

## SWAVESEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Swavesey Internal Drainage Board  
hosted at the Middle Level Offices, March on Tuesday the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021

### PRESENT

K Wilderspin Esq (Chairman)	W Handley Esq
J E Dodson Esq (Vice Chairman)	Mrs A C Hemington
J S Burgess Esq	Miss H Parish
Mrs S Dodson	N K Stroude Esq

Miss Lorna McShane (representing the Clerk to the Board) was in attendance.

### Apology for absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Ms A Malyon.

### B.1034 Declarations of Interest

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

The Chairman declared an interest in the Superintendent's Fee and payments.

The Vice Chairman declared an interest in minute no. B.1038

Mr Stroude declared an interest in minute no. B.1038.

### B.1035 Confirmation of Minutes

### RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Board held on the 18<sup>th</sup> February and 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

### B.1036 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 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

### RESOLVED

(i) That in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations the minutes record that approval of the accounts was given on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

(ii) That the Chairman was authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

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

B.1037 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED

That K Wilderspin Esq be appointed Chairman of the Board.

B.1038 Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED

That J E Dodson Esq be appointed Vice Chairman of the Board.

B.1039 Election of Members of the Board

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

BURGESS John Shepherd	HEMINGTON Mrs Andrea Clare
DODSON James	PARISH Miss Hannah
DODSON Mrs Shirley	STROUDE Neil Kingsley
WILDERSPIN Keith	

(NB) – Under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991, Councillors Ms A Maylon and W Handley are also Members of the Board as the nominees of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

B.1040 Main River Issues

Further to minute B.998, Miss McShane referred to the correspondence with the Environment Agency and reported that the Environment Agency have been chased on a number of occasions in relation to the current position regarding modelling of river levels in extreme events. A meeting had been arranged to go through all the information held but this was postponed when face-to-face meetings stopped and the Environment Agency's Brampton office closed to external parties, due to COVID-19.

Contact has recently been made to look to set up a meeting but this may realistically not be until early summer/late autumn.

The Chairman advised that Paul Burrows had stated that there was currently no money allocated for any works on the Swavesey river bank. Representations had been made to the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee on this and it was considered that the money required for this work was revenue maintenance not capital spend as it was effectively just putting back what had been there before. The Chairman advised the Board that they may be better off looking at the number of houses protected in the future and asking the Environment Agency how many houses are at risk if these works are not carried out. The Chairman advised that the Mere Fen works were being followed up and chased by Iain Smith and he would do this once COVID-19 conditions were relaxed.

Councillor Handley stated with regard to Phase 2 at Northstowe he would speak to the relevant Case Officer and provide a reply to the Chairman. The Chairman advised that he had written to Paul Burrows about Northstowe and 3B and this letter would be forwarded to Iain Smith.

#### RESOLVED

That Iain Smith would contact the Environment Agency about the Mere Fen works and the letter from the Chairman about Northstowe.

#### B.1041 A14 Improvement Scheme

Further to minute B.999, the Chairman advised that these works were now completed and he noted from a recent drive over the flyover that there was no water in the balancing ponds.

#### B.1042 Proposed Northstowe Development and other developments draining to Uttons Drove STW Northstowe and Effluent Discharge to Swavesey Drain

Further to minute 1000(b), as reported earlier, Councillor Handley had agreed to raise this matter with the relevant Case Officer at South Cambridgeshire District Council and would reply to the Chairman to give an update.

#### RESOLVED

That Councillor Handley would raise this matter with the Planning Case Officer and report back to the Chairman with an update.

(NB) - The Vice Chairman and Mr Stroude declared interests as landowners potentially affected by the scheme.

#### B.1043 Outstanding drainage rates

Further to minute B.1001, Miss McShane reported that this was an outstanding drainage rate which related back to 2012 in the sum of £1,770.25. Bailiffs had attended the premises on several occasions but there had been no goods on which to levy distress. At a previous meeting of the Board, the Board had acknowledged that there was difficulty in recovering the outstanding rates and there was no further action that could be taken at the present time. They did not, however, wish that the outstanding rates be written off at this stage in case it could be recovered at a future date.

#### RESOLVED

That the Board acknowledge the situation with regard to the outstanding drainage rates but do not write off the outstanding rates.

#### B.1044 Defra Consultation on the rating system

Further to minute B.1004, Miss McShane reported that the powers previously set out in the former New Rivers Authorities & Land Drainage Bill 2019 to amend the land valuation process for drainage rates and special levies were now contained in the Environment Bill which had also been delayed in the legislative process because of the need for Parliamentary time on Brexit legislation.

## B.1045 Clerk's Report

Miss McShane advised:-

### i) COVID-19 Actions

That following the instructions given by government on 23<sup>rd</sup> March the following list of actions have been taken (this list is not exhaustive);

- Arrangements were made for all MLC staff to have the facility to work from home. This included access to email, and in most cases full remote access to work computers. This was implemented and fully operational by Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March.
- MLC operatives continue to attend work but in a more restricted manor following NHS guidelines.
- A skeleton rota to ensure that the office phones are manned has been put in place, post is received and processed and letters sent out where necessary.
- Other temporary arrangements have been implemented to help support the continued operation of the office whilst the COVID-19 government restrictions remain in place, this includes allowing more flexible hours of work, allowing access to the office as and when required to collect or deposit papers making arrangements for the post to be collected and delivered to a safe location outside the office.
- A licence to run video conferencing meeting was obtained and arrangements made to hold meetings by telephone and/or video. Chairmen were contacted at each stage as government advice emerged.
- A policy statement was issued via the MLC website stating the actions the MLC were taking.
- Consultation with ADA on more or less a daily basis were undertaken in the first few weeks encouraging them to take proactive action. Of value to us (and as called for) ADA have been able to secure IDBs 'Key Worker' status and have obtained approval from Defra to move to web/telephone conference meetings.

### ii) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That a fifth Chair's Meeting was held on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

Topics discussed included health and safety, effective communications with the public, the move to electronic agendas, consideration of the level of planning information included in reports, planning fees and the work of WRE.

### Planning and Consenting

One of the agreed actions from this Chair's meeting was that each Board be asked to consider the degree of delegation and reporting they require on planning and consenting matters. This was in response to several queries over the extent of detail being reported on such matters and the delays in issuing responses due to the number of people being consulted. I have outlined several possible options below to assist the Board but of course there are many other permutations and it is for the Board to decide which suits its interests best.

