Internal Auditor.

C.403 Risk Management Assessment

- a) The Commissioners considered and expressed satisfaction with the current system of Internal Controls.
- b) The Commissioners considered and approved the insured value of their buildings.

C.404 Exercise of Public Rights

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

C.405 Annual Governance Statement – 2020/2021

The Commissioners considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended on the 31st March 2021.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Commissioners, for the financial year ending 31st March 2021.

C.406 Payments

The Commissioners considered and approved payments amounting to £223,364.33 which had been made during the financial year 2020/2021.

(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest in the payments to him.

(NB) – Mr Flint declared an interest in the payments made to L A Burton.

(NB) – Mr Wright declared an interest in the payment made to A G Wright & Sons (Farms) Ltd.

C.407 Annual Accounts of the Commissioners – 2020/2021

The Commissioners considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2021 as required in the Audit Regulations.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Return, on behalf of the Commissioners, for the financial year ending 31st March 2021.

C.408 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2021/2022

The Commissioners considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2020/2021 and were informed by Miss Ablett that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by special levy on local billing authorities would be respectively 64.28% and 35.72%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £187,386 be raised by drainage rates and special levy.
- iii) That the amounts comprised in the sum referred to in ii) above to be raised by drainage rates and to be met by special levy are £120,460 and £66,926 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 37.00p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v) That a Special levy of £66,926 be made and issued to East Cambridgeshire District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vi) That the seal of the Commissioners be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levies referred to in resolution (v).
- vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levies by such statutory powers as may be available.

C.409 Display of rate notice

RESOLVED

That notice of the rate be affixed within the District in accordance with Section 48(3)(a) of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

C.410 Date of next Meeting

Miss Ablett reminded the Commissioners that the next meeting will be held on Thursday the 4th November 2021.

C.411 Vehicles along the banks of the Catchwater Drain

Mr Lensen reported that a number of off-road vehicles were travelling along the banks of the Catchwater Drain, causing damage to the bank.

The Chairman advised that as gates were already in situ, he was not sure how the problem could be further addressed.

Mr Lensen enquired whether another gate could be erected as he would be happy to erect some form of barrier.

The Chairman advised that as the bank was a public highway this would be a matter for the County Council, but the Commissioners could make enquiries if there was a section where Mr Lensen thought another gate would help.

The Vice Chairman confirmed that even temporary fencing would have to be approved by the County Council.

The Chairman suggested that together with the District Engineer, he would meet with Mr Lensen on site to discuss the matter further. This was agreed by the Commissioners.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman and David Jordan meet with Mr Lensen on site to discuss the matter further.