

**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 MONDAY, 20 MAY 2024 AT 2PM.**

**Directly Elected Members**

- \* J R Davison
- \* J Polhill
- J M Ream
- \*v J Russell
- \*v T Wootton

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

**Co-opted Members**

- \* F Firth

**Appointed Members**

**Bedford Borough Council**

- G Coombes
- \*v N Gribble
- P Martin-Moran-Bryant
- \* D McMurdo
- \*v A Spice
- \*v M Towler
- \* J Weir

**Central Bedfordshire Council**

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

**Jointly Appointed**

**North Herts District Council**

S Jarvis

- \* Present (60%)
- \*v In attendance virtually

Doug McMurdo in the Chair

**In attendance:**

Tom Loakes (Administration Assistant), Phil Lovesey (Operations Manager), Matthew Philpot (Deputy Chief Executive), Alice Smith (Executive Assistant), and Nicole Hunter (Principal Accountant)

**ID Bedfordshire & River Ivel IDB, Minute**

**Action**

**16/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**16/24/01** Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Phil Camamile, Graeme Coombes, Steve Jarvis, Philippa Martin-Moran-Bryant and John Ream.

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<p><b>17/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p>	
<p><b>17/24/01</b> There were no declarations of interest reported to the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>18/24 MINUTES OF THE LAST BOARD MEETING HELD ON 05 FEBRUARY 2024</b></p>	
<p><b>18/24/01</b> The minutes of the last Board meeting held on 05 February 2024 were confirmed and signed as a true record. Arising therefrom:</p>	
<p><b>18/24/02 10/24/03 Marsh Leys</b></p> <p>Members were advised that the Board's Chair and officers had met with representatives from Bedford Borough Council on 27 February 2024 to discuss the necessary steps to facilitate the possible completion of the long-standing Marsh Leys agreements. RESOLVED that this be noted.</p>	
<p><b>18/24/03</b> Tom Wootton requested a follow up meeting be held in June 2024 to discuss progress made by Bedford Borough Council. RESOLVED that this be actioned.</p>	<p><b>TW &amp; AS</b></p>
<p><b>18/24/04 06/24/03 Environment Agency Highland Water Contribution</b></p> <p>Tony Brown questioned if the letter expressing the Board's disappointment in the increasing lack of maintenance carried out using the Board precept payment had been sent to the Environment Agency and local MPs. The Chair confirmed the letter had not been sent due to the formation of a Local Government Association Special Interest Group which was seeking a new approach to the funding of Internal Drainage Boards. The Chair advised, following his appointment to the Group in his capacity as a Bedford Borough Councillor, the group had written to all MPs nationally addressing their concerns surrounding the Highland Water Contribution. It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED that the Chair would present a report to members at the next Board Meeting.</p>	<p><b>DM</b></p>
<p><b>18/24/05</b> It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED that the Chair and the Mayor of Bedford, Tom Wootton write to all local MPs after the General Election and advise them of the appalling lack of maintenance being undertaken to the main-river network and request that more maintenance be done.</p>	<p><b>DM / TW</b></p>
<p><b>19/24 ENGINEERING REPORT</b></p>	
<p><b>19/24/01</b> The Engineering Report was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). Arising therefrom:</p>	

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<p><b>19/24/02 Universal Studios Project</b></p> <p>The Principal Engineer advised members that he met with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing &amp; Communities at Bedford Brough Council Offices regarding the proposed project. RESOLVED that this be noted.</p>	
<p><b>19/24/03 Pix Brook, Standalone Farm Reservoir</b></p> <p>Frank Firth questioned if the limit switch failure was as a result of routine maintenance not being carried out. The Principal Engineer advised these were original parts and failed despite routine maintenance being carried out. RESOLVED that this be noted.</p>	
<p><b>19/24/04 Telemetry</b></p> <p>Anna French inquired about potential issues arising from transitioning the existing telemetry system to a cloud-based platform, particularly in the event of an internet connection failure. The Principal Engineer reassured the members that, in such a scenario, officers would be deployed to the site to manually inspect the levels. RESOLVED that this be noted.</p>	
<p><b>19/24/05 Bed_B73 Running track Watercourse &amp; Newnham Avenue</b></p> <p>Frank Firth questioned if this should be included on the Board's Risk Register and Officers thought not. The Operations Manager advised members that issue was previously resolved by Anglian Water and discussions were ongoing for Anglian Water to once again undertake the necessary maintenance work. Members were assured that there was no immediate risk to people or property from the IDB ditch. RESOLVED that this be noted.</p>	
<p><b>19/24/06 Location Descriptions</b></p> <p>Jim Weir requested a small descriptor be added to each of the locations to allow for new Board Members to understand where sites fall within the Board's Drainage District. RESOLVED that this be actioned.</p>	<b>AS</b>
<p><b>20/24 OPERATIONS REPORT</b></p>	
<p><b>20/24/01</b> The Operations Report was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). Arising therefrom:</p>	
<p><b>20/24/02</b> The Operations Manager advised members that the Environment Agency had now appointed an IDB Precept Liaison Officer. This will be a pivotal role in building and maintaining relationships with local IDB's, acting as the liaison between the EA and the IDB's. It was hoped that this role would allow for greater detail to be provided to</p>	<b>AS / PL</b>

