

A MEETING OF THE BEDFORDSHIRE AND RIVER IVEL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD WAS HELD IN THE BOARD ROOM AT VALE HOUSE IN STEWARTBY AND VIRTUALLY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON TUESDAY, 05 NOVEMBER 2024 AT 2PM.

Directly Elected Members

- * J R Davison
- * J Polhill
- * J Russell
- *v T Wootton

Vacant Position
Vacant Position
Vacant Position
Vacant Position
Vacant Position
Vacant Position
Vacant Position

Co-opted Members

F Firth

Appointed Members

Bedford Borough Council

- * N Gribble
- D McMurdo
- R Rigby
- A Spice
- * M Towler
- J Weir
- Vacant Position

Central Bedfordshire Council

- N Andrews
- * A D Brown
- *v A French
- *v H Wightwick
- *v T Wye

Jointly Appointed

North Herts District Council

- *v A Willoughby
- * Present (44%)
- *v In attendance virtually

James Russell in the Chair

In attendance:

Phil Camamile (Chief Executive), Tom Loakes (Administration Assistant), Phil Lovesey (Operations Manager), Trevor Skelding (Principal Engineer), Alice Smith (Executive Assistant), and Nicole Hunter (Principal Accountant)

Cllr Saverio Bongo, Central Bedfordshire Council (Member of the Public)

35/24 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

35/24/01 The Chair welcomed Alistair Willoughby to his first Board meeting. RESOLVED that this be noted.

36/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

36/24/01 Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Nick Andrews, Frank Firth, Robert Rigby and Jim Weir.

37/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

37/24/01 There were no declarations of interest reported to the meeting.

38/24 TO REPORT THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE NEWLY ELECTED BOARD

38/24/01 The Chief Executive reported the newly elected membership of the Board for the three-year term from 01 November 2024 to 31 October 2027 following the recent non-contested election. A copy of the No Poll Declaration was appended to the minutes in the Minute Book.

Chief Executive in the Chair

39/24 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

39/24/01 It was proposed by Jo Davison, seconded by Anthony Brown, unanimously agreed and thereby RESOLVED to elect Doug McMurdo to serve as the Board's Chairman for the next three-year term.

39/24/02 It was proposed by Jo Davison, seconded by Anthony Brown, unanimously agreed and thereby RESOLVED to elect James Russell to serve as the Board's Vice-Chairman for the next three-year term.

James Russell in the Chair

40/24 TRIENNIAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW

40/24/01 The Schedule of Reserved Matters, Scheme of Delegation and Division of Responsibilities between the Chairman and Chief Executive were considered in detail and approved (copies of which are filed in the Report Book).

41/24 MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

41/24/01 It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to confirm the Board's Chair, Vice-Chair and Jo Davison as its representatives on the Joint Management Committee for the next three-year term, from 01 November 2024 to 31 October 2027.

42/24 APPROVE THE BOARD'S PARTICIPATION IN, AND REPRESENTATION ON JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEES

42/24/01 The Schedule of Joint Advisory Committees that the Board was currently represented on was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book).

42/24/02 It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to approve the Board's participation in and representation on the Joint Advisory Committees, as presented.

43/24 MINUTES OF THE LAST BOARD MEETING HELD ON 20 MAY 2024

43/24/01 The minutes of the last Board meeting held on 20 May 2024 were confirmed and signed as a true record. Arising therefrom:

43/24/02 21/24/03 Re-appointment of Internal Auditor

The Principal Accountant advised members that the reappointment of the Internal Auditor for 2024/25 was subject to a tri-annual tendering process, which had recently concluded, and Lighthouse UK Consultancy had subsequently been appointed as the Board's Internal Auditor for 2024/25. The Group's former Internal Auditor now works for the company and a saving of £105 a day had been made through the tendering process. RESOLVED that this be noted.

44/24 ENGINEERING REPORT

44/24/01 The Engineering Report was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). Arising therefrom:

44/24/02 East West Rail

The Principal Engineer provided an update following circulation of the Board papers. Members were informed that an introductory meeting had been scheduled for 21 November 2024, following the confirmation of funding in last week's budget. RESOLVED that this be noted.

