

SAWTRY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Sawtry Internal Drainage Board
held at the Admiral Wells Inn, Holme on Wednesday the 16th June 2021

PRESENT

S J Custance Esq (Chairman)	D R Elmore Esq
A G Darby Esq	A Lensen Esq
S Bywater Esq	S T Raby Esq
R G Tuplin Esq	

Miss Lorna McShane (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Rolly Laxton (District Officer) were in attendance. Mr Stephen Parsley attended the meeting as a member of the public.

An apology for absence

An apology for absence was received from Ms K Smith, (Natural England).

B.1218 Standing Orders

Further to minute B.1182, Miss McShane reported that ADA have obtained agreement from Defra for the flexibility which allowed the Board to choose how they wished to hold Board meetings during the pandemic to become permanent. This change will allow remote attendance or fully virtual meetings to take place in future should that best meet the Board's particular requirements at that time.

RESOLVED

That the Board adopt the revised Standing Orders.

B.1219 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.

Mr Raby declared an interest (as a Member of the Middle Level Board) in matters concerning the Middle Level Commissioners and in the payment to H Raby & Sons.

Mr Lensen declared an interest in the maintenance works.

Mr Darby declared an interest in the payments to T E Darby & Sons.

Messrs Darby and Lensen declared interests in matters relating to pump attendants.

B.1220 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 3rd June 2020 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1221 Board Membership

Miss McShane reported that Ms Katy Smith had replaced Chris Evans as Natural England's representative. However, she had sent her apologies for today's meeting

B.1222 Vacancy in Membership

Further to minute B.1187, the Chairman confirmed that Mr David Whittaker had declined the invitation to become a Member of the Board.

However, the Chairman had made an approach to Mr Stephen Parsley to fill the vacancy who had agreed.

RESOLVED

That Mr Parsley be co-opted to membership of the Board.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Parsley to his first meeting of the Board.

Councillors Simon Bywater and Richard Tuplin were representatives on the Board for Huntingdonshire District Council. Previously it had been the practice of the Board to invite the Chairman of Sawtry Parish Council to the meeting and the Board asked if they were any further vacancies on the Board if this could be achieved.

B.1223 Great Fen Project

Further to minute B.1189, as Katy Smith from Natural England was not in attendance no report could be presented to the meeting.

B.1224 Development at The Mulberries

Further to minute B.1190, Miss McShane reported that the Clerk was in contact with Persimmon Homes and work to the balancing ponds had been carried out and the development continued to be monitored.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk keep the work under review and monitor the situation.

B.1225 Development at Giddings Road, Sawtry

Further to minute B.1191, Miss McShane reported that there was nothing further to report on this matter, The Clerk continued to liaise and work with Highways England concerning the future maintenance of their balancing ponds.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk continue to liaise and work with Highways England concerning the operation and future maintenance of their balancing ponds.

B.1226 Structures in Sawtry Brook

Further to minute B.1192, Miss McShane reported that it had been impossible to continue with the proposed enforcement action on the Brook to deal with the structure because of the COVID-19 restrictions. However, now that these were being removed she would serve a further Notice of Entry onto the property owner with the structure in their garden and would if necessary instruct bailiffs to remove the structure in default of action by the householder.

B.1227 Clerk's Report

Miss McShane advised:-

i) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

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

Topics discussed included the Middle Level Commissioners' Chief Executive giving an update on COVID-19 actions and responses, the change of MLC Chairman from Marc Heading to Jonathan Brown, updates on the Technical Services Department review (which aims to address the delays in responding to planning and consenting matters) and an update on the work of WRE. He also advised that Defra had commented positively on the Good Governance Guide published by ADA and that on the back of this feedback ADA were currently working on an Environmental Good Governance Guide. It was also noted at this meeting that Agricultural and Environmental Bills were passing through Parliament, the later including clauses benefiting IDBs, allowing them to expand their boundaries or for entirely new IDBs to be created, which was welcomed by the Chairmen as a positive step forward. Paul Burrows spoke on the work of the Environment Agency covering topics such as carbon baselining, national strategies, the tactical plans (which are securing much needed grant allocation for the area) and the need to continue to grow partnership working. He also spoke for Brian Stewart, the RFCC Chairman, who unfortunately was suffering from a poor broadband connection. On behalf of Brian, he advised that following the re-shaping of the local RFCC, there were two extra EA nominated positions available and that in this respect he wanted to propose that an Ex-officio seat be created for the incumbent Chair of the Great Ouse branch of ADA. This is likely to be Marc Heading who is expected to take over from Harry Raby in the spring. The new post will inject a direct link to farming which is of course the major business sector covered by this RFCC. The meeting finally turned to the future amalgamation of IDBs which it was generally agreed are likely to increase over time as succession planning has to be addressed.

ii) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

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

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

Key speakers in the morning were;

David Cooper, Deputy Director for Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Policy (Defra) – who first thanked the IDBs for the work they do and then endorsed the efforts being made to improve governance through the publication of the ‘Good Governance Guide’ and the work in hand on ‘Good Environmental Governance’. He then went on to speak about the ambitious aims of government, the record investment agreed by treasury for the next six year funding cycle and the Agriculture Bill that if passed will facilitate the creation of new IDBs and allow existing IDBs to expand districts. He finished by stating that the key was to educate people and to work together to share good practice.

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

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

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

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

A more formal question and answer session ended the morning, the panel being made up from, Julia Beeden from Cambridgeshire County Council, Emily Clarke from Anglian Water, John Curtin from Environment Agency, David Jenkins from Wessex RFCC, Innes Thompson

from ADA and David Thomas from the Middle Level Commissioners. When asked a question David Thomas, your Clerk, took the opportunity to advise of the importance and value of the work being undertaken by WRE and also to point out to Toby Wilson that he absolutely agreed with the sentiments of partnership working and also the key aims of the EA but noted that true partnership working was a two way street and that there were still areas of policy development that ADA were not being involved with sufficiently. Toby accepted that the EA were not perfect and that more work needed to be done on this.

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

b) Annual Conference

That although the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities was scheduled to be held in London on Wednesday the 10th November 2021 it was proposed to hold the Annual Conference remotely.

RESOLVED

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

c) Meeting of the River Great Ouse Branch

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

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

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

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

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

d) ADA response to publication of EFRA Flooding Inquiry Report

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

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

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

iii) Capital Funding Projects

That at the spring 2020 budget it was announced that government would provide the Environment Agency with a settlement of £5.2bn 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 this 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

iv) 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.

v) 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.

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

The costing bands are:

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

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

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

RESOLVED

That a site survey be undertaken and the results reported at the next meeting of the Board.

vi) Anglia Farmers

Further to minute B.1158(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 30th 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 Ablett further reported that the need to show that IDBs carbon footprint is being actively managed over future years is expected to increase with the Environment Agency setting themselves the target of being carbon neutral by 2030.

