

TITLE: REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

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1.0 ISSUES

- 1.1. To confirm the appointment of representatives to the Outside Bodies within the remit of the Finance & Assets Committee.
- 1.2. To receive the annual reports from Council representatives on Outside Bodies within the remit of the Finance & Assets Committee.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1. That representatives be appointed to all of the Outside Bodies detailed in Appendix 1.
- 2.2. That the Senior Democratic Services Officer be instructed to contact the relevant Parish Councils to request nominations for the remaining vacancies on Internal Drainage Boards.
- 2.3. That the 2022-23 annual reports from the Council representatives on Outside Bodies within the remit of the Finance & Assets Committee, as detailed in Appendix 2, be noted.

3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

- 3.1. The Council's Constitution specifies in the Terms of Reference for the Finance & Assets Committee that it should appoint representatives to Outside Bodies within its remit, from the wider membership of Council, for a period of up to 4 years. In practice therefore, appointments are made at the first meeting after the elections and are then only reviewed between elections if there is a change of circumstances.
- 3.2. If there are insufficient candidates to fill all of the vacancies for the Internal Drainage Boards, then the Council's previously agreed process (see Appendix 2) for appointing former District Councillors and/or candidates nominated by Parish Councils should be followed.
- 3.3. All representatives are asked to supply a report each year detailing the activities of the Outside Body and assessing the continued relevance of appointing a Council representative. Appendix 2 contains the relevant pages of the Outside

Bodies Booklet including the details of the Outside Bodies and the reports provided by the representatives for 2022-23.

4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSION(S)

- 4.1. The two Group Leaders were supplied with a list of all Outside Bodies and details of the Council representation required for each one, and were asked to provide nominations. Appendix 1 lists the Outside Bodies within the remit of the Finance & Assets Committee and the candidates that have been nominated to serve as the Council's representatives for the next four years. In some cases, there are more candidates than positions available.
- 4.2. Six Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) received fewer nominations than vacancies, therefore Members are asked to consider inviting former District Councillors David Ambrose Smith, Lis Every and Simon Harries to continue in their roles as lay persons on the relevant IDBs. Members are also asked to instruct the Senior Democratic Services Officer to invite the relevant Parish Councils to submit nominations for the remaining IDB vacancies. All nominations from Parish Councils will be presented for consideration at a future Finance & Assets Committee meeting.
- 4.3. There is one new outside body at the request of Cambridgeshire County Council: "A10 Ely to A14 Improvements Scheme".
- 4.4. Members are asked to confirm appointments to all positions and to note the reports received from the 2022-23 representatives.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS / EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT / CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.
- 5.2. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required.
- 5.3. Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) not required

6.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Summary of the Outside Bodies within the remit of the Finance & Assets Committee and nominations for the 2023-27 representatives.

Appendix 2: The relevant pages of the Outside Bodies Booklet which detail the aims and activities of the Outside Bodies within the remit of the Finance & Assets Committee, and the 2022-23 annual reports from the Council's representatives.

Background Documents:

None

**SUMMARY OF OUTSIDE BODIES AND REPRESENTATIVES 2023-24 WITHIN
THE REMIT OF THE FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE**

ORGANISATION	REQUIRED REPRESENTATIVES	NOMINATION(S)	ECDC CONTACT OFFICER
A10 Ely to A14 Improvements Scheme (new for 2023-24)	2	Cllr Ian Bovingdon Cllr Lorna Dupré Cllr Bill Hunt	Director Community: Sally Bonnett
East Cambridgeshire Community Land Trust	1	Cllr Anna Bailey (<i>appointed at Finance & Assets Committee 26/11/20 for a 4 year term</i>)	Director Community: Sally Bonnett
East of England Local Government Association	1	Leader of Council: Cllr Anna Bailey	Chief Executive: John Hill
Local Government Association	1	Cllr Julia Huffer (<i>appointed at Annual Council, 25/5/23</i>)	Chief Executive: John Hill
Local Government Association – District Councils Network	1	Leader of Council: Cllr Anna Bailey	Chief Executive: John Hill
Burnt Fen Internal Drainage Board	2	2 x [vacancy]	Director Finance: Ian Smith
Cawdle Fen Internal Drainage Board	7	Cllr Christine Colbert Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann Cllr Christine Whelan 4 x [vacancy] Former Councillor who could be invited to continue as a lay person: Simon Harries	Director Finance: Ian Smith
Haddenham Level Internal Drainage Board	2	Cllr Gareth Wilson 1 x [vacancy]	Director Finance: Ian Smith
Littleport & Downham Internal Drainage Board	6	Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith Cllr Lorna Dupré Cllr Martin Goodearl Former Councillor nominated to continue as a lay person: David Ambrose Smith 2 x [vacancy]	Director Finance: Ian Smith