44/24/03 Ampthill Road

Anthony Brown queried why there was no update on the matter, the Principal Engineer confirmed that the Board's officers still awaited final confirmation that this proposal was to be progressed and were yet to receive correspondence from the Council's consultants. It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED for Anthony Brown to confirm who was leading on this at Central Bedfordshire Council.

AB

44/24/04 Enforcement - Abbeyfields Trees

Nicola Gribble expressed disappointment regarding the planting of trees at Abbeyfields within the Board's byelaw zone, raising concerns about the need for better communication of the 9-meter rule. Members shared her disappointment that the trees and associated efforts might be wasted but noted that officers at Bedford Borough Council should have been aware of the byelaws and the requirement for land drainage consent for the planting to remain.

NG/RH

44/24/05 It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED that officers would continue engaging with Bedford Borough Council councillors and the Borough's Arboriculture Officer to seek a solution that avoided the trees being removed from site.

44/24/06 James Russell acknowledged the Board's clear communication regarding the consent process and its pragmatic approach. He suggested that officers contact the heads of functions at Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) within the district to reinforce awareness of the byelaws and prevent similar issues in the future.

RH

44/24/07 Universal Studio Project

Anna French requested a detailed update on the Board's involvement with the Universal Studio project. The Principal Engineer confirmed that the Board's officers continue to hold regular meetings with Universal. However, until the outcome of the Special Development Order (SDO) was determined—expected by the end of December 2024—officers were unable to share project plans with members. Once the SDO was finalised, Universal would be invited to present their proposals to the Board. RESOLVED that this be noted.

45/24 OPERATIONS REPORT

45/24/01 The Operations Report was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). Arising therefrom:

45/24/02 Bedford Abattoir/Football Club

The Operations Manager reported that additional works at the Bedford Abattoir/Football Club site have now been completed following discussions with Melanie Bright from Bedford Borough Council. Discussions were ongoing regarding both temporary and permanent solutions for the watercourse, with Board officers continuing to support Bedford Borough in identifying the most effective resolution.

PL / TW

45/24/03 Tom Wootton acknowledged the complexity and potential cost implications of the situation. He requested that the Board attend a site meeting to advance the matter and confirmed that officers from Bedford Borough would coordinate with the Operations Manager. Tom also expressed his intention to attend the meeting in his capacity as Mayor of Bedford. RESOLVED that this be noted.

45/24/04 A421 National Highways

Tom Wootton requested details on the Board's role during the A421 flood event at Marston Moretaine. The Operations Manager provided an overview of the incident, explaining how the underpass filled with approximately 80,000 cubic meters (or 55 million Litres) of water due to the failure and overwhelming of the pumping station.

45/24/05 The timeline included:

- **Initial Response:** By the morning of 23 September 2024, discussions began with the Board on water removal strategies. The Board assisted National Highways by analysing asset designs, identifying potential storage sites in Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) ponds, and advising on water quality and discharge management.
- **Operations:** Tankers initially began removing water on 24 September 2024, scaling up to 30 tankers at peak capacity. Simultaneously, a pump system was set up to transfer water over 4 km to approved SuDS ponds connected to IDB watercourses, ensuring controlled flow rates and preventing flood risks downstream.
- **Resolution:** With additional pumps approved by the IDB and rainfall conditions monitored, the road was cleared of water by 06 October 2024.

45/24/06 Members praised the Board's officers for their exceptional work and the national recognition received for their collaboration with agencies such as National Highways, the Met Office, and the Bedfordshire Local Resilience Forum (BLRF).

45/24/07 Tom Wootton inquired about when the public could expect a review of the incident and how similar events would be prevented. The Operations Manager confirmed that National Highways was conducting a review of what happened. Temporary pumps were currently in place, and a permanent pumping solution was anticipated by the end of December 2024. This review would be shared by National Highways with all relevant parties including Bedford Borough Council. RESOLVED that this be noted.