- a) Remain with the current arrangements.
- b) Continue to delegate all commenting on consent applications and relevant planning matters to the chairman and in his absence (or where he has an interest) to the Vice Chair. The Chair to have the power to decide if a matter should be raised at the board meeting for its consideration where legal timeframes permit this. All matters however to be reported generally more briefly within the Board report, ie number of applications responded to and number of consents issued or refused.

- c) As above but leaving the Clerk with the power to determine the appropriate responses to consent applications and planning matters without reference to the Chair or Vice Chair.

## RESOLVED

That the Board wish to remain with the current arrangements which are a combination of a) and b).

That a sixth Chair's Meeting was held virtually on the 26<sup>th</sup> 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 a Environmental Good Governance Guide. It was also noted at this meeting that Agricultural and Environmental Bills were passing through Parliament, the later including clauses benefitting 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.

### iii) Association of Drainage Authorities

#### a) Annual Conference

That the 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference of the Association was held virtually on Wednesday the 11<sup>th</sup> 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 10<sup>th</sup> 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) Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse Branch

That the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association was held on Tuesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020.

The meeting format was as per the 2019 Conference with a workshop in the morning and the Conference in the afternoon. Topics covered were control of invasive species, water resources, planning and effective communications with the wider public.

That the date of the next meeting is Tuesday the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021.

d) Floodex 2021

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

e) 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.

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

iv) Vision for the Future of Boards administered by the MLC

Further to minute B.1006(vii), Miss McShane reported that the general feeling of the Boards so far was that they recognised there could be problems with Boards and the need to amalgamate possibly 10 years down the road but most seemed happy to continue with their current arrangements. However, this should remain under review and where appropriate amalgamations between Boards supported.

v) 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

vi) 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.

vii) Smart Level System/District Wide Telemetry Bid

That a Local Levy Bid has been submitted that appears to have been successful and 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. Also, as the bid covers all MLC administered IDBs there is scale which will facilitate very competitive rates.

RESOLVED

That, as the Board has its own telemetry system, this would not be advantageous to the Board but they would still like further information on what is being offered by this current proposal.

viii) Anglia Farmers

Further to minute B.969(vi), Miss McShane 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 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and to continue to monitor the performance of Anglia Farmers over the new contract period.

Miss McShane 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 McShane 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.

Miss McShane reported that the Chairman had subsequently agreed for the Board to remain with Anglia Farmers.

RESOLVED

That the actions of the Chairman be approved.

ix) Fens Biosphere

Further to minute B.1006, Miss McShane referred to the leaflet from Cambridgeshire Acre.

x) 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.

B.1046 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

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

## **Swavesey I.D.B.**

### **Consulting Engineers Report – January 2021**

#### **Environment Agency/Swavesey IDB/Middle Level Commissioners' PSCA Works 2020 Season**

The end of season debrief/pre-season 2020 meeting was held at the Middle Level Offices in January 2020, and attended by representatives from the Environment Agency (EA), Middle Level Commissioners (MLC), and the Swavesey IDB Chairman/District Superintendent. The previous season's works were discussed and the general consensus was that everything had more or less gone to plan and all parties involved were happy to continue to deliver a similar programme of works in the 2020 season under the existing PSCA.

Following the meeting the Swavesey IDB Chairman/District Superintendent was able to secure the services of a local contractor who had previous working knowledge of the EA watercourses in the Swavesey area. This contractor was able to undertake some small-scale bush cutting, hand clearance of watercourses in the centre of Swavesey village together with the pest monitoring and control elements of the PSCA programme. The use of this contractor last season provided an extremely useful addition to the works delivery, and hopefully his services and working knowledge can be secured for future seasons' works.

The MLC, for their part, provided plant and labour for the flail mowing and herbicide application (in-channel emergent aquatic weed) throughout the EA controlled watercourses in the Swavesey area.



A contractor was again utilised for self-sown bush trimming, 'tracked machine flail mowing' along the Church End Drain section, and the weed raking operation. All works were supervised by the

MLC Operations Engineer, greatly assisted by the Swavesey IDB Chairman/Superintendent, and carried out to EA specification and protocols. All the works were delivered in a timely manner, before ground conditions deteriorated during the wetter winter months.

It is anticipated and hoped a similar programme of works under the PSCA, will continue again into the 2021 season.

**All works undertaken with the PSCA at Swavesey were on a fully rechargeable basis to the EA.**

### **Weed Control and Drain Maintenance**

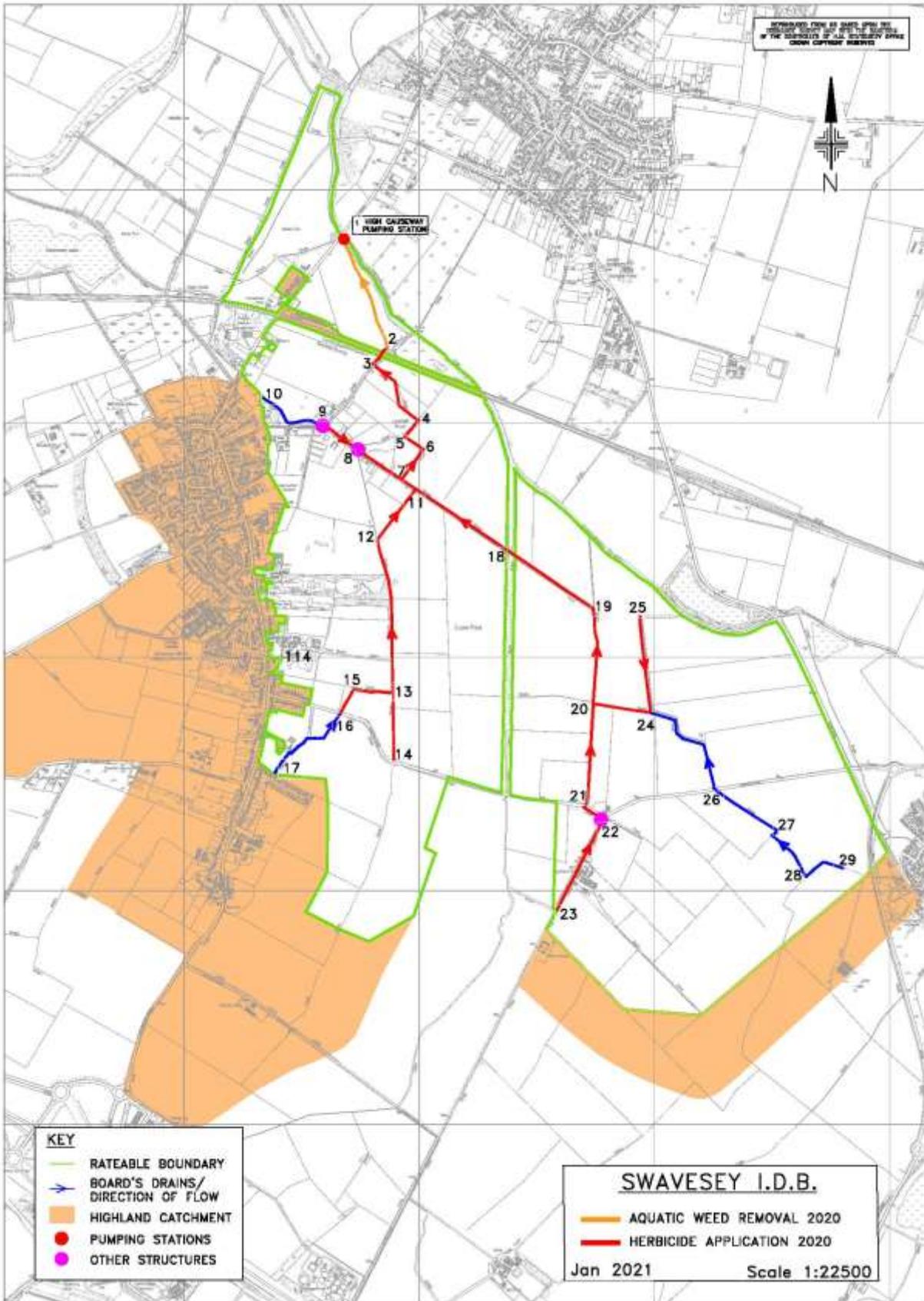
The maintenance works carried out last year generally accorded with the recommendations approved by the Board at its last Annual Meeting.