AGENDA ITEM NO 10 - Appendix 1

Middle Fen & Mere Internal Drainage Board	5	Cllr Ian Bovingdon Cllr Mark Goldsack Cllr Keith Horgan Cllr Caroline Shepherd Cllr Lucius Vellacott Former Councillor who has expressed a willingness to continue as a lay person: Alec Jones	Director Finance: Ian Smith
Padnal & Waterden Internal Drainage Board	7	Cllr Alison Whelan 6 x [vacancy] Former Councillors who could be invited to continue as a lay person: David Ambrose Smith Lis Every	Director Finance: Ian Smith
Swaffham Internal Drainage Board	4	Cllr David Brown Cllr Charlotte Cane Cllr Lavinia Edwards Cllr Alan Sharp Cllr John Trapp	Director Finance: Ian Smith
Waterbeach Level Internal Drainage Board	1	[vacancy]	Director Finance: Ian Smith

EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES
WITHIN THE REMIT OF THE FINANCE &
ASSETS COMMITTEE

2023-24

(Including reports from representatives for 2022-23)

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PRIORITY CATEGORY OF OFFICER SUPPORT

1. Nominated officers to provide Members with regular support on a proactive basis, and attend meetings where appropriate (including those outside bodies where officers attend at present).
2. Nominated officers to provide ad hoc support on specific agenda issues and act as a contact for feedback and implementation of action points. The onus will be on the Member to contact the nominated officer to facilitate these arrangements.
3. Members should liaise directly with Democratic Services.

A10 ELY TO A14 IMPROVEMENTS SCHEME

AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

- Member Working Group established by resolution of Cambridgeshire County Council Highways and Transport Committee (12/7/22);
- Members will receive information regarding the scheme as it develops;
- Members can discuss and express their views but it is not a decision-making body.

Representation:	Two Members
Status of Member:	Representatives of ECDC
No. meetings per year:	To be decided at the first meeting
Expenses paid by organisation:	No
Insurance provision:	No
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	1
Contact Officer:	Director Community, Sally Bonnett
Representatives for 2023/24:	tbc
	tbc

EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

East Cambs Community Land Trust is incorporated to enable affordable homes to be owned and managed by an independent locally-run body that enables people to live and work locally. It is an “umbrella” Community Land Trust (CLT) and therefore covers a wider area or region than a local CLT and takes a complementary, supportive, role to any local CLTs.

Its purpose is to carry on, for the benefit of people in need (whether by virtue of poverty, financial hardship, age, physical or mental disability or ill health), in East Cambridgeshire:

- The business of providing and managing housing (including social housing) and facilitating the provision and management of such housing;
- The provision of, and facilitating the provision of, information, advice, assistance, training, support, facilities, amenities and services incidental to the provision and promotion of housing;
- The promotion of regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation in such ways as may be thought fit by the Trustees;
- Any other charitable object that can be carried out from time to time by a community land trust and which the Trustees consider would further the social, economic and environmental interest of the community in the area of benefit.

Representation: Up to three Members (total of one vote irrespective of number of Members.)

