

## UPWELL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Upwell Internal Drainage Board  
hosted at the Middle Level Offices, March on Monday the 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021

### PRESENT

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

The Clerk and Miss Samantha Ablett (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Carl Nunn (District Officer) were in attendance.

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

### Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from R Gott Esq, J Kirk Esq, B Rackley Esq and N R Russell Esq.

### B.1933 Standing Orders

Further to minute B.1858, Miss Ablett 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.1934 Declarations of Interest

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

The Chairman and Vice Chairman declared interests in minutes B.1953 and B.1967.

Councillor Sutton declared an interest (as Members of the Middle Level Board) in any matters relating to the Middle Level Commissioners.

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

Messrs A and J Quail declared interests in planning application (MLC Ref No. 509) received for Mr J Quail.

Mr Gladwin declared an interest in planning application (MLC Ref Nos 409, 412 & 414) received for P J Farms Ltd.

Mr Tegerdine declared an interest in any matter in which Waldersey Farms were involved.

Mr Means declared an interest in minute no. B.1938.

Mr Bliss declared an interest in minute no. B.1967.

#### B.1935 Confirmation of Minutes

#### RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

#### B.1936 Amendments to the Constitution

Further to minute B.1903, Miss Ablett reported that the draft reconstitution scheme had been approved by Defra and had been sent to an Environment Agency solicitor, who needed to advertise the Scheme and send copies to the relevant local authorities, namely Fenland District Council and the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk. She advised that once advertised there would be a period of one month for objections.

Miss Ablett added that the Assistant Clerk had been asked to supply the names of the 14 Elected Members who will form the Board. As the Board had not been filling vacancies when they had arisen over the past few years, the number of elected Board members had consequently reduced from 20 to 14 and Miss Ablett enquired whether the Board were happy for these names to be put forward.

Miss Ablett advised that the next stage was for any objections to be considered and then Defra would prepare the Final Order to be advertised in the London Gazette with a further period of 30 days for objections. Assuming no objections were received, the Assistant Clerk estimated that the remaining procedures would take between 2-3 months.

#### RESOLVED

That the names of the current Upwell members be supplied to the Environment Agency to form the membership of the reconstituted Board,

#### B.1937 Ouse Washes Section 10 Reservoir Middle Level and South Level Barrier Bank Works

Further to minute B.1905, Miss Ablett referred to a Newsletter from the Environment Agency dated March 2021.

### B.1938 Worlds End Farm, Nordelph

Further to minute B.1906, the Clerk referred to the issues at Worlds End Farm and reported that the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and the Middle Level Commissioners' Solicitor/Assistant Clerk had recently met with Mr Partridge and his agent on site and that following this meeting he hoped the matter will soon be concluded.

Having spoken with Mr Partridge's agent and agreeing a course of action with him, which he would confirm in writing, the Clerk advised that Mr Partridge's agent was quite clear as to the advice he would be giving to his client.

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

### B.1939 Hales Drove, Old Croft River

Further to minute B.1907, the Chairman referred to the sheet piling works behind the cottages opposite Hales Drove and, having consulted the Clerk, it was agreed that an Engineer should inspect the site to ascertain the length of pile that would be required.

The Clerk confirmed that from the bank top to the hard back level had been measured and was near of 2 metres. He anticipated that the length of pile required was likely to be in the region of 5-6 metres and he would arrange for the Consulting Engineer to confirm this with the Chairman.

The Chairman hoped that, providing the resident at Maywood Farm allowed the Board access, the work would be undertaken in the summer.

### RESOLVED

That the Consulting Engineer advise the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the length of pile required for the piling works.

### B.1940 Joint Maintenance Works – Old Croft River

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

Further to minute B.1909(b), Miss Ablett reported that Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners had sent another letter to the resident requesting that a consent application be submitted, but no response had been received.

The Chairman advised that, in view of the Board being able to gain entry for works last summer, the resident did not appear to have a problem but he would still have to either remove the hedge or apply for consent. He added that when applying the Board's/Commissioners Byelaws, all landowners/occupiers had to be seen to be treated the same way.

The Chairman further advised that the resident was very approachable and as he would be speaking to him shortly to arrange access for the piling work he would address the hedge and the consent requirement with him at the same time.

### RESOLVED

That the Chairman speak with the resident to resolve the issue.

B.1941 Site of Former Shrub House, 46 Church Road, Christchurch – Planning Application F/YR15/0104/F

Further to minute B.1910, Miss Ablett reported that the outstanding discharge contribution had still not been received and the Planning Engineer was continuing to pursue payment.