Roundup herbicide treatments were applied (during the early summer, with a follow up application during the autumn months) where required within the Board's district drains to control stands of emergent aquatic weed and vegetation growing within the dry and semi-dry drain beds. Please refer to the site plan on the following page for treatment locations. A sum has been included within the estimated costs to undertake herbicide applications throughout the district again this year.

The Board's flail mowing requirements were undertaken by Lattenbury Services Ltd. At the Chairman/District Superintendent's request, Lattenbury will be approached to undertake the flail mowing of Board's drains again this year. A sum has been included within the estimated costs to cover this work.

After experiencing an exceptionally warm dry summer last season, many of the Board's drain beds dried out. This reduced pumping requirements and water conveyance for the early part of the season. As emergent weed within the channel beds had already been treated with a Roundup application, the watercourses were deemed to have retained their general good condition and no apparent machine cleansing was required at this time. As autumn progressed it finally started to rain and this continued to increase throughout the winter. Maintenance works carried out in previous years ensured the system continued to operate efficiently and as intended. To this end, and with the Chairman/District Superintendent's approval, a late spring/early summer joint inspection of the Board's drains will be undertaken again this year. The inspection should highlight herbicide application requirements, and give an opportunity to forward plan any other works required to maintain the Board's drains to a satisfactory standard.

Provisional sums based on previous year's machine cleansing expenditure and culvert cleansing/piling works, have been allocated within this report.



The estimated cost of this year's anticipated drain maintenance and weed control programme is as follows.

			£
1)	Roundup applications to control emergent aquatic vegetation in District drains	Item	Sum 1500.00
2)	Provisional Item Allow sum for machine cleansing work to Board's drains as required	Item	Sum 2500.00
3)	Provisional Item Allow sum for emergency works including bank piling or culvert headwall repair works	Item	Sum 1000.00
4)	Allow sum for flail mowing of District drains and hedge cutting	Item	Sum 3400.00
5)	Fees for preparation and submission of report to the Board, arrangement and supervision of herbicide applications and maintenance works.	Item	Sum 650.00
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£9,050.00</b>

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

### **Pumping Station**

The teething troubles with the new web based ultrasonic unit have not reoccurred and the pumps/controls have worked well over the period. The cleaner however shed a trolley drive wheel tyre during the summer and Ovivo, the original equipment manufacturer, was called in to fit a new wheel and tyre assembly. *Note: the polyurethane tyre had lost all integrity and broken up.* Inspection of the remaining 3 tyres showed them to be in a satisfactory condition with a minimum of 5 years' life left in them. Shortly after this inspection the Middle Level replaced all the hydraulic hoses and topped up all the oils. The cleaner now seems to be in a satisfactory condition however the unit is over 20 years old and is likely to need a major overhaul in 4-6 years.

### **Pumping Hours**

Hours Run	15/1/20 - 5/1/21	17/1/19 - 14/1/20	9/1/18 - 16/1/19	12/1/17 - 9/1/18	11/1/16 - 12/1/17	21/1/15 - 11/1/16	6/1/14 - 21/1/15	28/1/13 - 6/1/14
Pump 1	334 (7201)	273 (6867)	173 (6594)	92	101	2	227	3
Pump 2	254 (7740)	18 (7486)	191 (7468)	80	71	173	801	295

## **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 Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer, who represents both the Middle Level Commissioners 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.

### **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 is 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 Applications**

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 18 new development related matters have been received and, where appropriate, dealt with since the last meeting:

<b>MLC Ref.</b>	<b>Council Ref.</b>	<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Type of Development</b>	<b>Location</b>
367	S/4183/19/DC	Devonshires Solicitors	Residential (12 plots)	Rear of Cygnus Business Park, Middlewatch, Swavesey
368	S/4375/19/FL	Mrs J Jordan	Residential (2 plots)	Gibraltar Lane, Swavesey
369	S/0014/20/FL	Mr & Mrs Garner	Residence	Middlewatch, Swavesey*
370	Enquiry	Client of Stantec	Residential (Not known)	Boxworth End, Swavesey
371	FMW/092/19	Mick George Ltd	Waste Management	Middle Fen Drove, Swavesey
372	20/01629/PRI06A	Mr J Shepperson	Agricultural (Steel framed building)	Boxworth End Swavesey
373	20/01410/FUL	Mr Mawby	Residence	Wallmans Lane Swavesey
374	20/02499/FUL	Mr B Baker	Residence	Rose and Crown Road, Swavesey
375	20/02642/FUL	Ms S Moreton	Residence	High Street (accessed off Wallmans Lane), Swavesey
376	20/02798/HFUL	Mrs A Miller	Residence (Extensions)	Gibraltar Lane, Swavesey
377	20/03247/HFUL	Mrs L Harper	Residence (Extensions)	Ramper Road, Swavesey