Status of Member: Custodian Nominee Trustee

No. meetings per year: 3-4

Expenses paid by organisation: No

Insurance provision: Yes

Category of Officer Support (see p. 1): 3

Contact Officer: Director Community, Sally Bonnett

Representative for 2023/24: Cllr Anna Bailey

REPORT FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVE

Cllr Anna Bailey (attended all 12 meetings)

ECCLT is a not-for-profit Community Benefit Society, run by volunteers. The Trust was established in November 2017 as an umbrella Community Land Trust (CLT) for the whole of East Cambridgeshire. ECCLT supports the work of the Council in promoting Community Land Trust development in the District and in securing affordable homes that help to enable people with ties to the area to live and work locally.

ECCLT owns and manages two affordable homes within Montgomery House that were part of the East Cambs Trading Company’s Kings Row development in Barton Road, Ely which are occupied by local people. ECCLT also manages the Montgomery House building.

ECCLT has been working with East Cambs Trading Company to take on the ownership and management of 15 shared ownership affordable homes on the ex-MOD housing site in Ely; the work is nearly complete.

Continued representation on this outside body is very important – the District Council has Custodian Member status and has responsibilities to the Trust in that regard. Membership also helps to pursue the stated Corporate Plan housing objectives of the Council.

This organisation facilitates the delivery of affordable homes and supports the outcomes of the Council's Corporate Plan.

EAST OF ENGLAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

- To represent the interests of local authorities in the region;
- To formulate sound policies for the development of local government in the region;
- To promote the policies of the East of England LGA and provide information/advice on local government issues to the public and partner organisations;
- To enable Councillors to exercise their democratic accountability and leadership effectively;
- To support innovation and excellence that enables local authorities and their partnerships to meet the needs of their communities and meet future challenges.

Representation:	Leader of Council
Status of Member:	Representative of ECDC
No. meetings per year:	1
Expenses paid by organisation:	No
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 1):	1
Contact Officer:	Chief Executive, John Hill

Representative for 2023/24: Cllr Anna Bailey

REPORT FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVE

Cllr Anna Bailey

This is a member led organisation whose core services are funded by member subscriptions from the East of England.

Core Services are a universal offer available to all subscribing members and provided free at the point of access. They include programmes of activity in priority areas, support for regional member and officer networks, a range of free events and briefings, specific helpdesk and advice services, as well as activity undertaken jointly with Trade Unions in its role as the Regional Employers Organisation.

The organisation provides support and advice to the Council, particularly adding value when in house services are not available.

Continued representation on this Outside Body is worthwhile; the organisation is useful to the Council in providing briefings, information, support and expertise and in representing local Government with central Government.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

To support, promote and improve local government in England and Wales.

To support Councillors in their role as democratically elected local representatives.

Representation:	One Member
Status of Member:	Representative of ECDC (voting Member)
No. meetings per year:	1
Expenses paid by organisation:	Yes (attendance only, not travel)
Insurance provision:	No
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	1
Contact Officer:	Chief Executive, John Hill

Representative for 2023/24: Cllr Julia Huffer

REPORTS FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVE

Cllr Joshua Schumann

(Not received.)

LGA – DISTRICT COUNCILS NETWORK

AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

- To lobby and negotiate directly with senior members of national political parties on district-specific needs and issues – the “localism” agenda;
- To inform and influence national agencies, government departments and other local authority agencies on things that matter, such as resources and allocation;
- To get the Network’s unique message across to the audiences that matter – people, Government, partners, regulators;
- Help each other to remain effective and share learning/good practice.

Representation:	Leader of Council
Status of Member:	ECDC representative
No. meetings per year:	4
Expenses paid by organisation:	No
Insurance provision:	No
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	1
Contact Officer:	Chief Executive, John Hill

Representative for 2023/24: Cllr Anna Bailey

REPORT FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVE

Cllr Anna Bailey

The District Councils’ Network (DCN) is a cross-party member led network of 180 district councils. It is a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association (LGA), and provides a single voice for all district councils within the Local Government Association.

Being a member of the network supports the work of the organisation, provides valuable information and data to the Council and facilitates networking, helping the Council to lobby Government and fulfil its statutory and non-statutory activities.

Over the years during Covid the DCN has been particularly pro-active. Topics vary and cover most aspects of the functions of District Councils.

This organisation has been an incredibly effective conduit for District Councils and central Government, particularly in relation to dealings with the DLUCH; it has meant that District Councils have had a strong and united voice.

INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARDS

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Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) are public bodies that manage water levels in areas where there is a special need for drainage. They reduce flood risk to people and property and they manage water levels for agricultural and environmental needs. IDBs are funded by a combination of drainage rates levied on the owners of farmland, and special levies on District and Unitary Councils. District Councils appoint representatives to IDBs, the number of representatives being determined by the IDBs by consideration of the percentage of the Board's income being paid by each Council.

Haddenham Level IDB is part of the Middle Level Commissioners, all other IDBs on which ECDC is represented are part of the Ely Group of Internal Drainage Boards.

Appointment of ECDC representatives to Internal Drainage Boards has been discussed at various Council and Committee meetings¹ and the following process has been agreed:

1. Nominations should be invited from the Members of Council.
2. If vacancies cannot all be filled from within the District Council then;
 - a. former District Councillors who are willing to continue in their IDB role could be nominated as a layperson, and;
 - b. the relevant Parish Council(s) should be invited to submit nominations.

If there are more nominations than vacancies then consideration should be given to the candidates' prior knowledge and experience of both the geographical area and the issues relevant to IDBs. In all cases, the final decision on each appointment rests with the Finance & Assets Committee.

¹ Resources & Finance Committee: 29 March 2018 (Agenda Item 11, Minute 94); 26 July 2018 (Agenda Item 12, Minute 35).
Council: 19 April 2018 (Agenda Item 10, Minute 89).
Finance & Assets Committee: 20 June 2019 (Agenda Item 13, Minute 17); 26 September 2019 (Agenda Item 18, Minute 56).

BURNT FEN INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Ely North Littleport
Parish Councils covered:	City of Ely Council Littleport Parish Council
Representation:	Two Members
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by the Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith
Representatives for 2023/24:	tbc tbc

REPORTS FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr Julia Huffer (attended 1 of 4 meetings)

The Drainage Board continues to provide a vital service to Farmers and residents alike. It is a well run and effective organisation.

Support for this organisation should continue.

Derrick Beckett (lay member)

(Not received.)

CAWDLE FEN INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Ely West
Parish Councils covered:	City of Ely Council
Representation:	Seven Members
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith

Representatives for 2023/24:	tbc
	tbc
	tbc
	tbc
	tbc
	tbc
	tbc

REPORTS FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr Simon Harries

(Not received.)

Cllr Christine Whelan (attended 2 of 3 meetings)

There has been little change from last year. The nature of the land that is around Ely means that drainage and water management is important. The whole area was affected by the adverse weather conditions last year, with the total rainfall of one month falling in a single day.

It is important for ECDC as the flooding would affect the agricultural land of the area. So the work of the IDB is essential for the continued existence of East Cambs. The special levy has been increased this year.

There is an engineering problem with a culvert that runs along The Dock. Estimates are being sought but remediation could cost as much as £400k. If that is the case, then the Special Levy will be increased significantly.

Parish Cllr Ian Lindsay (attended all 3 meetings)

Continued representation is important as the effective drainage of the area covered by ECDC is dependent on the efficient operation of all the local drainage boards.

A budget has just been set that deals with the current operating costs; but the future financial situation of the Board is fraught. There is major damage to a drainage pipe deep buried in a covered culvert along the Ely Dock access road. The pipe will eventually need repairing, and that will be very costly. A project is underway to tackle both the engineering implications, and the funding thereof.

Rupert Moss-Eccardt (attended all 3 meetings)

Things haven't change much from last year:

Water management continues to be essential to support food production, protect property and underpin the local economy:-

The CPIER report alludes to significant GVA benefit from flood protection schemes. A fairly recent modelling exercise for the Great Ouse fens predicts 7-10 £bn of damage in the event of a significant flood control failure.

Many planning applications are only successful because, even though they are in Flood Zone 3, the site is protected by flood defences.

SUDSs only work if there is somewhere for the final outflow to go. IDBs move that water from catchwater drains through to the main river.

Finally, if the IDBs didn't provide a path for water to be abstracted, the local agricultural economy would fail.

So the work of the IDB is essential for the continued existence of East Cambs.