RESOLVED

That the Planning Engineer pursue collection of the outstanding discharge contribution as soon as possible.

B.1942 Roadway to Nordelph Pumping Station

Further to minute B.1911, the Chairman confirmed that the planings had been delivered but due to work load and weather conditions these were yet to be laid. The Vice Chairman would make arrangements with the District Foreman for the necessary work to be carried out.

B.1943 Structure under the Road at the Sixteen Foot River

Further to minute B.1913, the Chairman advised that he hoped that he and the Vice Chairman would be able to meet with Messrs A & J Quail on site after harvest to form a strategy and that once this was agreed he would contact the Consulting Engineer to request delivery of the clay and make arrangements with the Contractors for the work to be undertaken.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman and Vice Chairman meet with Messrs A & J Quail on site after harvest to form a strategy and contact the Consulting Engineer to make the necessary arrangements.

B.1944 Electrification of Cock Fen Pumping station

Further to minute B.1917, Miss Ablett reported that a loan of £300,000 had been advanced to the Board in February 2021. The contract had been awarded to E Rand & Sons in January and UK Power Networks had acknowledged receipt of £102,553 paid to them in February for the installation of the power supply.

Miss Ablett advised that, due to UK Power Networks not having received details of land ownership and access rights, this was delaying progressing with the power supply and obtaining drawings from UK Power Networks for the transformer base.

The Assistant Clerk had advised that deeds were held relating to ownership of the access land but not for the pumping station and she had contacted UK Power Networks to ascertain what they required and whether they required an Easement or wayleave over the land owned by the Environment Agency. Miss Ablett advised that a response had not yet been received.

Miss Ablett reported the aim remained to have the 3-phase electricity installed for March 2022 ready for the installation of the electric motors and panel in May/June 2022.

## B.1945 Asset Refurbishments – Grant-in-Aid

Further to minute B.1923, Miss Ablett reported that £50,000 for the refurbishment of flood risk management structures had been allocated in the Environment Agency's Project Application and Funding System and the Clerk was waiting for the Chairman to agree which of the Board's structures should take priority.

The Chairman considered this would be an opportunity to replace some of the failing culverts along the Old Croft River, particularly in Welney, and although these may not be owned by the Board the grant-in-aid funding did give the Board the opportunity to upgrade them in order to have better control of the water flow. He added that with the monies available it was hoped several culverts could be refurbished.

Miss Ablett advised that the funds were not yet available to the Board, they had purely been set aside, and a grant-in-aid application would have to be submitted and a business case developed before the Board would know whether a bid had been successful.

The Clerk added that the Board would have to select which structures required refurbishment and advise why they had been selected, for example, were they in danger of collapsing or were they undersized. He added that the Board may struggle obtaining grant-in-aid if the works were required for routine maintenance, which was not considered a flood risk. He considered that to assist with the development of a business case, the Board should produce a list and prioritise those structures which pose most risk to the Board.

The Clerk reported that the Middle Level Commissioners had also submitted a bid, on behalf of the Board, for a further £100,000 to be set aside next year. If this was successful the funding could be £50,000 for 2021-2022 and £100,000 for 2022-2023 and if the Board were to pursue with a grant-in-aid application a business case would be developed with a view to having £50,000 this year followed by a £100,000 next year seeking to maximise all of the grant that might be available.

The Chairman enquired what the implications would be with refurbishing structures that were on the border of the District with Manea & Welney District Drainage Commissioners.

The Clerk confirmed he would seek advice from the Environment Agency and get back to the Chairman.

Members approved for the Finance Committee to identify the Board's structures that require attention and advise the Clerk so that a business case could be produced.

Mr S Hartley reported that at the point where the Old Croft flows into the Sixteen Foot River at The Old Croft Outlet there was a considerable amount of debris and enquired who was responsible for its' removal.

The Chairman requested the Clerk investigate whether the Middle Level Commissioners or the Board were responsible for clearing the outlet.

### RESOLVED

- i) That the Finance Committee meet to identify the structures requiring attention, estimate the costs involved and provide the Clerk with details.
- ii) That when advised by the Finance Committee a grant-in-aid application be made for £50,000 in 2021-2022 and £100,000 for 2022-2023.

iii) That the Clerk investigate who is responsible for the removal of debris where the Old Croft River meets the Sixteen Foot River at The Old Croft Outlet.

iv) That the Clerk investigate whether the Environment Agency would have any reservations or concerns for grant-in-aid to be allocated to Upwell Internal Drainage Board for refurbishing structures that are between Districts.