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<p>the Board on where precept funding was being allocated within the district. It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to invite the newly appointed IDB Precept Liaison Officer to all future Board meetings.</p>	
<p><b>20/24/03</b> The Chair also requested that the invitation also be extended to the LLFA's Flood Officers. RESOLED that this be noted.</p>	<b>AS / PL</b>
<p><b>20/24/04 Water Vole along the Renhold Brook</b></p> <p>Nicola Gribble informed officers of the historical presence of water voles along Renhold Brook, observed approximately 25 years ago. She questioned whether an updated survey should be conducted prior to commencing maintenance work. The Operations Manager responded that mitigation measures were in place to allow work to proceed without causing disturbance, through compliance with the Board's maintenance procedures . Additionally, he agreed to liaise with Nicola regarding the ecological habitat surrounding Renhold Brook. RESOLVED that this be noted.</p>	<b>PL / NG</b>
<p><b>21/24 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2024 AND REAPPOINTMENT OF THE INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2024/25</b></p>	
<p><b>21/24/01</b> The detailed Internal Audit Report for 2023/24 and the Internal Audit Report that forms part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2023/24 as prepared by the Board's Internal Auditor, together with the Management Team's responses and agreed actions, (copies of which are filed in the Report Book), were considered in detail and approved. The Boards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> was satisfied that the Internal Auditor is independent (see Practitioners' Guide 2024 Paragraphs 1.36 and 4.11);</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> retrospectively approved the internal audit programme of work, having regard to the key risks identified in the Risk Register (see Practitioners' Guide 2024 Paragraphs 1.36 and 4.16); and</li> <li><b>(iii)</b> was satisfied with regard to the competence of the Internal Auditor and retrospectively approved the letter of engagement (see Practitioners' Guide 2024 Paragraphs 1.36, 4.1 and 4.13), including the signed letter of engagement.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>21/24/02</b> The Internal Auditor's recording of a substantial level of assurance awarded on conclusion of the audit was noted.</p>	
<p><b>21/24/03</b> It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to reappoint TIAA as their Internal Auditor for 2024/25. Members were pleased to note that Substantial Assurance had been awarded by the Internal Auditor, which was a credit to the Group's Management Team and particularly to Nicole Hunter, the Group's Principal Accountant and Responsible Financial Officer.</p>	

**22/24 FINANCIAL REPORTS AND RECONCILIATION TO THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2024**

**22/24/01** The Financial Report and reconciliation to the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2024 was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). Arising therefrom:

**22/24/02 Income and Expenditure Account**

The Principal Accountant explained that the Board had made a surplus of £158,232 during the 2023/24 financial year, which was largely due to the increase in interest rates and capital development income. RESOLVED that this be noted.

**22/24/03** Jim Weir inquired whether the £25,000 reduction in staffing costs was planned. The Principal Accountant explained that this reduction was due to the decrease in operations staff from 13 to 11.

**23/24 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2024**

**23/24/01** Following the approval of the financial reports and reconciliation to the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the year ending 31 March 2024, the AGAR was considered in detail and approved. Arising therefrom:

**23/24/02** The Annual Governance Statement shown in Section 1 of the Board's Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2024 was considered in detail and approved.

**23/24/03** The Accounting Statements shown in Section 2 of the Board's Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2024 were considered in detail and approved.

**24/24 DATE OF COMMENCEMENT PERIOD FOR THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS TO INSPECT THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2024**

**24/24/01** It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to publish the notice on the Board's website and also display the notice in the office reception, that the Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2024 would be available for inspection for the 30-working day period commencing 3 June 2024 and ending on 12 July 2024. RESOLVED that this be noted.

AS / NS

**25/24 REGISTER OF ELECTORS**

**25/24/01** The Register of Electors as at 01 April 2024 was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book), in accordance with Rule 3(11) of the Land Drainage (Election of Drainage Boards) Regulations 1938 (as amended).

**25/24/02** The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that the opportunity for Electors to Inspect the Electoral Register had been advertised on the Board's website from 16 May 2024 and that no objections to any entries or omissions in the proposed Register had been received. RESOLVED that this be noted.