As this is a body that raises a levy against ECDC it is incumbent on ECDC to utilise its scrutiny and management power to meet its obligations to ensure the money is spent properly.

The Special Levy has been increased this year.

There is an engineering issue with a culvert that runs along The Dock. Estimates are being sought but remediation could cost as much as £400k. If that is the case then the Special Levy will be increased significantly.

HADDENHAM LEVEL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Haddenham Stretham Sutton
Parish Councils covered:	Haddenham Parish Council Stretham Parish Council Sutton Parish Council Wentworth Parish Council Wilburton Parish Council
Representation:	Two Members
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith
Representatives for 2023/24:	tbc tbc

REPORTS FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr Gareth Wilson (attended all 3 meetings)

Drainage boards provide a vital function in the district and precept to the council. This body is a statutory body that imposes drainage rates. Drainage considerations are vitally important for the low-lying Fens.

Items discussed of particular relevance to ECDC were gravel extraction and drainage rates.

Parish Cllr Steve Cheetham (attended 2 meetings)

ECDC are committed to ensuring that East Cambridgeshire continues to be a district where people want to live, work and visit and ensuring flood defences are maintained is a critical element of this commitment.

Continued work on the monitoring of the construction of irrigation reservation reservoirs at Willow Hall Farm following the approval by the County Council. However, the HIDB will monitor the the development of the reservoirs accordingly. Worked with the HIDB and Haddenham Parish Council in relation to the planning application for three re-charge trenches which are

essential to protect the environment and the surrounding land at the proposed gravel extraction site.

HIDB have continued to raise concerns on the amount of seepage coming through or under the 100 ft riverbank, which this year has caused more surface water on land than we have seen before, and the refusal of the Environment Agency to acknowledge the benefit of dredging and carry it out.

This is a precepting body with the duty of protecting the Haddenham & Aldreth area from flooding and providing irrigation for agriculture and the meetings give a real insight into issues affecting farming and agriculture. The 2021/2022 winter has seen lower levels of rainfall than the rain which impacted East Cambs 2020/21, but it continues to be critical that the knowledge of the issues in detail from the HIDB are understood by ECDC.

LITTLEPORT & DOWNHAM INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Downham Villages Ely North Littleport Stretham Sutton
Parish Councils covered:	Coveney Parish Council Little Downham Parish Council Little Thetford Parish Council Littleport Parish Council Stretham Parish Council Wentworth Parish Council Wilburton Parish Council Witchford Parish Council
Representation:	Six Members
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith
Representatives for 2023/24:	tbc tbc tbc tbc tbc tbc

REPORTS FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith (attended 3 meetings)

This important work carried out in conjunction with other similar boards, keeps areas within the District from becoming flooded, while providing the local farming industry with water for irrigation during the dryer months & drainage dykes maintained. With the considerable level of housing development within areas of East Cambs, the IDB's are increasingly seen as important consultees by Planning Department.

It is useful to understand the part played by this and other boards within our area, and to hear from the other board members (Farmers) who while playing their own part, rely on the work of the Engineer and his workforce, to maintain the drainage system in good order.

It was agreed that for a number of reasons, regular maintenance work on the drainage infrastructure had fallen behind. As ECDC representatives we supported & pressed for the increase of professional assistance needed by the engineer so that he was able to spend time strategically planning the work schedules and other matters requiring his attention. Representatives also supported substantial pay increases to the workforce proposed by board members, reacting to the cost of living crisis. It was recognised by board members that in order to attract and retain good & trained workers, that pay needed to be competitive. To their credit, board members have always endeavoured to be thrifty. Regular review of plant is required to ensure that the best machinery for the necessary work is available. Great concern was raised by EA contractors dredging the riverbed and apparently removing clay used as a base. The possibility of water weakening the sides of the banks caused much discussion and investigation, with the EA being pressed for answers.

Cllr David Ambrose Smith

The IDB is an extremely important partner to ECDC.

ECDC Planners work closely with the IDB's and value one another's contribution to the planning process.

In recent years IDB's praiseworthy concerns regarding increasing their charges has restrained them from carrying out more medium to long term planning.