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.

vii) Fens Biosphere

Further to minute B.1193, Miss McShane referred to the leaflet from Cambridgeshire Acre.

viii) Land Registry

Whilst 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.

ix) National Drainage Show & Floodex 2021

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

x) Water Resources East (WRE)

Further to minute B.1193(vi), Miss McShane reported that WRE have had a productive and fruitful year despite COVID and have managed to lever many millions of funding for studies and initiatives which in the long term should benefit this area by recognising the importance of agriculture to the water resource supply chain and by seeking ways to integrate water resources, flood risk management and environmental objective delivery together. For the 2020/2021 year (should the Board continue to wish to support the work of WRE and contribute accordingly) the calculated figure will be £125.00. Please note that ADA have developed a new band based charging structure, hence the change from the previous year's figure.

RESOLVED

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

B.1228 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

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

Sawtry I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – May 2021

Pumping Stations

Other than the matters reported below only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant at each of the stations appears to be in a mechanically and electrically satisfactory condition. It should be noted the power supply to both Moat Farm and Castlehill is fragile and fails often when it is needed most, as was the case over the December 2020/January 2021 rainfall event. UK Power Networks does arrive promptly and make repairs but these seem to be of a superficial nature and do not appear to get to the heart of the problem. The Board may wish the Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) to pursue this matter further, however, this could be a lengthy and costly exercise with no guarantee of success.

Moat Farm

Further to the last report the gearbox shaft seal was replaced in autumn 2020.

Sawtry Roughs

Over the 2020/2021 winter period the control panel required further repairs, as it did in December 2019 and so, as instructed, the Engineer will be obtaining quotations for a new panel to be installed before winter 2021.

Pumping Hours

Pumping Station	Total hours run Mar 16-Apr 17	Total hours run Apr 17–Apr 18	Total hours run Apr 18–Apr 19	Total hours run Apr 19 – Apr 20	Total hours run Apr 20 – Apr 21
Castlehill	108	175	23	352	651
Moat Farm	79	284	10	325	675
Sawtry Roughs	85	173	18	325	787

	Total hours run May 11-Mar 12	Total hours run Mar 12-Apr 13	Total hours run Apr 13-Apr 14	Total hours run Apr 14-Mar 15	Total hours run Mar 15-Mar 16
Castlehill	230	356	195	162	51
Moat Farm	19	622	315	262	94
Sawtry Roughs	5	450	210	184	76

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

The MLC Planning Engineer has represented both the MLC 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.”

An allocation has been made available to the Board to maintain its system over the next 15 years. The details of this funding allocation are currently being clarified.

The Tactical Plans referred to in this document cover what has been termed the ‘Great Ouse Fens’, which covers the catchment of the River Great Ouse in Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. Its boundary to the west is formed of the right bank of the River Nene and includes all of the Middle Level catchment area and its constituent IDBs.

‘Flood Risk Management for the Fens’ is a project that has been set up to plan the best way of managing future flood risk in the whole Great Ouse Fens area. It is to be a Strategic Outline Programme which will set out the preferred option for managing flood risk in the Fens, taking in to account climate change and sea level rise (Strategic Outline Programmes sit above/before Strategic Outline Cases and are large scale programmes, so the Fens catchment scale fits this.)

The project will recommend actions that will be the best/most appropriate way of managing flood risk in the Fens over the next 50-100 years. The Flood Risk Management for the Fens project will take approximately 10-15 years to complete and in the mean time we need to know the maintenance and capital work needed in the area to continue to manage flood risk over the next two 6 year capital Grant in Aid settlement cycles, the period 2021 to 2027 and 2027 to 2033.

The background to the above is that the East Anglia Flood & Coastal Risk Management team have been working with national colleagues to come up with a better way of presenting the whole picture

of future investment to allow us to have a conversation with government about the short, medium and long term plans for the area. We agreed that we would produce Tactical Plans for each of the sub-catchments (Middle Level, South Level, West and East of Ouse and King's Lynn areas) to look at ALL FCRM assets for all sources of flooding that would better present the short term programme of works required and the agreed amount of benefits (Outcome Measures) that can be claimed for each project. This advice has led to the piece of work around benefit apportionment to address the issues with double counting of outcome measures by individual projects. In January 2019 all IDB Chairs in the Fens area were sent a letter, explaining the Fens project and how it fitted with the Strategic Approach for Flood & Coastal Risk Management Projects. This strategic approach fits with the Tactical Plans.

The Tactical Plans therefore clearly set out what maintenance and capital works are required in each sub catchment over the next 12 years (feeding into the East Anglian Area pipeline of work), and what benefits this work delivers. The plans also highlight the apportioned Outcome Measures and the likely FDGiA funding each scheme can attract based on maintaining the Standard of Service, along with the Partnership Funding (PF) scores to show where PF contributions are needed. The Plans also take into account benefits that have been claimed already in the previous six year capital investment programme (2015-2021).

The expectation is that work in the Fens area will only be to continue delivering the current Standard of Service for the area, until the Flood Risk Management for the Fens project has set out the preferred direction for the area as a whole. This can, though, include capital interventions to assets to return them to design standards, where assets are currently below target conditions and Standard of Service levels. The expectation is that those with assets in the area will be able to provide a plan of work for the next 12 years, and this will lead to us having a joined up, strategic approach for the short to medium term providing certainty to all RMAs with their investment planning and highlighting the amount of FDGiA funding individual schemes are eligible for. It will however remain the case that for each scheme a business case will need to be developed and approved before any grant is released and of course over the six year period national priorities for funding FRM schemes could impact the amount of grant available, in any given year, for schemes that come forward that do not currently have an allocation of funding.

As part of the Tactical Plans works, the base line economic benefits have been calculated for each of the Board's assets. This represent the potential maximum Grant-in-Aid that would be supportable, should a scheme or a series of schemes need to come forward to keep the asset operational over the 15 year period, whilst analysis of the long term catchment needs is identified. These sums effectively represent a cap on grant and are not allocated monies. They have been developed to help support scheme economics should an application for allocation be successful and in the development of the business cases. For this Board these sums by asset are;

Asset	Max eligible FDGIA
	£
Sawtry Roughs PS	84,890
Castle Hill (Manor Farm) PS	84,890
Moat Farm PS	84,890
Sawtry Main Drains	67,912

Baseline Report & Economic Appraisal Report

The draft report documents have been the subject of an internal consultation with the Technical Group. A detailed response was issued by the MLC. 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.

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

A virtual meeting of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was arranged for the end of April in advance of the publishing of the Baseline Report which the Agency has advised it aims to publish in the week commencing 10 May (after the local elections) via a new Fen's webpage on ADA's website.