45/24/08 River Gauges – Operations Faults

Anthony Brown raised concerns about the river gauges being non-operational during critical times and questioned what actions were being taken to address the issue. The Operations Manager clarified that these gauges were Environment Agency (EA) assets, and it was the EA's responsibility to review, rectify, and future-proof them. Members were informed that many of these gauges dated back to the 1960s and 1970s, making them outdated and in need of significant investment.

45/24/09 Anthony Brown suggested this issue highlighted the need to scrutinise the precept imposed on the Board by the Environment Agency (EA). The Operations Manager confirmed that he would seek clarification from the EA on whether precept funds were allocated towards the maintenance of these assets. RESOLVED that this be noted.

PL

45/24/10 Girtford, Sandy – Hole in the Bank

Jo Davison expressed deep concern upon learning that a hole in the Environment Agency's (EA) bank, identified as a danger to life, had not been fully resolved by the EA. She questioned how long the EA had been aware of the issue and why the necessary works had not been prioritised.

45/24/11 The Operations Manager confirmed that the EA had known about the issue for several months, but budgetary constraints had delayed the start of permanent repairs, leaving only a temporary fix in place. In response to Nicola Gribble's query about the duration of the temporary fix, the Operations Manager acknowledged it could remain for several months but confirmed that officers would seek clarification.

PL

45/24/12 Jo Davison voiced frustration over the repeated allocation of Board officer time to issues stemming from the EA's lack of action.

45/24/13 It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED that the Chief Executive would write to the EA on behalf of the Board, expressing members' dissatisfaction and urging that permanent works be prioritised as a matter of urgency.

PC

46/24 AUDITED ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR 2023/24

46/24/01 The audited Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2024 was considered in detail and approved by the Board. The External Auditor had no matters to report. The Chair thanked officers for their work in achieving a clean opinion.

47/24 FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2024 TO 31 AUGUST 2024

47/24/01 The Financial Report for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 August 2024 was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). Arising therefrom:

47/24/02 Income and Expenditure Account

The Principal Accountant highlighted the projected surplus of £160,403 compared to the budgeted deficit of £74,625. Members were advised that this was predominantly due to planned savings within Joint Administration, greater income received from consenting services – notably £352,785 received from Surface Water Development Contributions and higher interest being received than expected. RESOLVED that this be noted.

47/24/03 Environment Agency Highland Water Contributions

The Principal Accountant updated members regarding the Highland Water Contributions. The Environment Agency had confirmed that the Highland Water claim for 2023/24 would be paid in full. However, the claim for 2024/25 will not be fully funded.

47/24/04 For 2024/25, Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) in the Anglian (Great Ouse) RFCC area would receive payments on a pro-rata basis due to budget constraints, meaning the Board would only receive a portion of the forecasted claim amount. This shortfall had been incorporated into the Board's budgets moving forward, ensuring that necessary funds were managed effectively. The Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA) was aware of the issue but seemed powerless to do anything about it.

47/24/05 The Environment Agency indicated that if additional funding became available, they would seek to cover the remaining claims; however, there was currently no funding to do so.

47/24/06 The Board had been advised to prepare for funding shortfalls and to monitor updates on future funding announcements related to Highland Water or other allocations.

47/24/07 The Chief Executive explained that if the RFCC confirmed that Highland Water payments would not be made in full, formal notification of this from the EA would follow. The Board would then have six weeks to file an appeal

PC

with the Minister. While the likelihood of a successful appeal was low, James Russell emphasised the importance of pursuing it. The Chief Executive confirmed that members would be informed of the meeting outcome.

47/24/08 Outstanding Special Levies

The Principal Accountant reported that Cherwell District Council and North Herts District Council (NHDC) had not paid the second instalment of their Special Levy, which was due on 01 November 2024. Alistair Willoughby indicated he would follow up on this matter internally at NHDC.