#### B.1946 Clerk's Report

Miss Ablett advised:-

i) Applications for byelaw consent

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

<u>Name of Applicant</u>	<u>Description of Works</u>	<u>Date Consent Granted</u>
Mr C and Mr B Dawson	Construction of 600mm pipe to form an access crossing for roadway access off "Fen View" Land west of Syringa House Upwell Road, Christchurch	21 <sup>st</sup> December 2020
Mr C and Mr B Dawson	Installation of surface water outfall headwall within bank of private watercourse adjacent to "Fen View" land west of Syringa House, Upwell Road, Christchurch	21 <sup>st</sup> December 2020
Waldersey Farms Ltd	Installation of 19 no field underdrain outfalls in district watercourse between Points 80 and 82 and points 101 and 105 near Cock Fen Pumping Station	9 <sup>th</sup> March 2021

#### RESOLVED

That the action taken in granting consent be approved.

ii) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

b) ADA response to publication of EFRA Flooding Inquiry Report

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

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

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

iii) Smart Level System/District Wide Telemetry Bid

Further to minute B.1915(vi), that a Local Levy Bid had 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.

Members discussed the advantages of having telemetry at the pumping stations and approved for a survey to be carried out at each pumping station.

#### RESOLVED

That a survey be carried out at each pumping station

#### iv) Land Registry

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

#### v) National Drainage Show & Floodex 2021

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

#### B.1947 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

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

## **Upwell I.D.B.**

### **Consulting Engineers Report – May 2021**

#### **Pumping Stations**

Other than the matters previously reported at the December 2020 meeting and that described below, only routine maintenance has been carried out.

#### **Bedlam Bridge**

The repairs to the weedscreen cleaner have been completed and, so far, they appear to have been effective and the unit is working as it should.

The corroded pump bolts on pump 1 have not been addressed, it is recommended these are attended to this summer.

The issue with the electricity meter only having one rate has reached an impasse with the meter operator refusing to alter it, stating rates can be seen remotely.

#### **Cock Fen**

An order has been placed and an upfront payment made for the installation of a 3-phase supply at Cock Fen. However, the current UK Power Networks' completion date is March 2022. In order to hold prices, the order for the plant was placed with E Rand & Sons. Items will be manufactured, stored and vested in the name of Upwell IDB for installation and commissioning in summer 2022. The order includes for the repairs to the flap valve main frames which are badly corroded.

During 2020 engine number 1 developed a leak on its heat exchanger (radiator). The District Foreman swapped this for the spare on site, but this spare unit does not have a tapping for the coolant low level switch and so pump 1 is only used whilst under supervision. It is the intention of the District Officer to put the original heat exchanger (now repaired) back this spring.

#### **Nordelph**

The electricity meter remains faulty. The Middle Level Commissioners (MLC) continue to try to resolve the issue with the meter operator and supplier but to date have had little success. The MLC are currently trying to get the relevant parties to meet on site in an attempt to get this matter finally resolved but are being met with resistance at the moment due to the pandemic.

#### **Upwell Fen**

The leak around the thrust block returned over the winter period but was no worse than before and so monitoring will continue. The District Officer has completed a course on vermin control and he

has reported some success recently with a significant reduction in mouse droppings being found at the site over the period, which is encouraging.

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

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

### ***Tactical Plans for the Fens***

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;

<b>Asset</b>	<b>Max eligible FDGiA £</b>
Nordelph PS	1,443,591
Upwell Fen PS	1,443,591
Cock Fen PS	732,662
Bedlam Bridge PS	732,662
Padgetts Corner	732,662
Upwell Main Drains	549,497
Upwell Asset Refurbishments	1,395,826

***Baseline Report & Economic Appraisal Report***

Further to the last Meeting Report, 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 that it aims to publish week commencing 10 May (after the local elections) via a new fen's webpage on ADA's website.

### **Cranbrook/Counter Drain (CCD) FRM Strategy**

Since the last Board meeting, the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer has represented both the Middle Level Commissioners and the relevant Boards at regular "Update" Progress Meetings, primarily to discuss sources of funding, the delivery of opportunities and provided assistance concerning a visualisation project. Attendance at these meetings is not charged to the Board.

Further engagement meetings have been held with stakeholders including, Tarmac and Aggregate Industries, RSPB and Water Resources East. The Environment Agency (EA) is currently setting up a contract for a Comms & Engagement specialist for the scheme to be appointed in April 2021. This contract is for a period of 1 year and includes an option to extend for a further year to allow for the strategy to develop. Once in post it is planned that an engagement workshop with the various stakeholders will be held in May/June.

At the time of reporting the Aerial/Drone survey of the Counter Drain and Welches Dam pumping station has been carried out with completion of the main Block Fen/Langwood Fen topographical survey planned to be complete by the end of April.