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. 11, as detailed below:

11. Repairs to Buildings

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

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

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

High Rainfall Event and Flooding Incident

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

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

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

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

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



A view of Sawtry Brook taken on 23 December with flooding on the adjacent field behind

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

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

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

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

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

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

Planning Procedures Update

The employment of agents and engineering consultants

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

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

The use of Infiltration Devices

There has been no further progress on this.

Example of Good Practice

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

The re-submitted Reserved Matters application (East Cambridgeshire District Council Ref No 20/01169/RMM MLC Ref No 004) for this development was refused permission in January primarily on issues relating to the failure to comply with the Sutton Neighborhood Plan and District Council Policies relating to landscape and settlement characteristics, Design and Biodiversity. However, the Decision Notice also includes the following:

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

Members will be only too well aware of the importance of riparian watercourses in the larger flood risk and water level management system within the fenland environment and the workload and financial burden that dealing with riparian issues can cause. The importance of these “assets” is often overlooked or ignored when considering planning applications where planning authorities are under pressure to reach growth targets. Therefore, it is considered that the position taken is an unusual but appropriate one which should be applauded and considered as an example of best practice for all the planning authorities in the “fenland” environment.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 21 new development related matters have been received and, where appropriate, dealt with since the last meeting:

MLC Ref.	Council Ref.	Applicant	Type of Development	Location
617	H/20/00628/PMBPA	Mr A Rowell	Residence	Bridge Street, Woodwalton
618	H/20/00452/FUL	Woodwalton Village Hall	Car parking	Raveley Road, Woodwalton*
619	H/20/00607/HHFUL	Mr Smith	Residence (Extension)	Huntings Drive, Sawtry
620	H/20/00482/FUL	Mr R Malachowski	Residence	High Street, Sawtry
621	H/20/00849/FUL	Agreserves	Residential (5 plots)	Church End, Woodwalton
622	H/20/80192/COND	Spirotech Group Ltd	Industrial	Old Great North Road, Sawtry*
623	H/20/01470/OUT	Larkfleet Homes	Residential (Up to 340 plots)	Shawley Road/Glatton Road, Sawtry*
624	H/20/01223/HHFUL	Mr Roubinas	Residence (Extensions)	Deerpark Road, Sawtry
625	H/20/01593/HHFUL	Mr M Litchfield	Residence (Garage annexe)	Gidding Road, Sawtry
626	H/20/80218/COND	Vistry East Midlands	Residential (Up to 295 plots)	Gidding Road, Sawtry*
627	H/20/01764/FUL	Mr P Churchman	Residential (2 plots)	Green End Road, Sawtry
628	H/20/02379/HHFUL	Mr & Mrs Malachowski	Residence (Extension)	High Street, Sawtry
629	H/20/02345/HHFUL	Mr & Mrs Clark	Residence (Extension)	Glatton Road, Sawtry
630	H/20/02455/FUL	Mrs B Gilbert	Residence	Beville, Woodwalton
631	Enquiry	Fisher German LLP	Agricultural (Grain store)	Middlemarsh Farm, Sawtry
632	H/20/02068/FUL	Mr R Eastwood	Residence (Driveway)	Glatton Road, Sawtry*
633	H/20/02294/CLPD	Sawtry Parish Council	Leisure (Skate Park)	St Judiths Lane, Sawtry*
634	H/21/00072/HHFUL	M G Armitage	Residence (Extension)	Hill Close, Sawtry
635	H/20/02138/FUL	Spirotech Group Ltd	Business Park	Old Great North Road, Sawtry
636	H/21/00546/HHFUL	Mr Chance	Residence (Extension)	Bedford Way, Sawtry
637	H/21/00070/HHFUL	Mr & Mrs P Ward	Residence (Garage with Studio over)	Fen Lane, Sawtry

Planning applications ending 'PMBPA' relate to Prior Approval - Agricultural to Dwellings
Planning applications ending 'HHFUL' relate to Householder applications for Full Planning Permission
Planning applications ending 'COND' relate to the discharge of relevant planning conditions
Planning applications ending 'CLPD' relate to the Certificate of Lawfulness proposed

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.

Some of the above are likely to discharge treated effluent water into the Board's system via Sawtry, Wood Walton or Upwood Water Recycling Centres (WRC).

Mr Smith chose to use the infiltration device self-certification process for surface water disposal from Huntings Drive, Sawtry (MLC Ref No 619) and, in doing so, agreed that if the device was to fail in the future, he would be liable for discharge consent.

Further to general principles detailed in Minute B.1159 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters the current position is being ascertained in respect of the following developments:

- *Developments at Sawtry Community College, Fen Lane, Sawtry - The Governors of Sawtry Community College (MLC Ref Nos 384, 481 & 581)*
- *Construction of sewage treatment works at land off Raveley Road, Woodwalton - Anglian Water Services Ltd (MLC Ref No 447)*
- *Residential development on land between St Andrews Way & Chapel End, Sawtry - Davidsons Developments Ltd (MLC Ref No 456) & Lodge Park Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 525 & 532)*
- *Development at Sawtry Infants & Junior School, Middlefield Road, Sawtry – Kier Construction (MLC Ref Nos 501, 539, 559 & 571) and Cambridgeshire County Council (MLC Ref Nos 512 & 566)*
- *Erection of new firefighting training facilities, with associated infrastructure for the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service at Cambs Constabulary Police Training Centre, Monks Wood Road, Sawtry - Cambridge & Peterborough Fire Authority (MLC Ref No 578)*

Re-development of the former Toll Bar Services on land between Toll Bar Way and Great North Road, Sawtry – Cardinal Property Services Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 273, 295, 469, 484, 490), Travelodge Hotels (MLC Ref No 404) & Moto Hospitality Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 469, 592 & 600)

According to the District Council's Simple Search webpage the planning application is "In Progress".

Residential development at and to the south of Marshalls Bros Garage, Gidding Road, Sawtry – Client of Royal Haskoning (MLC Ref No 307); Fox Land & Property (MLC Ref Nos 325, 339 & 343) Persimmon Homes (EM) (MLC Ref No 405); Persimmon Homes & Bellway Homes East Midlands (MLC Ref No 409) and Charles Church (East Midlands) (MLC Ref No 439)

Persimmon Homes has been chased over its plans to bring the balancing ponds up to the required standard and then maintain them. Emails were sent in January and February on this which included advice that the Board would not wish to adopt the ponds, but did require them to be maintained to a suitable standard.

Erection of a single dwelling between 8 and 18 Chapel End, Sawtry – Mrs J Solomon (MLC Ref Nos 344, 366, 428 & 429), Mr J McLelland (MLC Ref Nos 558 & 569) & Claybrook Properties Ltd (MLC Ref No 607)

Further to the Board's last Meeting Report, the latest planning application, HDC Ref No 19/01885/FUL, MLC Ref No 607, was granted planning permission by the District Council subject to the imposition of planning conditions including those related to both foul and surface water disposal.