378	20/03379/FUL	Mr M Harvey	Residence	Middle Watch, Swavesey
379	2315/18/CONDA	Bloor Homes Eastern	Residential (99 plots)	Fen Drayton Road, Swavesey
380	20/04021/HFUL	Mrs S Ballard	Residence (Extension)	Moat Way, Swavesey
381	20/04173/FUL	Mrs J Jorden	Residence	Gibraltar Lane, Swavesey
382	20/04286/FUL	Mr & Mrs Garner	Residence	Middlewatch, Swavesey*
383	20/04425/HFUL	Megnajet	Residence (Replacement outbuilding)	Boxworth End, Swavesey
384	Enquiry	Lolworth Developments	Industrial/Commercial	Slate Hall Farm, Bar Hill

***Planning applications ending 'COND', 'DISC' or 'DC' relate to the discharge of relevant planning conditions***

***Planning applications ending 'PRIO6A' relate to prior approval not required***

***Planning applications ending 'CONDA' relate to a condition request***

Developments that propose direct discharge to the Board's system are indicated with an asterisk. The remainder propose, where applicable and where known, surface water disposal to soakaways/infiltration systems or sustainable drainage systems.

No applications for the Infiltration Device Self Certification or the Checking Service have been received during the reporting period.

The following applications are outside the Board's area but discharges may increase flows in the Turn Bridge, Church End Drain, Swavesey Drain system:

- Bloor Homes (Eastern) (MLC Ref Nos 349, 350, 351, 357, 360, 361, 366 & 379)
- Lolworth Developments (MLC Ref Nos 384)

No further correspondence has been received from the applicants or the applicants' agents concerning the following development and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

- Repair and alterations to the listed building including demolition and replacement of rear extensions together with the construction of two new dwellings and associated access at 37 Market Street, Swavesey – Cardinalis Development Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 199 & 311)
- Residential development comprising 18 market and 12 affordable units plus open space, children's play area and landscaping at 18 Boxworth End, Swavesey – Mr & Mrs R Mallidine (MLC Ref No 271) and Matthew Homes (MLC Ref No 346)
- Demolition of farm outbuildings and the erection of up to 90 dwellings with public open space, landscaping and sustainable drainage system (SuDS) and vehicular access point from Boxworth End with all other matters reserved except for means of access on land off Boxworth End, Swavesey - Client of L K Group /Gladman Developments Ltd & Burgess (MLC Ref No 293) & Gladman Developments Ltd & Burgess (MLC Ref No 313)
- Erection of 56 dwellings including new access at field north of Home Close and west of Moat Way, on land north of Fen Drayton Road, Swavesey - Laragh Homes Ltd (MLC Ref No 314)

*Proposed development to the rear of Cygnus Business Park (Mill Farm), Middlewatch, Swavesey - Nationwide Ltd (MLC Ref No 123) and Starburst Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 182 & 243) and Starburst Property Ltd (MLC Ref No 305)*

In a response issued during April, the planning authority refused to confirm the discharge of all conditions associated with planning application S/1329/13/FL dated 29<sup>th</sup> May 2015 and advised that based on the information available:

“... it appears that Condition 7 (Foul Water Drainage), Condition 8 (Surface Water Drainage), Condition 11 (Cycle Parking) and Condition 13 (Screening Walls) have not been discharged and are outstanding.”

*Residential development with associated access, infrastructure and open spaces at land south of Fen Drayton Road, Swavesey – Bloor Homes (Eastern) (MLC Ref Nos 284, 349, 350, 351, 357, 360, 361, 366 & 379), Pegasus Group (MLC Ref No 285) and Bloor Homes (Eastern) & Mr A Johnson (MLC Ref Nos 291, 315 & 344)*

Further to the last meeting report a consultation request was received from the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service (GCSPS) (reference S/2315/18/CONDA) concerning the submission of details required by condition 5 (Sluice) of planning permission S/2315/18/RM. Following a discussion with the Board's Chairman, the following was included in the response sent to the Case Officer:

“You will recall from the previous letter dated 4th October 2018 that the Board has expressed significant concerns about both this and other sites within the village.

It is understood that the telemetry has been removed from the Environment Agency's Station Road Floodgates (Church Green Doors) in the village and will be placed upon one of the facilities at Webb's Hole.

It is essential that this condition is not discharged until:

- (a) The telemetry has been installed at Webb's Hole and been operational for an appropriate period and
- (b) Until a suitable maintenance provider, agreement and schedule has been supplied and approved by all relevant RMAs including the Board.

Suggested contents for the maintenance schedule can be found in the aforementioned letter.

It is likely that problems with the water level and flood risk management devices associated with this site will occur during an extreme event and whilst the Board would prefer any such devices to be adopted by an appropriate public authority or statutory undertaker it acknowledges that the resources of such bodies are limited, particularly during an extreme event, when it may have other more relatively important priorities

and question whether a management company would attend the site in such circumstances?

In view of the above, the Board are disappointed to be advised that some of the properties have been occupied and would be pleased if you could advise whether the Boards previous concerns, raised in the aforementioned letter, have been dealt with satisfactorily or remains covered by a suitable planning condition?

In respect of Condition 4 could you clarify what is meant by the phrase 'The Council hereby ACCEPT but DO NOT DISCHARGE the following condition'.

The Board must therefore confirm that it considers that these development proposals do not satisfactorily deal with the issue of water level and flood risk management from the development and consider that these will therefore raise flood risk for land and properties within its catchment."

In response, the Case Officer replied as follows:

"I have asked Bloor to provide a timetable of works for the installation of the telemetry at Webb's Hole. Although this is not strictly a requirement of the condition and would not necessarily stop the condition from being discharged, I acknowledge the local concerns and am seeking details of installation. Once those details are available they will be published on the Council's website and I will endeavour to send a copy to you.

As you note in your letter some of the properties have been occupied. The wording of certain conditions requires the approval of details prior to occupation, including condition 4. The decision stating "The Council hereby Accept but Do Not Discharge" is a decision where the details submitted have been agreed, in consultation with technical consultees (in this instance the Lead Local Flood Authority and Sustainable Drainage Engineers), but the condition is not formally discharged as the trigger has been breached (i.e. prior to occupation)."