The past twelve months has seen a dramatic and costly move towards catching up with drain maintenance work and taking on a more rounded team to manage the systems going forward.

Members have played an important role in being part of the decision-making process of the board.

I believe that all our local Internal Drainage Boards should be amalgamated into a single board which would bring efficiencies at all levels from governance to the water courses. ECDC councillor/s representation on this single board would then give ECDC a better joined up understanding of the whole area, with the councillor becoming the ECDC Service Champion/s for Internal Drainage.

Cllr Lorna Dupré (attended 2 meetings)

The work of the Littleport & Downham Internal Drainage Board is key to the provision and maintenance of flood and drainage infrastructure in this part of East Cambridgeshire, and to the environment of the district. Continued representation on this Outside Body and other Internal Drainage Boards is very worthwhile.

The IDB adopted updated bye-laws as amended by the Association of Drainage Authorities at national level. It contributed £1,000 to Fenland SOIL, and was well represented at the very successful two-day Fenland SOIL conference in April.

The Board nominated two members to represent it on the new South Level Water Resources Group following recent challenges with abstraction. The new Group will discuss matters such as enforcement issues, restrictions and licences.

Cllr Jo Webber (attended 2 meetings)

The internal drainage boards play a vital role in keeping East Cambridgeshire free from flooding, and supporting our agricultural industry by maintaining drainage channels, and providing irrigation services throughout the drier months.

Additionally, the IDBs play an important role in the environment, by maintaining habitats for Wildlife, and are a key stakeholder in the ECDC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

I think it is increasingly important that East Cambs continues to work in partnership with the IDBs, and for members to be aware of the potential risks that face both our residents and local businesses, and the funding required to mitigate those risks.

Ongoing maintenance of drainage channels and the reliability of equipment play a huge part in reducing the risk of flooding to both farmers fields and adjacent homes. Excess water can cause issues during the winter months, but a shortage of water for irrigation purposes can cause as many issues during the drier summer months, as it can severely impact the ability to produce crops. This was very evident in the extremely hot weather experienced in the summer of 2022. The IDBs are tasked with managing these situations and each meeting addresses issues as they arise, as well as planned maintenance of equipment, health and safety, training and wider issues that can impact the Board.

As the local planning authority, East Cambs DC play a key role in the overall plan to address the flood risks to our area along with the County Council as the lead flood authority, Anglian Water, the Environment Agency and the Internal Drainage Boards.

Parish Cllr Howard Palmer (appointed 24 November 2022)

(Not received.)

Parish Cllr Mark Taylor (attended multiple meetings)

I have been to 18 meetings to do with the drainage board and the problems with the 100ft river that we put on ITV news. But I have also been involved in my own time with new members of the IDB staff showing them the area and drainage system and catch waters as the old people that used to know all have past and the danger is the younger ones don't know.

I definitely think it has been worthwhile as the work on catch water from Ely – Little Downham – Littleport – Witchford – Mepal needs upgrading as it has not been updated since 1600 when built and the building from that date is not fit for purpose and is now getting done. I have also got the main drains done in the fen that haven't been done in the last 20 years. Also I pushed to get new pumps at the 100ft pump house which we got as well. Still plenty to do. Even though I rustle a few feathers the IDB have asked me to chair or be vice chairman. I have also been trying to get money for the IDB through grants, which Anna Bailey helped, to make improvements to the system.

MIDDLE FEN & MERE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Ely East Ely North Fordham & Isleham Soham North Soham South
Parish Councils covered:	City of Ely Council Fordham Parish Council Isleham Parish Council Soham Town Council Wicken Parish Council
Representation:	Five Members
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith
Representatives for 2023/24:	tbc tbc tbc tbc tbc

REPORTS FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr Ian Bovingdon (attended 2 of 4 meetings)

The IDB has continued important work which affects local agricultural production and flooding protection. It fits with ECDC's commitment to be an area where people want to live, businesses want to grow and people want to visit. Their work is increasingly important due to climate change.

ECDC representation is extremely important to understand the effect on local employment, flooding and the environment, and how their work affects ECDC regarding planning for housing/infrastructure.