The applicants' engineering consultant, PRP UK Ltd, acknowledged that the use of infiltration devices was not viable due to the site's geology and submitted a revised surface water drainage scheme that utilised permeable paving and porous sub-base material under the driveways.

The sub-base is lined with an impermeable geomembrane which forms a water tight tank that stores the surface water and prevents both the release of surface water and the ingress of groundwater.

Using an Orifice Control Chamber, the discharge from the developed site will be attenuated to greenfield rates of run off and sufficient storage is provided to accommodate the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP), a 1 in 100 year, event and includes a 40% allowance for Climate Change.

The point of discharge will be an existing on-site surface water sewer.

Residential Development on land at The Paddock, Raveley Road, Great Raveley – Mr K Robinson (MLC Ref No 422) & Optimum Land & Property Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 474, 556 & 612)

Further to the last Board Meeting Report, the applicant submitted an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate in relation to the District Council's refusal of the last planning application, HDC Ref No 19/02145/OUT, MLC Ref No 612, for nine self-build and custom-built dwellings with access road and supporting infrastructure.

The District Council's Simple Search webpage advises that the planning appeal is "In Progress".

Single storey extension to rear at 8 Tinkers Lane, Sawtry, Mr K Edwards (MLC Ref No 473)

Members will recall that this site was the subject of an innovative solution which used a series of six 200 litre water butts to provide the necessary attenuation for the extension, a temporary consent was granted to see if the proposal would work effectively.

The MicroDrainage storm analysis provided at the time indicated that a total of 1066 litres would be needed to accommodate the 1% AEP (Annual Exceedance Probability), a 1 in 100 year, storm event together with an allowance for climate change.

Before the expiration of the five year temporary consent in October, the applicant contacted the office to request that a permanent consent be granted. The applicant confirmed that the system had worked well with no instances of lack of storage capacity occurring during rainfall events with the heavy rainfall that occurred during December 2020 being contained within the system effectively. The resident indicated that the requirement to empty the water butts was becoming more challenging, due to age, and wanted to install a system that would self-regulate. It was agreed to install a flow restrictor to allow connection to the local drainage system to limit the discharge of the system to below greenfield rates of run off.

Following consultation with the Board's Chairman it was recommended that the system meets the Board's requirements for a fully attenuated discharge and that the previous temporary consent issued in October 2015 be revoked in favour of confirmation that the system meets the Board's requirements.

This solution provided a reasonably cost-effective means of surface water disposal in restricted sites and/or where infiltration does not provide a viable and efficient solution.

Outline planning application for the erection of up to 295 residential dwellings, access and associated works, all other matters reserved at land south west of Mill Cottage, Gidding Road, Sawtry – Waterman Infrastructure & Environment (MLC Ref No 520); Kier Group (MLC Ref No 524), Bovis Homes Limited (MLC Ref Nos 587, 588 & 589) & Vistry East Midlands (MLC Ref No 626)

NB The Vistry Group is the result of a merger between Galliford Try (including Linden Homes) with Bovis Homes that was completed on January 2020.

In September, an application was submitted to the District Council for the discharge of planning condition C9 (maintenance arrangements for SWD), HDC Ref No 20/80218/COND, MLC Ref No 626.

Initially, the LLFA were unable to recommend the discharge of the planning condition but following the submission of further documents was able to advise the District Council that the:

“... documents demonstrate that the surface water features can be managed for the lifetime of the development.”

On this recommendation the District Council discharged the condition at the end of March.

However, the submission document titled "Ownership and the maintenance of all drainage assets", advises that:

"The Freeholders

The responsibility for maintenance of all elements of the development remain with Bovis Homes (part of the Vistry Group) until handed over to the Adopting Authority (Anglian Water for Main Foul Drainage), Freeholders, Housing Association or a Residents Management Company.

Handover of external works to the Freeholders coincides with completion and sale of each respective residential unit.

Surface Water Sewers

The Adoptable Surface Water Sewers will remain with Bovis Homes until handed over to the Adopting Authority (Anglian Water) under a Section 104 agreement.

The Swale, pond and outfall will remain with Bovis Homes until handed over to the Residents Management Company.

The remaining shared storm water pipework systems where located within the individual plot curtilage, will be the responsibility of the homeowner.

It is also recommended that each homeowner regularly cleans and inspects rainwater pipes and chambers where located within their plot curtilage as a preventative measure to minimise the ingress of detritus into the storm water system. It is suggested that new homeowners are informed of such responsibilities in their welcome packs or within their conveyancing.

Foul Drainage

The main drainage will be adopted by Anglian Water under a S104 Agreement. Until such adoption the drainage, will be maintained by Bovis Homes, and the pipework and chambers will be inspected regularly as works progress and connections are made.

Just as with the Surface water pipework the plot curtilage drainage will remain the responsibility of the homeowner and regular inspection of pipes and chambers takes place to ensure their systems flow effectively. It is suggested that new homeowners are informed of such responsibilities in their welcome packs or within their conveyancing."

As highlighted above, this document infers that the responsibility for maintenance of the drainage elements is shared between up to five separate parties.

Neither correspondence from the LLFA nor the District Council included a suitable informative or Drainage Note advising the applicant of its duties under both the relevant Byelaws and the Land Drainage Act.

In view of the above, and the ongoing issues with the maintenance of SuDS elsewhere in the village, it is suggested that the Board may wish to contact the parties concerned to ensure that its requirements are met.

Proposed residential development to the north west of Copins Close, Shawley Road, Round Hills Way, Fairfield Close and Salters Way and south west of Glatton Road, Sawtry – Client of Waterman Infrastructure & Environment (MLC Ref No 548) & Larkfleet Homes (MLC Ref Nos 553, 564 & 623)

Further to the Board's last Meeting Report, the District Council refused planning permission for the planning application HDC Ref No 18/01458/OUT, MLC Ref No 564. The applicant submitted an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against the District Council's decision and this is "In progress".

A subsequent planning application, HDC Ref No 20/01407/OUT, MLC Ref No 523, for what is understood to be the same scheme that was previously submitted to the District Council, is currently "In progress".

The LLFA has advised the District Council that it has no objection to the proposal "in principle" and has suggested the imposition of two planning conditions. The response also includes an informative advising on the need to seek the Board's consent.

During February, the Board was approached by the applicant's engineering consultant, Waterman Infrastructure & Environment Ltd, as part of the on-going post-application consultation process. During a conversation the Board's Chairman referred to the meeting at the Middle Level Offices held in February 2019, with the parties involved, concerning the Board's requirements and confirmed that these remain generally unchanged ie:

- (i) The re-alignment of the downstream end of Sawtry Brook to eliminate the current bends immediately upstream of the culvert under Glatton Road which currently restrict the flows.
- (ii) Where possible the flows from the development should enter the watercourse to the north (Top Lodge Drain). It should be noted that some channel improvement works may be required to facilitate this.
- (iii) The balancing ponds must be the subject of a "secure" maintenance agreement to ensure that they are fully operational during their lifetime.