Following further discussion, the Case Officer advised further as follows:

"..... there have been more discussions around this matter. As it stands I can confirm that I will not be releasing the condition until progress has been made around the installation of the telemetry – we may now hold on to the condition until the works have been done rather than simply securing a timetable of works.

The Environment Agency has contacted me on the matter raising some points which need to be explored further with several parties.

I wanted to update you and I will keep you informed as matters progress, but I trust this is welcomed news to the Parish Council."

*Residential development on land to the rear of 130 Middlewatch, Swavesey - Swavesey Ventures Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 294 & 310) and Bushmead Homes (MLC Ref Nos 358 & 359)*

In early January 2020 a consultation request was received from South Cambridgeshire District Council concerning the provision of amended information associated with

planning application reference S/1896/19/RM. Following a discussion with the Board's Chairman, the following was included in the response sent to the Case Officer:

"Whilst some discussions have been undertaken between the Board and the applicant, no correspondence or detail has been supplied since July, but these will hopefully continue as part of a post-application process until the Board's requirements are met, the Board has, in the meantime, expressed concerns about this development in respect of the adverse impacts on the natural, built and waterborne environment together with the water level and flood risk management systems and, as a result, it has instructed that we write to your authority to advise that it wishes to continue to **object** to this planning application until its requirements are met."

Despite being the subject of a revised site layout, it is difficult to determine how access to either the adjacent watercourse or the drainage basin/nature reserve area will be gained by routine maintenance machinery.

Planning permission was approved by the District Council in June.

*Potential large-scale development at Slate Hall Farm, Barhill to the north east of the A14 between Hattons Road (B1050), Longstanton and Dry Drayton Road, Oakington – Lolworth Developments (MLC Ref No 384)*

An enquiry has recently been received concerning a large-scale development at Slate Hill Farm, between Northstowe and the A14.

### ***Development Contributions***

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

### **Northstowe**

#### ***Phase 1***

An enquiry for a discharge of condition planning application was received from the County Council in respect of the Secondary School adjacent to Stirling Road which is outside the Board's area of interest.

During June an application was submitted for discharge of condition 22 which related to the Mare Fen Improvement Works.

The matter was discussed with the Chairman of the Board who advised that he was prepared to accept the proposals but was disappointed that the berm had not been provided at a lower level,

as proposed in a previous scheme, as this would have provided some additional storage of excess flows and flood water during extreme events and that this missed opportunity may have an adverse impact on future developments that may wish to utilise the Swavesey Drain system.

The condition has been discharged by the GCSPS.

### ***Phase 2***

A request has been received from John Sisk & Son Ltd, the contractor, who is trying to obtain technical approval from the County Council for the highway drainage design associated with the Southern Access Road (West) [SARW].

The contractor advised that the allowable discharge rate from the new attenuation ponds, which were agreed within the original planning application, was proving unrealistic and the County Council advised on the need to consult with the Board concerning the use of discharge rates in excess of those that had previously been agreed.

The relevant parties were reminded of the Board's concerns regarding the absence of any hydraulic modelling and lack of a holistic approach.

Stantec has been employed to undertake an independent review of the proposals. Discussions with the relevant parties are continuing.

### ***Phase 3b***

Apart from a couple of meetings, the engagement that the Board had been advised would occur to discuss and agree the relevant issues in advance of the planning application for Phase 3b did not occur (an outline planning application which was submitted to the GCSPS in April), and this is reflected in the relevant information contained within the planning application documents which contained significant errors and misleading information.

The Board then wrote to the planning authority highlighting its concerns and stating its objection to the planning application.

According to the planning authority webpage a decision is awaited.

## **Greater Cambridge Local Plan and associated Evidence Base**

### ***Greater Cambridge Integrated Water Management Study (IWS)***

The Greater Cambridge Local Plan Strategic Spatial Options Assessment Integrated Water Management Study was issued in November 2020.

This report provides a high-level commentary on the opportunities, constraints and uncertainties for water aspects (flood risk, water supply, wastewater and water quality) for the strategic (non-site specific) spatial options currently being tested by the GCSPS. These initial evidence findings will help to inform further engagement with stakeholders and have been prepared in advance of completing the main Integrated Water Management Study documents (a Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), an Outline Water Cycle Study (WCS) and a Detailed Water Cycle Study), which due to timing of receipt of data and ongoing studies by others will be completed later in 2021.

Where necessary, assumptions have been made that aim to be conservative, technically achievable and represent a “safe” fall-back position. The analysis and findings of this report will be revisited in greater depth in the Outline and Detailed WCS.

For flood risk, wastewater treatment, and water quality, there are constraints to development due to existing areas of high flood risk, wastewater treatment capacity limitations, and existing diffuse and point source pollution. At a minimum, development will need to ensure no further detrimental impacts on flood risk and a neutral impact water quality and wastewater treatment. However, there are also opportunities for major development to offer betterment, for example by reducing flood risk downstream, reducing point and diffuse pollution, and supporting larger integrated water management schemes including more natural wastewater treatment options.

The minimum growth scenario would be the most sustainable of the three trajectories, in terms of preventing any further detrimental impacts on the water environment. Interim mitigation measures will still be necessary to prevent detrimental impacts before regional scale water supply solutions are operational.

The report identifies that while development in the Cambourne area could give rise to positive opportunities for water resources, these are potentially offset by the significant constraints for wastewater treatment at Bourn and Uttons Drove WRC, for which further work would be necessary to identify technically feasible mitigation measures or alternative provision (eg re-routing to Papworth WRC).

The Level 1 SFRA is currently the subject of an internal consultation with the various stakeholders involved.

## **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 Board are as follows:

### ***Future Meetings***

Following the successful “joint” approach the Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership (CFRMP) and Peterborough Flood & Water Management Partnership (PFLoW) have merged to become the C&P FloW Partnership. The MLC were stakeholders in both partnerships.

### **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.

South Cambridgeshire District Council is looking to recruit a new watercourse/drainage manager.

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

A public consultation on the draft FCERM Strategy for England document was held between May and June 2019.

Members of the partnership generally considered that amongst other matters the consultation could have been more ambitious; sought greater RMA involvement; and that surface water flooding should have been included.

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:** The East Cambridgeshire Level 1 and Level 2 SFRA and WCS were last updated in late 2017 and are, therefore, relatively up to date when compared with others within the county.