Discussions of particular relevance to ECDC this year have been:

- The impact of developments on the watercourses.
- Fuel usage which impacts on ECDC carbon policy.
- Climate change effects on water supplies/flooding.

Cllr Mark Goldsack

During the year the board met with regularity and covered a multitude of subjects. The levy discussion for what the board has to do in the future was the main contention but well chaired the meeting concluded an accepted increase. Members all act and work for the board albeit most coming from local farm concerns so obviously bring a local feel to proceedings. Under Mr Mawby the board runs well and works hand in glove with Andrew, chief engineer.

During the year the South Level Water Resources Group was formed and with engineer three members stepped in to represent abstraction users and the board.

I'd like to thank those on the board for their focus and time and Andrew and staff for their terrific work. As stated the chair has done an excellent role and long may all continue past 2023 and beyond.

Cllr Alec Jones (attended 1 of 3 meetings)

The work of the IDB fits with ECDC's corporate objectives because it provides a vital connection between draining land for agriculture and development, both business and domestic, keeping it usable and safe from flooding as well as providing access to water for agriculture during the dryer seasons.

While there is little direct relevance in the day to day dealings, its relevance to local agricultural business is immense and maintaining the links between business and Local Authorities makes this a worthwhile commitment.

Discussions of particular relevance to ECDC have been the development of future drainage infrastructure, maintenance of drainage systems and the rising cost of drainage during high inflation period.

Cllr Daniel Schumann (attended 0 meetings)

I have nothing to report. I attended no meetings of and was never invited to attend a meeting.

Derrick Beckett (lay member)

(Not received.)

PADNAL & WATERDEN INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Ely North Littleport
Parish Councils covered:	City of Ely Council Littleport Parish Council
Representation:	Seven Members
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith

Representatives for 2023/24:	tbc
	tbc
	tbc
	tbc
	tbc
	tbc
	tbc

REPORTS FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr David Ambrose Smith

The IDB is an extremely important partner to ECDC.

ECDC Planners work closely with the IDB's and value one another's contribution to the planning process.

IDB's praiseworthy concerns regarding increasing their charges perhaps restrains them from carrying out more medium to long term planning.

Members have played an important role in being part of the decision-making process of the board.

I believe that all our local Internal Drainage Boards should be amalgamated into a single board which would bring efficiencies at all levels from governance to the water courses.

ECDC councillor/s representation on this single board would then give ECDC a better joined up understanding of the whole area, with the councillor becoming the ECDC Service Champion/s for Internal Drainage.

Cllr Lis Every (attended 3 meetings)

The internal drainage board (IDB) is the operating authority which is established in areas of special drainage need in England and Wales, eg the Fens, with permissive powers to undertake work to secure clean water drainage and water level management within drainage districts. It also has the authority to add a levy to the Council Tax. Internal Draining Boards are a statutory consultee for all Planning Applications. In this area, which seeks growth, the work of the IDB is a very important organisation which has representatives from local farmers and councillor representatives from ECDC.

Regular discussions take place with local farmers for whom the drainage board is vital. Discussions are based on the running of the individual IDB, but for this IDB concerns are currently being discussed about the North Ely Junction and what this will mean for the Board and also for the local farmers.

As seen above, the work undertaken by the IDB is vital for the area, ensuring that there is no flood activity, that the relevant maintenance is undertaken, the right levels of water for irrigation are maintained and the protection of species, ie eels, is undertaken.

It is a statutory consultee for all planning applications.

Cllr Alison Whelan (attended 2 meetings)

The nature of the land that surrounds Ely is such that water management is crucial to avoid flooding. Representation on these bodies is important to further the Council's environmental and flood prevention objectives. Recent changes to our weather, with record hot spells and intense rain periods make this even more important.

The refurbishment of the Padnal No 1 pumping station is underway.

On the 6th February 2023 the Board made a Drainage Rate of £0.30 in the £ in respect of agricultural land and agricultural buildings in their District to raise £39,418.80 of their expenditure for the year ending on the 31st March 2024 and made a Special Levy of £102,191.70 on East Cambridgeshire District Council to raise the balance of their expenditure for the same year.