It is further suggested that to be proactive, protect its interests and avoid the problems discussed elsewhere in this report, that this be expanded and that the Board writes to the District Council to advise on the above and include the following as a minimum:

- a) The Board's District Drains are protected by its byelaws made under the Land Drainage Act (LDA). The Board's prior written consent is required for works within, under or over the protected watercourses and the associated 9.0m wide maintenance access strip(s).
- b) Unless the Board's prior written consent is sought, no dwellings or buildings; other structures, including access roads and driveways; boundary treatments, including both soft and hard landscaping; utility services etc; whether temporary or permanent, are to be placed within 9.0m of the brink of the Board's District Drain.
- c) In order to prevent an increase in flood risk, by reducing available hydraulic and water storage capacities, restricted access for maintenance and raising the local ground water table etc and to protect the natural environment, the retention of open watercourses is encouraged.
- d) The piping and filling of open watercourses, except as may be necessary to create a means of access across a watercourse, or other structures that require consent under Section 23 of the LDA is generally prohibited within the Board's rateable district.
- e) Any application which requires the Board's consent must be supported by a suitable hydraulic model that proves that flood risk as a result of the development is not increased or advise on any mitigation works that are required.
- f) The respective water level and flood risk management systems serving the site must be:
 - Designed for the worst case 1% AEP (Annual Exceedance Probability), a 1 in 100 year, storm and must consider a range of durations to determine the maximum volume required. Allowances for the impact of climate change and siltation must be included within the calculations and subsequent design.

- Provided with protected maintenance access strips, say at least 9.0m wide, to enable ready access to undertake maintenance and spoil disposal.
 - Provided with a suitably sized loading/off-loading area together with access routes for the maintenance machinery required.
 - Completed to its maximum dimensions and the necessary flow regulation and other structures installed, operational, consented and approved by the respective Board before work on the roads/dwellings commences on-site.
- g) Adequate evidence should be provided to prove that a viable system for appropriate water level and flood risk management that meets current design standards exists. This should include, when relevant, appropriate detailed engineering plans to a recognised engineering scale; appropriate supporting calculations, or additional outstanding information and documents, such as but not limited to:
- Survey drawings of the site and/or receiving watercourses including longitudinal and cross sections.
 - Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment (Flood Risk/Drainage Strategy/Assessment), including hydraulic calculations and modelling of watercourses, an allowance for exceedance flows and the effects of climate change and must advise on any mitigation works that are required.
 - Construction water level and flood risk management plan, including a Works Programme/Schedule, Site Layout/General Arrangement/Plan, Construction Details and Method Statements.
 - Water Level and Flood Risk Management Maintenance and Action Plan (Maintenance Schedule/Plan).
 - Habitats and Species Risk Assessment & Action Plan (Environmental Assessment/Statement).

Long-term Ownership, Funding and Maintenance

It is considered that the issues of long-term funding, management and maintenance arrangements for the upkeep of the facilities in perpetuity, particularly those associated with flood risk and water level management including SuDS, is of prime importance. It is further considered that, on this occasion, these should have been supplied much earlier within the decision-making process. This should include arrangements for adoption by an appropriate public authority or statutory undertaker and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime. Failure to do so may lead to an unacceptable burden on the ratepayer. Economic constraints **must not** be accepted as a justification for non-inclusion of such arrangements.

- i. It is a requirement that the Water Level and Flood Risk Management Maintenance and Action Plan includes as a minimum:
 - Appropriate detailed plans, to an engineering scale, of the surface water system, including any balancing/attenuation features, together with:
 - Appropriate supporting calculations, construction details, Method Statements, Risk Assessments, operating instructions etc.
 - Details of land ownership and responsibility including maintenance arrangements and funding mechanisms.
 - A description of the system.
 - Identification of individual assets and activities.
 - Maintenance Schedules.
 - Drawings of assets.
 - Relevant information and data sheets.
 - Utilities Plans.
- ii. Further details concerning the adoption by an appropriate public authority or statutory undertaker and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme including ownership, funding and maintenance throughout its lifetime **must** be provided.

This can include correspondence from and/or legal agreements with the appropriate body confirming the adoption of both the proposed foul and surface water systems. If future maintenance is to be provided by a management company, then the Board will require that details of the works to be carried out by the Management Company, acknowledging that it will be responsible for the whole life funding, management and maintenance of the on-site drainage system, together with the associated costs, are included in the deed of sale.

- iii. Preparation of a regular maintenance programme, to be undertaken and agreed upon by all relevant parties to ensure its long-term integrity and efficiency.

In order to guide further discussion, it would be beneficial to receive the Board's opinion and further instruction on how it wishes us to proceed.

Erection of industrial buildings on land north of St Andrews Nurseries & east of the Old Great North Road, Sawtry - Spirotech Group Limited (MLC Ref Nos 565, 622 & 635)

Further to the Board's last Meeting Report, an application was submitted to the District Council for the discharge of planning condition C6 (Drainage), HDC Ref No 20/80192/COND, MLC Ref No 622. The condition was subsequently discharged. The District Council's letter advises that:

"The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) as a consultee have reviewed the above documents and have recommended the discharge of condition 6. Surface water from the proposed development will be restricted to a maximum of 3.1 l/s and will attenuated within a pond. The strategy confirms the depth of water within the pond will not exceed 2.1m.

Condition 6 can be considered discharged upon completion of the works in accordance with the approved details listed above."

A subsequent planning application was submitted to the District Council in October, HDC Ref No 20/02138/FUL, MLC Ref No 635 for a wider site than was granted planning permission in June 2019.

The proposals are the subject of a post-application consultation for which a response is currently being prepared.

Development Contributions

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

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC)

No further correspondence has been received concerning Policy Planning issues and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board’s interests.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Flood and Water Management (FloW) Partnership

The MLC Planning Engineer has represented both the MLC and their associated Boards since the last Board meeting.

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

Future Meetings

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

Staffing Updates

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

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

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

The revised Strategy was ‘laid before Parliament’ during July.