AW

48/24 POLICY UPDATES

48/24/01 The following policies were considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising. It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED that the following policies be adopted with immediate effect:

- Corporate Risk Register
- Privacy Notice – General
- Privacy Notice – Ratepayers

49/24 TO NOMINATE 5 OF THE DIRECTLY ELECTED MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE PUTATIVE UPPER OUZE WATER MANAGEMENT BOARD WHEN IT IS CONSTITUTED FROM THE AMALGAMATION OF THE ALCONBURY & ELLINGTON IDB, BEDFORDSHIRE & RIVER IVEL IDB AND THE BUCKINGHAM & RIVER OUZEL IDB

49/24/01 The Chief Executive advised the first elected members of the new Board must be appointed by the relevant Minister, in accordance with section 1(a) of the Land Drainage Act 1991. Therefore, the Environment Agency had asked for the names of who we would like to appoint to the new Board as its first members for the Minister's consideration. The Minister would usually accept the names put forward, but we were free to decide how we select who to nominate.

49/24/02 There would be 14 directly elected member places on the new Board, 5 of which will represent drainage ratepayers in the Bedfordshire and River Ivel IDB area. We currently have 5 directly elected members on the existing Board, all 5 members advised they wished to stand for appointment to the new Board.

49/24/03 It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to nominate the following five members to represent the Bedfordshire and River Ivel Area on the new Board when it is constituted:

Jo Davison, Frank Firth, Julian Polhill, James Russell and Tom Wootton.

49/24/04 Members were advised that the new Board could be established on 01 April 2025 at the earliest, so the existing Board would continue to meet and conduct its regular business until that time.

50/24 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2025/26

50/24/01 The calendar of meetings for 2025/26 was considered and approved. Bedfordshire & River Ivel IDB would meet as follows:

Monday, 03 February 2025

Monday, 19 May 2025

Monday, 27 October 2025

Monday, 02 February 2026

51/24 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

51/24/01 It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED for the Board to next meet on Monday, 03 February 2025 at 2 pm, to be held in the Board Room at Vale House, Broadmead Road, Stewartby, Bedfordshire, MK43 9ND and virtually via Microsoft Teams.

52/24 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

52/24/01 Upcoming Events

The Executive Assistant advised members of the two upcoming events:

Date: 13 November @ 11:00 am - 5:00 pm

Event: ADA Flood & Water Conference 2024

Location: One Great George Street, Westminster, London

Attendees: Open to 2 members, typically attended by Chair & Vice-Chair, open to other members if they were unable to attend

52/24/02 Date: 27 & 28 November 2024

Event: Floodex UK

Location: ExCel London E16 1XL

Attendees: Open to all Board members

53/24 OPEN FORUM: TO HEAR FROM ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC, WITH LEAVE OF THE CHAIRMAN

53/24/01 There were no matters raised by members of the public present at today's meeting.

54/24 CONSORTIUM MATTERS**54/24/01 Unconfirmed minutes of the last Joint Management Committee (JMC) meeting held on 24 September 2024**

The unconfirmed minutes of the last Joint Management Committee meeting held on 24 September 2024 were considered in detail, noted and adopted. There were no matters arising.

54/24/02 JMC's Operations Report

The JMC's Operations Report (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

54/24/03 JMC's Social Media Report

The JMC's Social Media Report (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

54/24/04 JMC's Schedule of Paid Accounts

The JMC's Schedule of Paid Accounts for the period 01 April 2024 to 31 August 2024 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

54/24/05 JMC's Financial Report and Accounts

The JMC's Financial Report and Accounts for the for the period 01 April 2024 to 31 August 2024 was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). There were no matters arising.

54/24/06 Policy Updates

The Employees Code of Conduct policy was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising. It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to adopt the policy with immediate effect.

54/24/07 Items for discussion at the next JMC meeting

There were no issues raised by members for discussion at the next Joint Management Committee (JMC) meeting on 03 December 2024. Should members wish to raise any item for discussion at the next meeting, they should contact any of the Board's representative or the Chief Executive directly.

55/24 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

55/24/01 It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED that as there were no items of confidential business to discuss, a separate set of confidential minutes would not be produced for this meeting.

56/24 UNCONFIRMED CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (JMC) MEETING HELD ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2024

56/24/01 The unconfirmed confidential minutes of the last Joint Management Committee meeting held on 24 September 2024 were considered in detail, noted and approved. There were no matters arising.

57/24 ANY OTHER CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS.

57/24/01 There was no other confidential business to discuss. The Chairman thanked members for their attendance and contribution, and declared the meeting closed.