The EA is currently preparing a Business Case submission to the National Project Assurance Service (NPAS) to secure additional funding to progress the strategy over the next few years. The work planned for the current 2021/22 financial year includes hydraulic modelling work of the Counter Drain and Welches Dam System which will be run using data from the recent Winter 2020 storms to check it and then it will be used to test a number of potential operational scenarios. In addition to this topographical modelling of the Block Fen/Langwood Fen areas, in respect of flood storage, is also proposed.

It is worth noting that the EA is also seeking to appoint advisors from the Legal and Estates Teams to commence the process of identifying the relevant legal agreements that may be required and to start to develop "Heads of Terms" for the strategy.

An element concerning the CCD Strategy was included in Cambridgeshire County Council's Flood and Coast Resilience Innovation Programme bid that is discussed elsewhere in this report.

## **Old Croft Piling Works**

Occupiers of those properties fronting onto the Old Croft where piling works to secure the bank are being proposed have all signed agreements to accept the risks to their properties associated with vibration from piling works. It is therefore hoped that it will be possible to make arrangements to pile along this length (50-60m) later this year. Works will be undertaken from the southern (non-property side) bank which has been cleared of trees and shrubs to facilitate access.

## **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 Middle Level Commissioners recorded 127.5 mm 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.

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

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

As previously stated, upon initial review it appears that the instances of reported flooding are less than 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 Middle Level Commissioners' 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**

### 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 8 new development related matters have been received and, where appropriate, dealt with since the last meeting:

<b>MLC Ref.</b>	<b>Council Ref.</b>	<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Type of Development</b>	<b>Location</b>
508	Enquiry	Freebridge Community Housing	Residential	Hurst Crescent, Lakesend *
509	F/YR20/1174/F	Mr J Quail	Residence (Extension)	Scotts Road, Christchurch
510	F/YR20/1229/F	Mr & Mrs S Barltrop	Residence (Extension)	Upwell Road, Christchurch
511	21/00258/F	Martin Reynolds Construction	Residence	Main Road, Lot's Bridge,
512	F/YR21/0139/F	Dr C Mannion & Ms R Amin-Mannion	Residential (2 plots)	Church Road, Christchurch
513	F/YR21/0171/F	Mr B Dawson	Residential (3 plots)	Fen View, Christchurch
514	21/00163/F	Mr D Gainsford	Equestrian (Stable block and Menage)	Mudds Drove, Three Holes
515	Number not used			
516	21/00333/PACU3	Mr D Lunn	Residential (5 plots)	Squires Drove, Three Holes

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

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

No applications for development outside the Board's natural surface water drainage catchment but which discharge treated effluent into the Board's system via AWSL's WRC's have been received during the reporting period.

The current position in respect of the following developments is currently being reviewed and ascertained, but at this point in time there is nothing to report:

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

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

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

One person has chosen to use the Infiltration Device self-certification process for a residential extension at Scotts Road, Christchurch (MLC Ref No 509) and, in doing so, he has agreed that if the device was to fail in the future, he would be liable for discharge consent.

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

No subsequent correspondence has been received from AWSL.

*Erection of a house with detached carport – The Ely Diocesan Board of Finance (MLC Ref No 269) & Mr & Mrs Mannion (MLC Ref Nos 309, 313 & 366) & Dr & Ms Mannion (MLC Ref No 416) & 2 plots on land south west of The Rectory, Church Road, Christchurch – Dr C Mannion & Ms R Amin-Mannion (MLC Ref Nos 465 & 512)*

Further to the Board's May 2018 Meeting Report, a subsequent planning application (MLC Ref No 512), effectively a renewal of the previous permission which was due to expire at the end of February, was submitted to Fenland District Council.

According to the District Council's Public Access webpage the application is pending consideration.

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

It is assumed that the works associated with this development have now been completed.