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

Local FRM Strategy

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

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

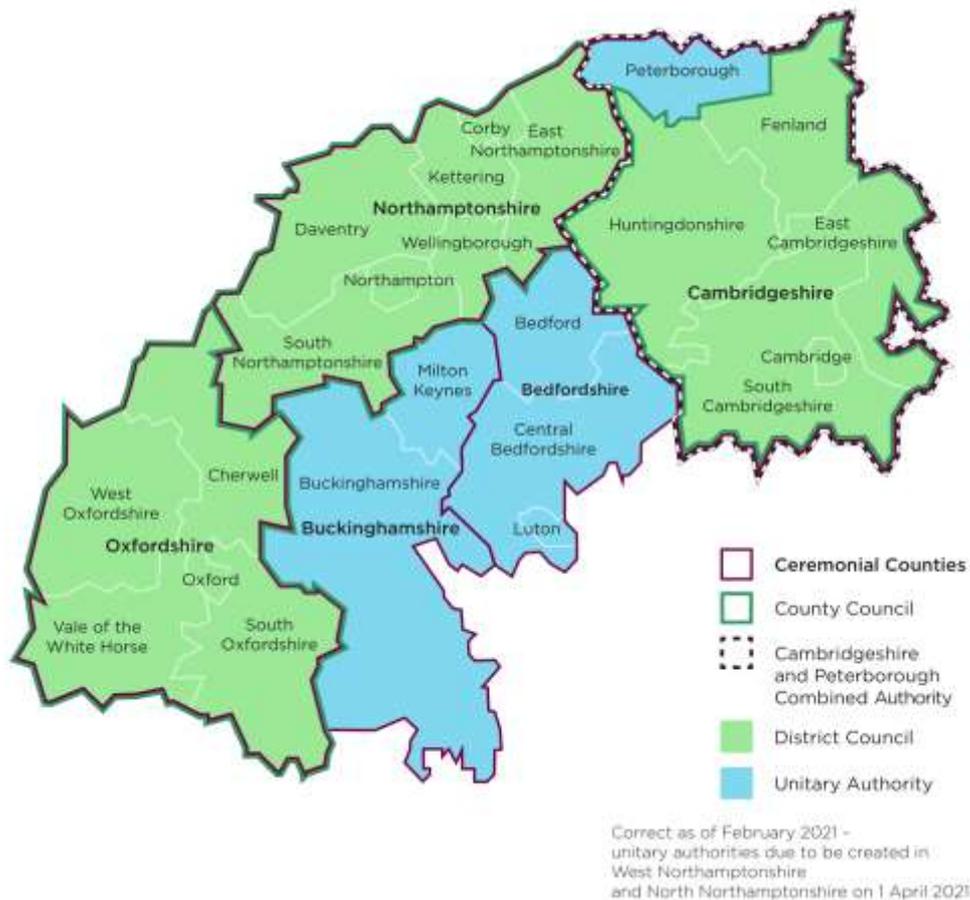
A successful £700k Grant-in-Aid (GiA) bid was made by a consortium of six LLFAs across the region, including Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC), Peterborough City Council (PCC) and Northampton County Council (NCC), in respect of The Oxford–Cambridge Arc (formerly the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford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

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

The Baseline Report has been completed.



Plan showing the extents of the Ox-Cam ARC

Riparian Responsibilities

In order to raise awareness of and instigate discussion on an issue that causes difficulties for RMAs, including the Boards, primarily due to increased workload and costs, the County Council’s Flood Risk and Biodiversity Team prepared an “Issues and Options Briefing Note” seeking changes to current practices that are inefficient and create inconsistency across the county in the use of public resources to address the issues associated with riparian assets. The document has been considered by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) and was subsequently presented to the RFCC Chairman Group with the hope that it would actively support a national information campaign. Unfortunately, this did not happen but the information has been fed into the national strategy via the EA and the action plan is likely to contain actions related to riparian owners.

Flood and Coast Resilience Innovation Programme

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

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

Good Governance for Internal Drainage Board 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 to include 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 at least provide reassurance to landowners who consider that they are "better than nothing". Political decisions often take precedence about the use of sandbags in relation to this matter however guidance from the County Council's Emergency Planning Team concerning the publication and management of the document is on hold due to the workload generated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sign off is required from Huntingdonshire District Council.

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 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)

Following the higher than average rainfall experienced during the winter of 2019/20, the EA has been 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. A recovery programme was put in place looking at locating and fixing defects but also community engagement and asset data gathering.

A debrief exercise originally planned for April 2020 was postponed.

(b) Cambridgeshire County Council - Flood Risk and Biodiversity

(i) *Flooding in Milton Keynes – May 2018*

Following the flooding experienced 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.

(ii) *August flooding in Cambridgeshire*

Flooding occurred in Bluntisham, Colne, Cottenham, Earith, March, Somersham, St Ives, St Neots/Eaton Socon, Weston Colville and Woodhurst plus garden flooding in a number of locations.

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

CCC and PCC Climate Change Strategy/Plan

(a) Peterborough City Council (PCC)

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

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

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

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

(b) Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)

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

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

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

(c) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate

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

The County Council was keen to ensure that water and flood management are a key focus and is planning on submitting a RFCC response which will highlight the evidence gathered as part of the FRM for the Fens project in particular.

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 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 so instead making significant redundancies. This does leave uncertainty for AWSL as the CMA can choose to review everything and this can take up to a year to complete.

(b) Flooding Partnership Funding Programme

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

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

(c) Drainage & Wastewater Management Plans (DWMPs)

See the separate item later in this report.

Cambridgeshire County Council – Highways

Highway Gullies

The CCC mapping work on its highway gullies is complete.

Environment Agency (EA)

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

See the separate item elsewhere in this report.

(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.

Highways England (HE)

Organisational Changes

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

Drainage & Wastewater Management Plans (DWMPs)