### ***Good Governance for Internal Drainage Board Members***

In March and April 2019 ADA ran a series of five Good Governance Workshops for IDB Members.

Electronic copies of the Guide, copies of the You Tube training modules and workshop presentation slides can be viewed at <https://www.ada.org.uk/knowledge/governance/>.

### ***Public Sector Co-operation Agreements (PSCA)***

Following a problem encountered within the North Level District IDB which required close liaison with Peterborough City Council, in its role as the Highway Authority, several partners have expressed an interest in widening the project and the possibility of arranging PSCAs with IDBs and Councils was discussed but has not yet been concluded.

### ***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 Agency 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 2019, 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 <https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/climate-strategy> net gain.

Further details can be found at

## ***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***

(a) Capitally Funded Highway Drainage Schemes

Schemes have been assessed and prioritised based upon the level of flooding reported, ie high priority is property flooding or risk to life, low priority is highway only flooding and will be developed to provide estimated costs and prioritised to be delivered to available budget. There is an annual highway drainage budget of £1m, which needs to cover all staff, investigation, design and construction costs and, therefore, not all the schemes will be delivered in the current financial year.

The majority of investigation and design is delivered through Skanska or its supply chain, and managed by the County's Highways Projects team. Priority and funding are confirmed by its Asset Management team.

(b) Highway Gullies

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

## ***Environment Agency (EA)***

### (a) Joint Assurance Group

This group provides support to the RMAs on the delivery of GiA funded projects and meets on a monthly basis to discuss business cases. There are separate groups for the River Great Ouse and Welland & Nene catchments.

Partnership members generally agreed that it would be beneficial to understand what the EA, in its role as the approval body, would like to see in business cases and requested suitable good examples that could be used as guidance.

The EA advised that:

- (i) The lack of sharing of suitable business case examples may be for GDPR/commercially sensitive/economic reasons and advised that whilst the EA cannot 'circulate' these, other RMAs can.
- (ii) Due to the specialist nature of projects within The Fens it may not be possible to find enough suitable projects.

### (b) Great Ouse catchment

#### *Flood storage and conveyance study*

A successful workshop has been held.

#### *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.

#### *A1101 Welney Wash Road*

Local residents are concerned about the installation of 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.

### (c) Welland & Nene catchment

#### *Tidal Nene Strategy*

This is currently being worked on.

## ***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.

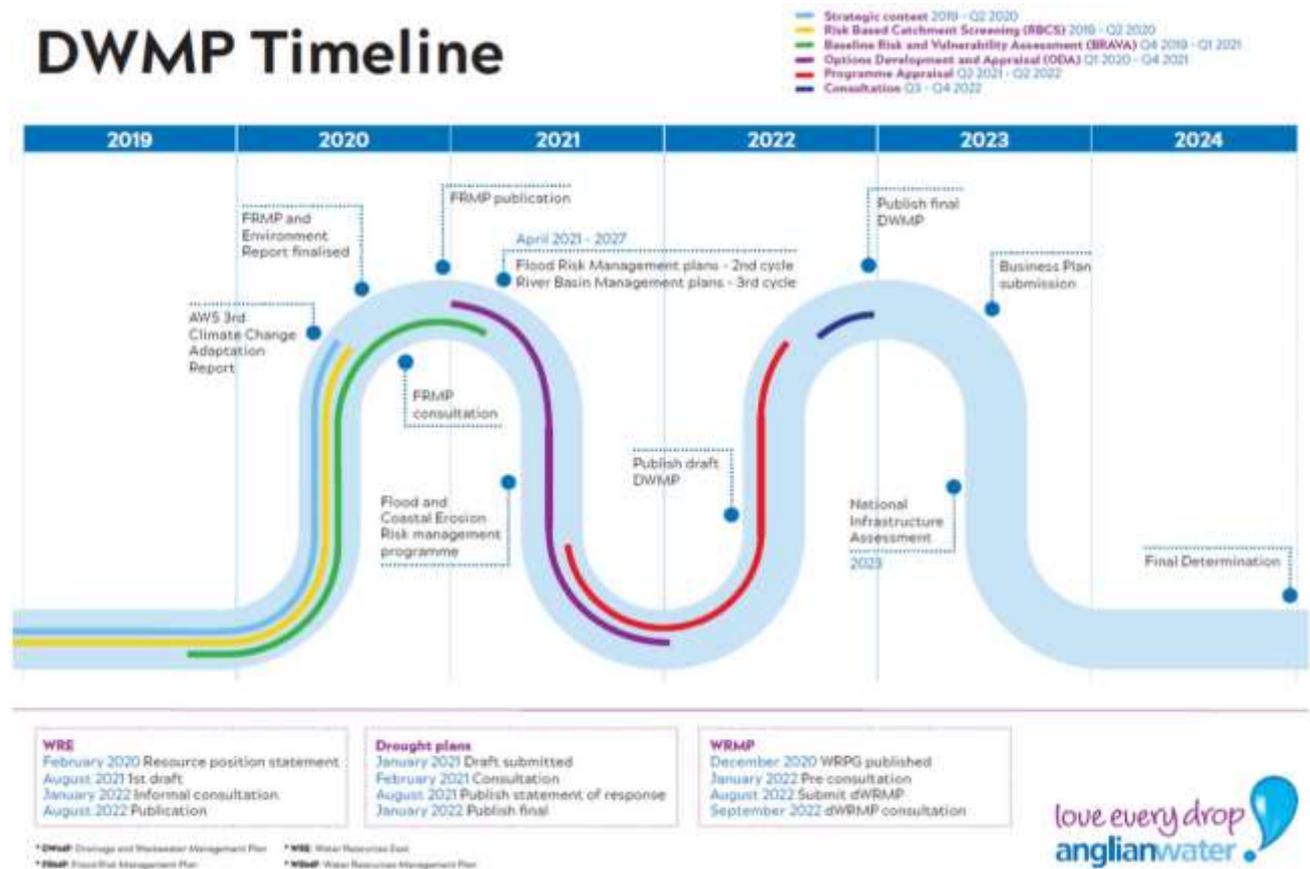
4. Options Development and Appraisal (ODA).

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 was hoped that the BRAVA results would 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 associate 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.