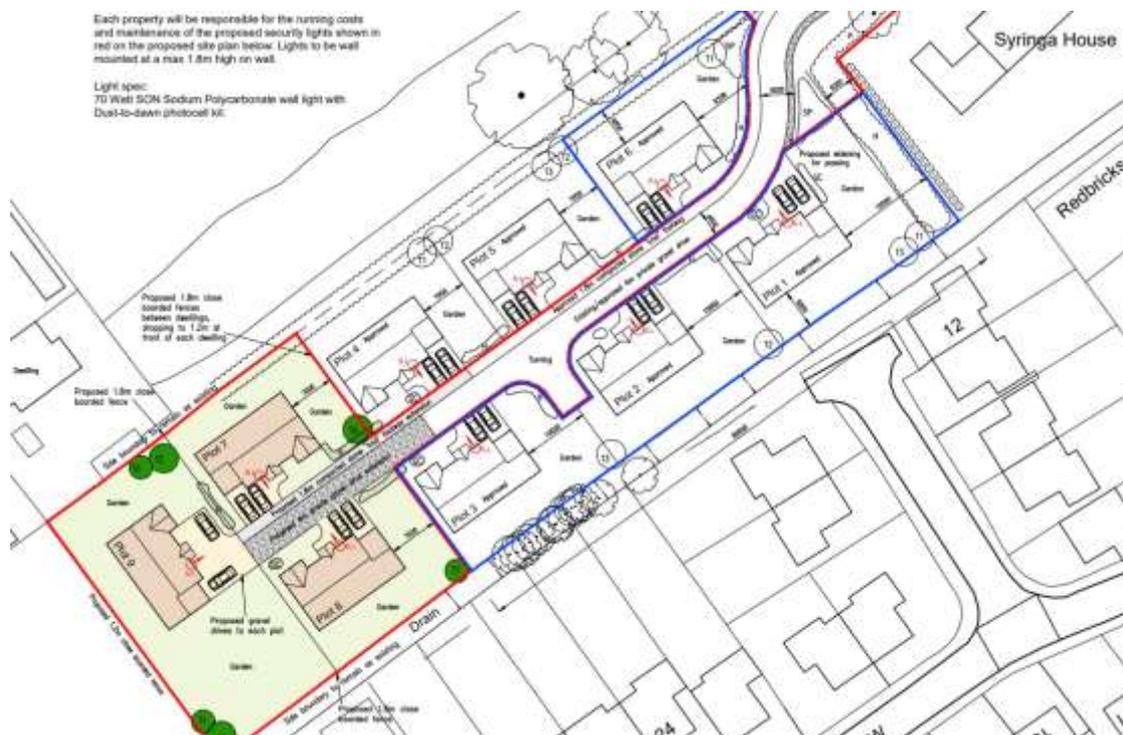
*Erection of 4 dwellings with detached garages, comprising of 2 x 2-storey 4-bed dwellings and 2 x 3-storey 5-bed dwellings at the site of the former Shrub House, 46 Church Road, Christchurch – P J Farms Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 409, 412 & 414)*

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

*Residential development on land to the south west of Syringa House, Upwell Road, Christchurch - Mr J Stittle & Miss R Watson (MLC Ref No 437) & Mr B Dawson (MLC Ref Nos 476 & 513)*

Further to the December 2020 Board Meeting Report, a subsequent planning application for three additional plots has been submitted to the District Council for consideration.

**Extract from Peter Humphrey Associates Limited's Proposed Site Plan Drawing No. 5812/02/02**



The planning application submission documents advise that surface water disposal will be to soakaways with foul water discharging to the mains sewer system.

According to the District Council's Public Access webpage the application is pending consideration.

*Proposed residential development of 17 units to the north west of The Grange and south east of North Road, Welney – Loyd Homes (Client of JPP Consulting) (MLC Ref No 462)*  
It is understood that work on site has not yet commenced.

*Revised drainage at 1-6 Hurst Crescent, Lakesend – Freebridge Community Housing (MLC Ref No 508)*

During December the Board was approached by Freebridge Community Housing in an effort to resolve an issue that has resulted in flooding of the bungalows and former chapel and the immediate area.

It has been proposed that the existing facilities are replaced with a private treatment plant which discharges into the existing open watercourse to the north west of Hurst Crescent that discharges into the Board's system at Point 89 via a new pipe thrust bored under the road.

At a meeting held in January, attended by the relevant parties, the Board's Vice Chairman, in the absence of the Board's Chairman, was content with the proposal subject to the Board's requirements being met, as the direct discharge would not be a significant quantity of water.

An application for the discharge consent has been received and is currently being progressed.

### ***Development Contributions***

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

### **Local Plan Update and Associated Consultations**

#### **King's Lynn & West Norfolk / Fenland District Council (FDC) - Emerging Local Plan review**

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

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

##### ***Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Policy Review 2021***

No further correspondence has been received or discussion subsequently occurred concerning this matter but the County Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy webpage advises that:

##### **"Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Policy Review 2021**

Since the adoption of our Local Flood Risk Management Strategy in 2015, Norfolk has been subject to significant rainfall and widespread flooding (as well as droughts and heatwaves). This includes the event in summer 2016, which saw over 250 properties flooded, blocked roads and required emergency provisions to deliver ballot boxes on the referendum vote.