Parish Cllr Clive Webber (attended 2 meetings)

I represent the Littleport Town Council on the IDB. With flooding becoming more of a risk with climate changes, I think we all need to be aware of, and also contribute to, the important work being carried out by the IDB's, as they maintain the drainage channels that run through our parishes, and support our farmers.

I think it is very important that ALL levels of local government continue to be represented on the IDBs, as we need to be aware of the continuing threat of flooding, the actions we can take to mitigate the risks, and the costs involved. It also assists us with developing our own emergency planning policies.

Keeping drainage channels clean, supplying water for irrigation and increased risk of flooding.

It is vital that East Cambs District Council work with all of the agencies that are involved in keeping the District free from flooding.

Parish Cllr Debra Jordan

(Not received.)

Parish Cllr Susan Kerridge

(Not received.)

SWAFFHAM INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Bottisham Burwell Fordham & Isleham Soham South
Parish Councils covered:	Bottisham Parish Council Burwell Parish Council Fordham Parish Council Lode Parish Council Reach Parish Council Swaffham Bulbeck Parish Council Swaffham Prior Parish Council Wicken Parish Council
Representation:	Four ² Members
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith
Representatives for 2023/24:	tbc tbc tbc tbc

REPORTS FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr David Brown (attended 3 of 3 meetings)

Swaffham IDB plays a key role in managing water, preventing flooding – keeping people and property safe, helping with agricultural production – thereby contributing to the economic wellbeing of the District.

As a precepting body it is vital that District Councillors are actively involved in the IDBs to help ensure that public funds are spent in a reasonable manner. So, yes, continued representation on the IDB is worthwhile.

² Four Members plus one nominee jointly with South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). SCDC makes the joint appointment by reciprocal agreement of June 1990 whereby ECDC makes the joint appointment to Waterbeach Level IDB. Appointments are for 3 years.

One example of the above in 2022/23 would be the decision to spend significant funds on replacing the winding mechanism for the pump.

Cllr Lavinia Edwards (attended 2 of 3 meetings)

The work of the Swaffham Internal Drainage Board fits in with ECDC Corporate Objective because it maintains the large area of drainage networks in the District.

I think the continued representation of the Drainage Board is worthwhile because the district has a large agricultural element with much employment in this field. The Drainage Board is also a consultee for Planning Applications.

Items discussed in the last financial year have varied from financial to ecological issues.

We have discussed the setting of the levy, climate change, water shortages agriculture and flood issues.

Cllr Alan Sharp (attended 1 of 3 meetings)

The work of the Drainage Board totally fits in with the corporate objectives of the Council, as the issue of flooding and water management is a crucial factor in resolving the challenges that Climate Change presents to us.

I have attended one meeting during the year out of the three arranged, the other two meetings clashing with other commitments.

The Board meetings take place at the Drainage Board offices in Prickwillow.

Contributing to the management of The Fens is an important role of the Council and the involvement of Council representatives with this body is totally necessary.

I find the meeting of the Board very interesting and worthwhile, listening to the comments of farming colleagues.

Cllr John Trapp

(Not received.)

WATERBEACH LEVEL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Stretham Soham South
Parish Councils covered:	Little Thetford Parish Council Stretham Parish Council Wicken Parish Council
Representation:	One ³ Member
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith
Representative for 2023/24:	tbc

REPORT FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVE

David Chaplin (lay member, attended 1 of 2 meetings)

The IDB has phased out all diesel pumps and all now have primary and back up electrical supplies. Run off from development and other surface water run off is monitored and controlled (within the scope of its powers) by the drainage board.

Continued representation on the IDB is worthwhile whilst it continues to cost nothing to ECDC.

Whilst the Drainage Board waters are not in East Cambs, they are all upstream and therefore actions impact waterflow and quality in East Cambs waterways.

³ One Member jointly with South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). ECDC makes the joint appointment by reciprocal agreement of June 1990 whereby SCDC makes the joint appointment to Swaffham IDB. Appointments are for 3 years.