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

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

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

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

1. Strategic context.

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

2. Risk Based Catchment Screening (RBCS).

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

3. Baseline Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (BRAVA).

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

4. Options Development and Appraisal (ODA).

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

5. Programme appraisal.

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

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

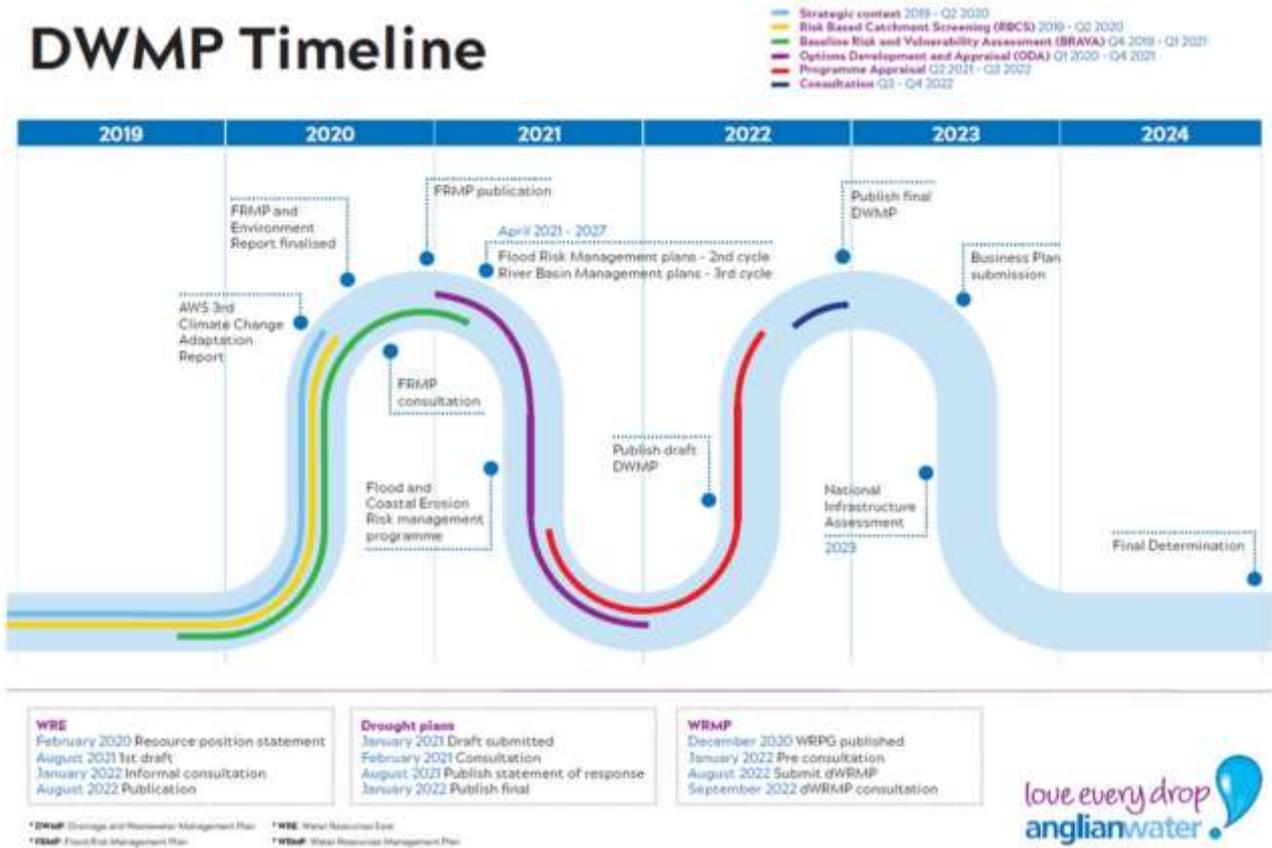
Further details can also be found at <https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/about-us/our-strategies-and-plans/drainage-and-wastewater-management-plan/>.

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

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

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

DWMP Timeline



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

Consulting Engineer

19 May 2021

Sawtry (342)\Reports\May 21

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	
							Rating 0 Not concerned 1 Concerned 2 Very concerned
SAWTSC	Sawtry	6312	1	2	2	2	Reasonably sized catchment in which growth is occurring. Catchment extents will increase as future growth occurs. Concerns about the adverse impacts on the receiving watercourse system, including the Great Fen Project, 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 Sewer Drain discharges unregulated by gravity into the Middle Level Catchwater Drain. Headwall is in poor condition.
UPWOSC	Upwood	545	1	2	2	2	Reasonably sized catchment in which growth is occurring. Some further growth is likely. Concerns about the adverse impacts on the receiving system, including the Great Fen Project, 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 Board's Drain approaches capacity during high rainfall events and discharges unregulated by gravity into the Middle Level Catchwater Drain.
WOORST	Woodwalton	Not known	0	1	1	2	This is a relatively new WRC which the Board was involved with and has its consent. It serves a small catchment with only limited future growth and is unlikely to reach its design limit. Concerns about the adverse impacts on the receiving system, including the Great Fen Project, involving the capacity and maintenance of the receiving watercourse system, flood risk implications – the receiving watercourse is already at capacity, volumetric flow and water quality permits/consents. The Board's Drain discharges unregulated by gravity into the Middle Level Catchwater Drain.

The Engineer reported that other than matters set out in the report only routine maintenance had been carried out since the last meeting and that the pumping plant at each of the stations appears to be mechanically and electrically in satisfactory condition. However, it should be noted that the power supply to both Moat Farm and Castle Hill pumping stations is fragile and fails often when it is needed most as was the case over the December 2020/January 2021 rainfall event. UK Power Networks does arrive promptly and make repairs but these seem to be of a superficial nature and do not appear to get to the heart of the problem. The Board may wish the Middle Level Commissioners to pursue this matter further giving an indication of the likely costs and what can be done to improve the situation with regard to this matter.

Moat Farm Pumping Station

The Board noted that further to the last report the gearbox shaft seal had been replaced in autumn 2020. The Board discussed the need for an automatic weedscreen at Moat Farm pumping station and were advised that the provision of an automatic weedscreen would be the responsibility of the internal drainage board as it would not be able to get grant funding unless there was a major refurbishment of the pumping station and the weedscreen was included. Mr Lensen made a suggestion that if it was not possible to provide an automatic weedscreen at Moat Farm pumping station consideration should be given to an additional safety rail for hand weeding.

Sawtry Roughs Pumping Station

Over the winter period 2020/2021 the control panel required further repairs and the Engineer had obtained quotations for a new panel to be installed before winter 2021. The Chairman advised that he had accepted the quotation from Carlton Controls at a total price of £6,168.00. Carlton Controls were a well established company with a long track record and all installation work would be done by the company themselves.

The Board noted the pumping hours for Castle Hill, Moat Farm and Sawtry Roughs pumping stations.

Flood Risk Management (FRM) for the Fens

The Engineer reported on the future Fenland project. The Board noted the response from the Environment Agency and the cost to Internal Drainage Boards of developing the technical plans.

Integrity of Corrugated Steel Pipes

The Board noted what had arisen with other Boards and the failure of corrugated steel pipes.

High Rainfall and Flooding Incident

The Engineer reported on the rainfall event which had occurred on the 23rd December 2020 and the action taken by the Middle Level Commissioners for the period the 25th to the 27th December 2020. During December the Middle Level Commissioners recorded 127.5mm of rain at their March office with 52.5mm being recorded solely on the 23rd December. It was noted that although the amount of rain that fell in this period was not great as that experienced in December 2014 the rain had fallen on highly saturated ground that offered no sponge effect and led to significant flooding within the local area. The Clerk to the Board attended a meeting with Stephen Barclay MP and representatives from other organisations and the Clerk and the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer had attended both routine and extraordinary meetings of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Flood and Water Partnership and the Fenland Flooding Sub-group which had discussed issues associated with the flooding event.

Due to the number of incidents reported, the County Council in its role as Lead Flood Authority, was likely to prepare several Section 19 reports (which places a duty on the Lead Flood Authority under the Flood and Water Management Act to undertake flood investigations after a significant flood event).