Norfolk has also seen significant growth and development. There have been expansions of many market towns and settlements, particularly along the A11 corridor and around Norwich and Great Yarmouth. Alongside this, major infrastructure projects have been developed and delivered, including Broadland Northway completed in 2018.

The legislative landscape has also changed and with the publication of the revised National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England, our Strategy needed to be updated to remain consistent and relevant.

The existing policies in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy have been reviewed against new and emerging national strategies and policies. This has resulted in 3 new policies and minor updates to our existing policies. These changes have been shared with relevant stakeholders and the public across Norfolk for comment.

[View the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Policy Review.”](#)

### **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Flood and Water Management (FloW) Partnership**

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

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

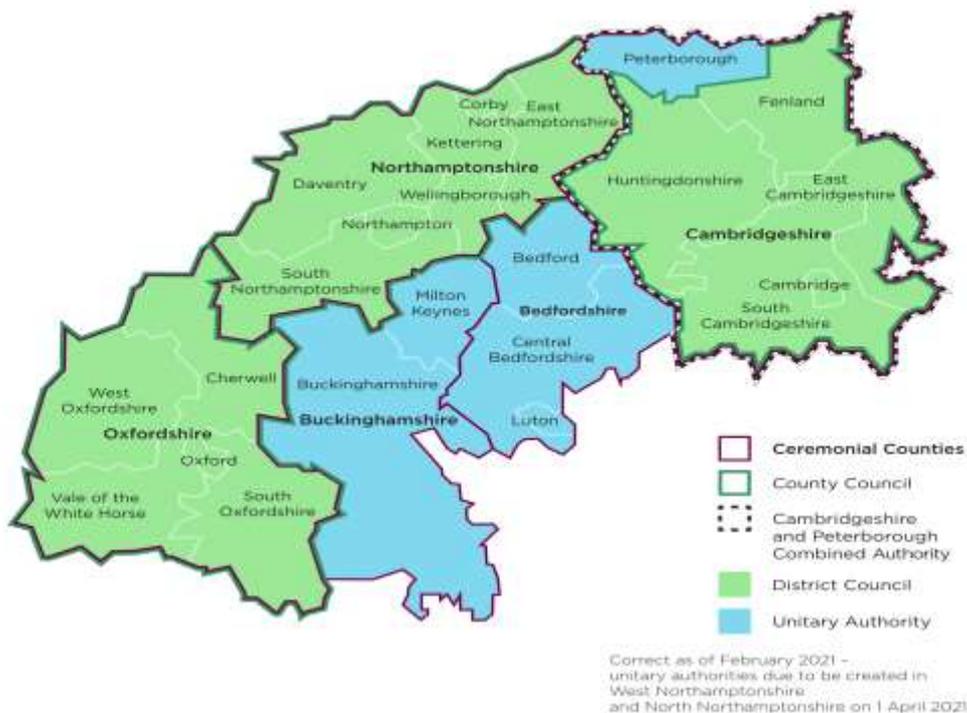
#### ***Future Meetings***

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.

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

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***

The “Issues and Options Briefing Note” 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 Middle Level Commissioners and associated Boards, and other key stakeholders submitted an expression of interest for several workstreams which offered innovative approaches to improve resilience to flooding and coastal change, including the ability to adapt to future climate change. Unfortunately, the bid was unsuccessful and other sources of funding are currently being investigated.

### ***Major Flood Response and Recovery document***

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.

### ***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) *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***

#### 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.

### ***Highways England (HE)***

#### Organisational Changes

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

## **Drainage & Wastewater Management Plans (DWMPs)**

Virtual stakeholder workshops will be held on 14 and 15 June.

### **General Advice**

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

- (a) Waldersey Farms – An application for byelaw consent for the installation of 19 field underdrain outfalls near to Cock Fen Pump Station; 16 between Points 80 and 82, and 3 between Points 101 and 105, was recommended for approval.

Consulting Engineer

12 May 2021

Upwell (331)\Reports\May 2021

Miss Ablett referred to the Consulting Engineer's comment relating to the corroded pump bolts on pump 1 at Bedlam Bridge pumping station and his recommendation that these be replaced in the summer.

The Chairman enquired when Pump No. 1 was likely to need an overhaul and whether the bolts could be replaced at that time. Miss Ablett advised that she would have to speak with the Consulting Engineer and request he contacts the Chairman.

Members agreed that, as the pump bolts were under water and the wet well would need de-watering, a quotation should be obtained from the Consulting Engineer and sent to the Chairman and Vice Chairman. They also requested that the Consulting Engineer contact the Chairman to discuss the timing of an overhaul of Pump No. 1 at Bedlam Bridge pumping station.