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	
OVERSC	Over	13747	1	2	1	2	Reasonably sized catchment in which growth is occurring. Future growth will increase the catchment extents. Concerns about the adverse impacts on the receiving watercourse system, including the River Great Ouse/Ouse Washes system, involving the current and future outfall/catchment extents, the capacity and maintenance of the receiving watercourse system, flood risk implications, volumetric flow and water quality permits/consents and the potential sub-division of the current catchment.
UTTOSC	Uttons Drove	21822	2	2	2	2	Significant growth is occurring and planned within the catchment extents including the potential expansion of Cambourne. Significant concerns about the adverse impacts on the receiving system, including the River Great Ouse/Ouse Washes, involving the current and future outfall/catchment extents, the capacity and maintenance of the receiving watercourse system, flood risk implications, volumetric flow and water quality permits/consents. The receiving watercourses have a low standard of protection and can be "locked" for long periods which contributes to increased flood risk.

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 are detailed in the above table.

Consulting Engineer

25 January 2021

Swavesey (360)\Reports\January 21

## Environment Agency/Swavesey IDB/Middle Level Commissioners' Public Sector Co-operation Agreement Works 2020 Season

The end of season debrief/pre-season 2020 meeting was held at the Middle Level Offices in January 2020 and attended by representatives from the Environment Agency, Middle Level Commissioners and the Swavesey IDB Chairman/District Superintendent. The previous season's works were discussed and the general consensus was everything had gone to plan and all parties involved were happy to deliver a similar programme of works in the 2021 season under the existing Public Sector Co-operation Agreement.

Following the meeting the Swavesey IDB Chairman/District Superintendent was able to secure the services of a local contractor who had previous working knowledge of the Environment Agency watercourses in the Swavesey area. This contractor was able to undertake some small-scale bush cutting, hand clearance of watercourses in the centre of Swavesey village together with the pest monitoring and control elements of the Public Sector Co-operation Agreement programme. The use of this contractor last season provided an extremely useful addition to the works delivery, and hopefully his services and working knowledge can be secured for future seasons' works.

The Middle Level Commissioners, for their part, provided plant and labour for the flail mowing and herbicide application (in-channel emergent aquatic weed) throughout the Environment Agency controlled watercourses in the Swavesey area.

A contractor was again utilised for self-sown bush trimming, 'tracked machine flail mowing' along the Church End Drain section, and the weed raking operation. All works were supervised by the Middle Level Commissioners' Operations Engineer, greatly assisted by the Swavesey IDB Chairman/Superintendent, and carried out to Environment Agency specification and protocols. All the works were delivered in a timely manner, before ground conditions deteriorated during the wetter winter months.

It is anticipated and hoped a similar programme of works under the Public Sector Co-operation Agreement, will continue again into the 2021 season.

All works undertaken with the Public Sector Co-operation Agreement at Swavesey were on a fully rechargeable basis to the Environment Agency.

### Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

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

Roundup herbicide treatments were applied (during the early summer, with a follow up application during the autumn months) where required within the Board's district drains to control stands of emergent aquatic weed and vegetation growing within the dry and semi-dry drain beds. Please refer to the site plan on the following page for treatment locations. A sum has been included within the estimated costs to undertake herbicide applications throughout the district again this year.

The Board's flail mowing requirements were undertaken by Lattenbury Services Ltd. At the Chairman/District Superintendent's request, Lattenbury will be approached to undertake the flail mowing of Board's drains again this year. A sum has been included within the estimated costs to cover this work.

After experiencing an exceptionally warm dry summer last season, many of the Board's drain beds dried out. This reduced pumping requirements and water conveyance for the early part of the season. As emergent weed within the channel beds had already been treated with a Roundup

application, the watercourses were deemed to have retained their general good condition and no apparent machine cleansing was required at this time. As autumn progressed it finally started to rain and this continued to increase throughout the winter. Maintenance works carried out in previous years ensured the system continued to operate efficiently and as intended. To this end, and with the Chairman/District Superintendent's approval, a late spring/early summer joint inspection of the Board's drains will be undertaken again this year. The inspection should highlight herbicide application requirements, and give an opportunity to forward plan any other works required to maintain the Board's drains to a satisfactory standard.

Provisional sums based on previous year's machine cleansing expenditure and culvert cleansing/ piling works, have been allocated within this report.

### Pumping Station

The teething troubles with the new web based ultrasonic unit had not reoccurred and the pump/controls had worked well over the period.

### The integrity of Corrugated Steel Pipes

Miss McShane reported that several boards 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. This can have serious complications for a Board when there is a structure failure particularly during high rainfall events. Therefore, in order to reduce the risk of failure it is considered appropriate for the Board to investigate the integrity of such structures for which they are directly responsible.

### Planning applications

The Consulting Engineer's report set out 18 new development related matters which had been received and dealt with since the last meeting.

The Consulting Engineer reported that no further correspondence had been received from the applicants or the applicants' agents concerning the following development and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interest:-

- Repair and alterations to the listed building including demolition and replacement of rear extensions together with the construction of two new dwellings and associated access at 37 Market Street, Swavesey – Cardinalis Development Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 199 & 311)
- Residential development comprising 18 market and 12 affordable units plus open space, children's play area and landscaping at 18 Boxworth End, Swavesey – Mr & Mrs R Mallidine (MLC Ref No 271) and Matthew Homes (MLC Ref No 346)
- Demolition of farm outbuildings and the erection of up to 90 dwellings with public open space, landscaping and sustainable drainage system (SuDS) and vehicular access point from Boxworth End with all other matters reserved except for means of access on land off Boxworth End, Swavesey - Client of L K Group /Gladman Developments Ltd & Burgess (MLC Ref No 293) & Gladman Developments Ltd & Burgess (MLC Ref No 313)
- Erection of 56 dwellings including new access at field north of Home Close and west of Moat Way, on land north of Fen Drayton Road, Swavesey - Laragh Homes Ltd (MLC Ref No 314)

Residential development with associated access, infrastructure and open spaces at land south of Fen Drayton Road, Swavesey (MLC Ref Nos. 284, 285, 291, 315, 344, 349,350, 351, 357, 360, 361, 366 & 379)

The Consulting Engineer updated the Board on confirmation from the Case Officer that he would not release condition 4 and 5 of the planning permission until issues around the installation of telemetry had been resolved.

Residential development on land to the rear of 130 Middlewatch, Swavesey (MLC Ref Nos. 294 & 310)

The Consulting Engineer had responded to a consultation from South Cambridgeshire District Council and would object to the planning application until the Board's requirements were met, with regard to water level and flood risk management systems. A revised site layout had been submitted however it was considered likely that this would still present difficulties for access to the adjacent watercourse for routine maintenance machinery.