Several board members commented on flooding that had occurred in the local area. Flooding overtopping Sawtry Brook had taken place on the 23rd December 2020. The District Officer reported that between Points 90-91 on Sawtry Brook there had been a build up of silt and vegetation and this needed to be cleared out. He said he would investigate this and if necessary seek further assistance from the Middle Level Commissioners.

The Engineer reported on the 21 new development related matters which had been received since the date of the last meeting.

Residential development at and to the south of Marshalls Bros Garage, Gidding Road, Sawtry (MLC Ref Nos. 307, 325, 339, 343, 405, 409 and 439)

The Engineer reported that Persimmon Homes had been chased over its plans to bring the balancing ponds to the required standard and maintain them. Emails had been sent in January and February on this which included advice that the Board would not wish to adopt the balancing ponds but did require them to be maintained to a suitable standard. Councillor Tuplin reported that Larkfleet Ltd had submitted a second application which was very similar to their first application which had been refused and this application was due to be determined by the Planning Inspector.

Long term ownership and funding maintenance

The Engineer reported on the issues of long term funding management and maintenance arrangements for the upkeep of facilities in perpetuity particularly those associated with flood risk and water level management including SUDS and it is considered that these should be supplied much earlier within the decision making process. This should include arrangements for an adoption by an appropriate public authority or statutory undertaker and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime. Failure to do so may lead to an unacceptable burden on the ratepayer. It was considered that economic constraints must not be accepted as a justification for non-inclusion of such arrangements. One of the main concerns of the Board on this matter was about the use of management companies and they felt that if future maintenance is to be provided by a management company then the Board would require the details of the works to be carried out by the management company. The Board's main concern was the failure of management companies during the life of the development.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) Sawtry Roughs Pumping Station

That the actions of the Chairman be approved.

B.1229 Capital Improvement Programme

Members reviewed the Board's future capital improvement programme.

RESOLVED

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

B.1230 District Officer's Report

The Board considered the Report of the District Officer which set out the lengths that had been flailed during the year 2020/2021 and detailed the lengths of the drains that would be flailed later in year.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved and that the Officer be thanked for his services over the preceding year.
- ii) That the District Officer be authorised to arrange for flail mowing as he felt appropriate.

B.1231 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.1232 District Officer's Fee and Pumping Station duties

- a) The Board gave consideration to the District Officer's fee for 2021/2022.
- b) The Board gave consideration to the payment in respect of pumping station duties for 2021/2022.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Board agree that the sum of £3,545.00 be allowed for the services of the District Officer for 2021/2022.
- ii) That the Board agree that the sum of £975.00 be allowed for the provision of pumping station duties for 2021/2022.

(NB) –Messrs Darby and Lensen declared interests when this item was discussed.

B.1233 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.

A question was asked about the provision of automated weedcreens under grant aid and the Board were advised that this would be responsibility of the Board.

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

B.1234 Environment Agency – Precepts

Miss McShane reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2021/2022 in the sum of £6,486.00 (the precept for 2020/2021 being £6,486.00).

B.1235 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

Miss McShane reported that the sum of £849.03 (£6,077.70 less £5,228.67 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 £5,237.79 in respect of 80% of the Board's estimated expenditure for the financial year 2020/2021.

B.1236 Association of Drainage Authorities Subscriptions

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

RESOLVED

That the requested ADA subscription for 2021 be paid.

B.1237 Contributions from Developers

Miss McShane reported that contributions towards the cost of dealing with the increased flow or volume of surface water run-off and treated effluent volume have been received.

B.1238 Health and Safety

Further to minute B.1206, the Chairman referred to the report received from Cope Safety Management following their visit to the District on the 10th November 2020 and reported that a chain had been fitted at Sawtry Roughs pumping station and that a barrier had been fitted with a padlock for when the weedscreen was cleaned.

B.1239 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.1240 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board - 2019/2020

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

B.1241 Defra IDB1 Returns

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

B.1241 Budgeting

Miss McShane referred to the budget comparison of the forecast out-turn and the actual out-turn for the financial year ending 31st March 2021.

B.1242 Review of Internal Controls and appointment of Internal Auditor

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

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

RESOLVED

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

B.1243 Risk Management Assessment

- a) The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with their current Risk Management Policy.
- b) The Board considered the insured value of their buildings.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman agree any increases in the insured value after discussion with Richard Lloyd, Middle Level Commissioners' Mechanical and Electrical Engineer, when he next carried out an inspection of the pumping stations.

B.1244 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.1245 Annual Governance Statement – 2020/2021

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

RESOLVED

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

B.1246 Payments 2020/2021

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £77,851.74 which had been made during the financial year 2020/2021.

(NB) – Mr Darby declared an interest in the payment made to T E Darby & Sons.

(NB) – Mr Raby declared an interest (as a Member of the Middle Level Board) in the payments to the Middle Level Commissioners and in the payment to H Raby & Sons.

(NB) – Mr Lensen declared an interest (as an employee of AG Reserves) in the payments made to Ag Reserves.

B.1247 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2020/2021

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

RESOLVED

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

B.1248 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 Huntingdonshire District Council would be:-

Gravity Area – Area 1

Drainage rates	-	15.42%
Special levy	-	84.58%

Gravity Area (Flood Alleviation Scheme) – Area 2

Special levy	-	100%
--------------	---	------

Pumped Area (Sawtry Fen) – Area 3

Drainage rates	-	99.89%
Special levy	-	0.11%

Pumped Area (Moat Farm) – Area 4

Drainage rates	-	100%
----------------	---	------

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £59,200 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 £41,352 and £17,848 respectively.
- iv) That drainage rates in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District as follows:-

AREA 1	-	2.72p
AREA 3	-	45.90p
AREA 4	-	65.00p

- v) That a Special levy of £17,848 be made and issued to Huntingdonshire 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.1249 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.1250 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Wednesday the 8th June 2022 at 10.00am at the Admiral Wells Inn, Holme.

B.1251 Additional works

Mr Lensen raised several matters.

He said there were no lifebuoys at either pumping stations and these should be fitted. Mr Lensen said that, following the flooding over the Christmas period when he had over 100 acres underwater, with the District Officer's permission, he had carried out slubbing and gutting works this year that do not appear to have been undertaken by the Board for several years. This was between 131-130-129 at Castle Hill and 107-101, 102-103 and 04-103 at Moat Farm pumping station and he requested that additional works need to be carried out to the drain from Moat Farm pumping station to Raveley Wood which is points 105-7. He also stated that there were numerous badgers setts in the Board's drains particularly in the small bank between points 105 and 3. Four years ago there were only a couple of setts now there are many more and these need attention before they get out of control. He also raised the issue of the Middle Level Commissioners not slubbing out their drains which he considers is preventing the water getting to the new pumping station at St Germans pumping station quick enough in high rainfall times.