Miss Ablett reported on several problems experienced with various electricity meters, one of which had been ongoing for 5 years.

She further reported that in February 2020 she and the Consulting Engineer had met with Anglia Farmers and it was agreed that a site meeting should be arranged to include Anglia Farmers, the supplier, UK Power Networks, the Middle Level Commissioners' Mechanical and Electrical Engineer, and the Board's Chairman and District Foreman. It was hoped that a meeting on site may help to resolve the matter. However, due to the COVID-19 restrictions, this meeting had not taken place but now that restrictions were being eased she had contacted Anglia Farmers again and asked that this meeting be rescheduled as soon as possible

#### Planning Matters

Miss Ablett referred to planning section of the Consulting Engineer's report.

#### RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) Bedlam Bridge Pumping Station
  - a) That the Consulting Engineer obtain a quotation for the replacement of the corroded bolts and send to the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
  - b) That the Consulting Engineer contact the Chairman to discuss the corroded bolts and the timing of an overhaul of Pump No. 1.
- iv) That, in an effort to resolve the issue regarding the electricity meter at Nordelph pumping station, a site meeting be arranged with all the relevant parties.
- v) That the Planning Engineer continues to review planning applications and all correspondence received.

(NB) - Messrs A and J Quail declared interests in planning application (MLC Ref No. 509) received for Mr J Quail.

#### B.1948 Finance Committee Report

The Chairman reported that no Finance Committee had been held since the last meeting of the Board.

## B.1949 Capital Improvement Programme

Members considered the Board's future Capital Improvement Programme.

Miss Ablett referred to costs relating to the electrification of Cock Fen pumping station and for asset refurbishments, as discussed previously. She also referred to other expenditure that had been programmed and advised that the Board needed to consider how this expenditure was to be funded in the future.

She reported that the Consulting Engineer had programmed £1,100,000 for the replacement of Nordelph pumping station in year 6 (2026/2027) and this had been included in the Environment Agency's Project Application and Funding System.

The Clerk advised that the expenditure had deliberately been programmed for year 6 as this was considered the time the station would be approaching its end of life.

Miss Ablett referred to the Tactical Plans works in the Consulting Engineers report and advised that the works undertaken indicated that the funding should be available for the replacement of the Nordelph pumping station.

The Clerk advised the Board that it should seriously consider replacing Nordelph pumping station, especially as there was potential for the project to be fully funded by grant-in-aid, and that if the Board decided to proceed with a grant-in-aid application they should allow a 3-year period from making the decision to commencing with the construction of the pumping station.

Miss Ablett advised that should the Board wish to proceed with a grant-in-aid application a business case would have to be produced at a cost to the Board but if the grant-in-aid bid was successful and the project was 100% funded these costs could be recovered. She enquired how the Board wished to proceed.

The Chairman enquired of the likely cost of a business case which the Clerk advised would be in the region of between £10,000-£15,000.

After consideration, Members agreed that the matter should be discussed by the Finance Committee and reported back to the next meeting of the Board.

### RESOLVED

- i) That the Capital Programme be approved in principle and reviewed at the next meeting of the Board.
- ii) That the Finance Committee discuss the matter of a grant-in-aid application for the replacement of Nordelph pumping station and report back to the next meeting of the Board.

## B.1950 Maintenance Work in the District

- a) District Work Report – January – May 2021

The Board considered the District Work Report.

### RESOLVED

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

b) Drainworks Programme 2021/2022

With reference to minute B.407, the Board gave consideration to maintenance work required in 2010/2022.

RESOLVED

That the programme be approved and the District Officers be authorised to undertake the necessary maintenance work.

B.1951 District Labour  
Board's Employee's Wages

Miss Ablett reported that during the financial year 2020/2021 overtime payments had been made as indicated on the Supplementary Schedule.

B.1952 Chemical Weed Control of District Drains

With reference to minute B.1881, the Chairman confirmed that no works had been undertaken and he was not aware of there being any issues.

B.1953 District Officers' Fees

- a) The Board gave consideration to the District Officer's fees for 2021/2022.
- b) The Board gave consideration to the expenses payable to Mr Goodger and Mr Clabon.

RESOLVED

- i) The Board agree that the sum of £3,595.00 be allowed for the services of the District Officers for 2021/2022.
- ii) That the Board agree that a sum of up to £925.00 for expenses be allowed and split between the District Officers as necessary.

(NB) – The Chairman and the Vice Chairman declared interests when these items were discussed.