Potential large-scale development at Slate Hall Farm, Barhill to the north east of the A14 (MLC Ref No. 384)

The Consulting Engineer reported an enquiry had been recently received concerning a large-scale development at Slate Hall Farm between Northstowe and the A14.

Northstowe

Phase 1

The Consulting Engineer updated the Board on the discharge of the conditions relating to Phase 1 of the development.

Phase 2

The Consulting Engineer reported that Stantec had been employed to undertake a review of the proposals and discussions with the relevant parties were still continuing.

Phase 3b

An outline planning application had been submitted for Phase 3b but so far no discussions on the relevant issues in advance of the planning application had taken place.

The Engineer reported that according to the planning authority website a decision is still awaited on Phase 3b

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) Weed Control and Drain Maintenance

That the maintenance works contained in the Report be undertaken.

### B.1047 Capital Improvement Programme

Members considered the Board's future capital improvement programme and noted that the pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement were earmarked for the year 2023/2024

#### RESOLVED

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

### B.1048 District Superintendent's Report

The District Superintendent reported that he had nothing further to add to the Consulting Engineer's report on the pumping.

There had been some difficulties with the telemetry system which the Middle Level Commissioners' Mechanical & Electrical Engineer had attended and it was now working satisfactorily.

#### RESOLVED

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

### B.1049 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

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

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

### B.1050 District Superintendent

#### a) Record of hours worked

Miss McShane reported that Mr K Wilderspin had worked 85 hours as District Superintendent between February 2020 and January 2021.

#### b) Fee

The Board gave consideration to the District Superintendent's fee for 2021/2022.

#### RESOLVED

i) That the Board agree that the sum of £1,784 be allowed for the services of the District Superintendent for 2021/2022.

ii) That the Board's thanks to the District Superintendent for his work over the last 12 months be recorded in the minutes.

c) Telephone Expenses

The Board gave consideration to the appropriate reimbursement of telephone expenses incurred on the Board's behalf.

RESOLVED

That the Board agree that the sum of up to £80 be allowed for telephone expenses incurred on behalf of the Board by Mr Wilderspin.

d) Casual Labour

The Board gave consideration to the use of casual labour that may be required during the year.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman and Vice Chairman be authorised to engage such casual labour as they consider appropriate up to a limit of £200.

(NB) – Mr Wilderspin declared an interest in all items save d) and left the room when these items were discussed.

The Chairman stated that he thought it was important that the Board should have some succession planning for the Board should he retire at a future date. Following discussions with Hannah Parish it had been agreed that she would shadow some of the work done by the Chairman and that Ms Parish would work with the Chairman on planning matters and eventually take over some of the work which the Chairman does on behalf of the Board.

It was suggested by the Board that someone other than the Chairman should take ownership of cleaning culverts etc and the use of casual labour could be used to do this manual work.

B.1051 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.

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

B.1052 Environment Agency – Precepts

Miss McShane reported that the Environment Agency had held the precept for 2021/22 in the sum of £1,796 (the precept for 2020/21 being £1,796).

B.1053 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

Miss McShane reported that the sum of £742.11 (£4,658.34 less £3,916.23 paid on account) (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency based on the Board's

actual expenditure on maintenance work for the financial year 2019/2020 together with the sum of £3,891.79 in respect of 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2020/2021.

B.1054 Association of Drainage Authorities  
Subscriptions

Miss McShane reported that the Clerk had been advised that subscriptions for 2021 will remain unchanged at £565.

RESOLVED

That the requested ADA subscription for 2021 be paid.

B.1055 Health and Safety

Further to minute B.1019, Ms Parish reported that the next visit by Cope Safety Management would be held on Thursday the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

Miss McShane reminded the Board that it is responsible for ensuring it is compliant with all Health and Safety legislation and is adequately insured. In view of this, all points for action raised by its Health and Safety consultant must be implemented so as to avoid the Board's insurance policy from becoming invalid.

B.1056 Special Circumstance Policy on Tendering

Miss McShane 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.1057 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2020/2021

Miss McShane reported that in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, Internal Drainage Boards' accounts were required to be approved by resolution on or before 30<sup>th</sup> June.

B.1058 Defra IDB1 Returns

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

B.1059 Review of Internal Controls

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

### B.1060 Risk Management Assessment

- a) The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with their current Risk Management Policy.
- b) The Board considered and approved the insured value of their buildings and suggested that an insurance review should be included in next year's agenda.

### B.1061 Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

Miss McShane reported that as resolved at its' last meeting, the Board will continue with a limited assurance review and not take advantage of the audit exemption available for smaller public bodies with income and expenditure less than £25,000.

### RESOLVED

To continue with a limited assurance review as has been carried out in previous years.

### B.1062 Exercise of Public Rights

Miss McShane 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.

### B.1063 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £3,905.38 which had been made during the financial year 2019/2020 (1<sup>st</sup> February – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020) and £24,755.09 made during the financial year 2020/2021 (1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021).

Mr Stroude raised a query about the Middle Level Commissioners administrative charges. The Chairman explained that although this seemed expensive for a small Board, it was in fact good value for the services provide and if required the expenses could be reviewed at a future date.

(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest in the payment made to K & P J Wilderspin.

### B.1064 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2021/2022

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2021/2022 and were informed by Miss McShane 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 :-

	<u>Drainage rates</u>	<u>Special levy</u>
AREA 1	62.42%	37.58%
AREA 2	70.25%	29.75%
AREA 3	100%	-

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £19,389 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 £13,091 and £6,298 respectively.
- iv) That drainage rates in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District as follows:-

AREA 1	-	70.0p
AREA 2	-	30.0p
AREA 3	-	10.0p
- v) That a Special levy of £6,298 be made and issued to South Cambridgeshire District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vi) That the seal of the Board be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levy referred to in resolution (v).
- vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levy by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.1065 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.

B.1066 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

B.1067 Cambridgeshire District Council

The Clerk reported that Cambridgeshire District Council had appointed a new drainage engineer and it was suggested that it would be useful if consideration could be given by South Cambridgeshire District Council for the Council to be a member of ADA.

## B.1068 Northstowe

The Chairman reported that he had received an update on the Northstowe development. It was proposed that the work on the development should start next week however the properties cannot be occupied unless the authority agree a timescale for the occupation of the properties. The Case Officer was liaising with the Developer and any change to this arrangement would need to be reported to the Planning Committee and full Council.