B.1954 Conservation Officer's BAP Report

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.1955 State-aided Schemes

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

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

### B.1956 Charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work

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

#### Flail mower

Present charge - £35 per hour (inclusive of operator's wages)

#### RESOLVED

That the hire charge be increased to £37 per hour.

### B.1957 Environment Agency – Precepts

Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2021/2022 in the sum of £55,928.00 (the precept for 2020/2021 being £55,928.00).

### B.1958 Contravention of Byelaws – Outfall at Prospect Farm

Miss Ablett reported that in November 2020 the Consulting Engineer had been advised that a pipe had been installed through the bank along Red Barn Drove. The Consulting Engineer had visited the site and spoken with the resident on a number of occasions advising him that he needed to apply for consent. In an effort to speed up the process, the Consulting Engineer had supplied the resident with the relevant consent application forms for completion, but nothing has been received.

The Chairman considered that in the absence of a consent application being submitted the pipe should be removed and the Clerk should write to the resident advising him of the Board's position regarding the matter. Members agreed this was the best course of action.

#### RESOLVED

That a letter be sent to the resident giving him 14 days to apply for the necessary byelaw consent and to advise that should an application not be forthcoming the pipe will be removed.

### B.1959 Determination of annual value for rating purposes

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

#### RESOLVED

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

### B.1960 Rate arrears

Consideration was given to writing off rate arrears amounting to £1.47.

### RESOLVED

That the arrears be written off.

### B.1961 Contributions from Developers

With reference to minute B.272(b), Miss Ablett 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.1962 Health and Safety

Further to minute B.1927, the Chairman referred to the report received from Cope Safety Management following their visit to the District on the 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

The Vice Chairman reported that the meeting with Cope Safety Management had gone very well and they were pleased with the work the Board had done and was continuing to do. He confirmed that all matters highlighted at the inspection had been attended to.

The Chairman thanked the Board's employee for undertaking some of the work that had been necessary.

The Clerk congratulated the Board on receiving a positive report from Cope Safety Management as health and safety was such an important issue.

### B.1963 Review of Internal Controls and appointment of Internal Auditor

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

Miss Ablett advised that their Internal Auditor, Whiting & Partners, were in the third year of a three year contract and that normally we would be tendering for this work at this stage. However, with COVID-19 the Middle Level Commissioners had approached Whiting & Partners and asked if they would be prepared to continue into a fourth year on the same terms. They had agreed. It was also being proposed that going forward auditors be invited to tender for a five-year term, the principle being that this gave both parties certainty over a longer period. For the Boards this meant that the investment in time in getting a new auditor up to speed represented better value.

### RESOLVED

That the Board approve the one-year extension of the appointment of Whiting & Partners as Internal Auditor and to support the proposal for a five year contract to be tendered thereafter.

### B.1964 Risk Management Assessment

a) The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with their current Risk Management Policy.

- b) The Board considered and approved the insured value of their buildings.

Miss Ablett enquired whether the Board wished for a professional valuation to be carried out on Nordelph bungalow.

#### RESOLVED

That the Finance Committee discuss the valuation of Nordelph bungalow.

#### B.1965 Exercise of Public Rights

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

#### B.1966 Annual Governance Statement – 2020/2021

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

#### RESOLVED

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

#### B.1967 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £345,649.42 which had been made during the financial year 2020/2021.

(NB) – The Chairman and Vice Chairman declared interests in the payments made to them.

(NB) – Mr Bliss declared an interest in the payment made to H G Bliss Farms Ltd.

(NB) – Councillor Sutton declared an interest (as Members of the Middle Level Board) in the payments made to the Middle Level Commissioners.

#### B.1968 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2020/2021

The Board considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31<sup>st</sup> 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 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

#### B.1969 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 Ablett that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by special levy on local billing authorities would be respectively 75.71% and 24.29%.

#### RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £206,929 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 £156,666 and £50,263 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 22.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v)
  - a) That a Special levy of £30,135 be made and issued to the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
  - b) That a Special levy of £20,128 be made and issued to Fenland 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 levies referred to in resolution (v).
- vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levies by such statutory powers as may be available.

#### B.1970 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.1971 Dates of next Meetings

The Chairman wished to thank all Members who had assisted during the significant rainfall events as their assistance was much appreciated.

#### RESOLVED

That the next Meetings of the Board be held as follows, viz:-

- i) Monday the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021 prior to which the District Inspection will be held at 5.00pm.

The Vice Chairman enquired whether there would be any objections to inviting some of the younger generation of farmers to the Inspection for a trip around the District to get an understanding of the work undertaken by the Board and this was approved.

ii) Monday the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 6.00pm.