**26/24 MATERIAL CHANGES TO THE CORPORATE RISK REGISTER**

**26/24/01** Members considered and approved the risk register for those risks with a risk assessment matrix score of  $\geq 6$  (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). Arising therefrom:

**26/24/02 Loss of income through error or fraud**

Members acknowledged the high-risk level assigned to this issue and requested that officers review its severity. Jim Weir also inquired about the transfer process and location of this risk. It was agreed, and thereby RESOLVED, to reassess the risk level and introduce a "Residual Risk" column to indicate the revised position after mitigation measures were implemented.

*Post Meeting Note: It was noted that the maximum risk level stated on the risk register as 6 is a typographical error and should be corrected to 9. This correction, along with the Risk Management Policy and the Risk Management Matrix, which details how the risk level is determined, has been circulated to members.*

**PC / AS****27/24 CORRESPONDENCE****27/24/01 Water Resources East: Update and contribution for 2024/25**

The Water Resources East (WRE) update and annual invoice of £775 from WRE for 2024/25 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved for payment. Arising therefrom:

**NS**

**27/24/02** Tony Brown questioned the benefits the Board had received since becoming a member of WRE. The Deputy Chief Executive responded that the project was gaining significant momentum, and the publication of the business plan would enable members to monitor progress more closely. It was agreed and RESOLVED to circulate the business plan to members. – Link to Business [plan here](#)

**AS**

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<p><b>27/24/03</b> Jim Weir inquired about the source of the remaining funding. Officers were unable to provide a definitive answer during the meeting but indicated that the terms of reference would provide clarification. It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to circulate the WRE terms of reference to members.</p>	<p><b>AS</b></p>
<p><b>27/24/04</b> The Chair requested that Tom Wooton in his capacity as the Mayor of Bedford facilitate a meeting between Water Resources East and Universal Studios. RESOLVED that this be noted.</p>	<p><b>TW</b></p>
<p><b>27/24/05</b> It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to continue to review the Board’s membership of WRE annually.</p>	
<p><b>28/24 DATE &amp; TIME OF NEXT MEETING</b></p>	
<p><b>28/24/01</b> It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED for the next Board meeting to take place on Tuesday, 05 November 2024 at 2pm, which would be held in the Board Room at Vale House, Broadmead Road, Stewartby, Bedfordshire, MK43 9ND and virtually via Microsoft Teams.</p>	
<p><b>29/24 ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p>	
<p><b>29/24/01</b> There was no other business to discuss.</p>	
<p><b>30/24 OPEN FORUM: TO HEAR FROM ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC, WITH LEAVE OF THE CHAIRMAN</b></p>	
<p><b>30/24/01</b> There were no members of the public present at today’s meeting.</p>	
<p><b>31/24 CONSORTIUM MATTERS</b></p>	
<p><b>31/24/01 Unconfirmed minutes of the last Joint Management Committee (JMC) meeting held on 30 April 2024</b></p>	
<p>The unconfirmed minutes of the last Joint Management Committee meeting held on 30 April 2024 were considered in detail, noted and adopted. There were no matters arising.</p>	
<p><b>31/24/02 JMC’s Operations Report</b></p>	
<p>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.</p>	

**31/24/03 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.

**31/24/04 JMC's Schedule of Paid Accounts**

The JMC's Schedule of Paid Accounts for the period 1 November 2023 to 31 March 2024 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

**31/24/05 JMC's Financial Report for the year ending 31 March 2024**

The JMC's Financial Report for the year ending 31 March 2024 was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

**31/24/06 Group's Performance Report for 2023/24**

The Group's performance report for 2023/24 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

**31/24/07 Objectives for 2024/25, as recommended by the JMC**

The draft objectives for 2024/25 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) were considered in detail and approved. It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED that the following objectives be adopted for 2024/25:

- (i) To ensure that total expenditure does not exceed the approved expenditure budgets for 2024/25 and plan for subsequent years' rate increases to deliver balanced and affordable budgets before 2026/27.
- (ii) To ensure that the total maintenance works budget does not exceed £1.75m, unless there is an extraordinary/high rainfall event. Any costs that are incurred over and above the budget of £1.75m are to be itemised, identified, and costed separately.
- (iii) To ensure that the Environment Agency's annual precept charges on the Boards are fair and that it is spent on work that benefits the Drainage Districts.
- (iv) To continue improving the main-river network that the IDB watercourses discharge into at key known trouble spots by working with the Environment Agency using the Public Sector Co-operation Agreement and continuing to push for the de-maining of low/medium consequence main-rivers.

- (v) To identify suitable locations to create additional off-line storage areas, which will reduce reliance on the main-river network, reduce flood risk and increase access to fresh water for the purposes of irrigation, potable water supply, recreation or biodiversity.
- (vi) To set up Public Sector Co-operation Agreements with other Risk Management Authorities, which will enable the Boards to provide services outside the Drainage Districts, particularly during high rainfall events.
- (vii) To introduce an alternative approach of ensuring that the drainage infrastructure which serves new developments is of sufficient capacity and appropriately maintained in perpetuity, without attempting to enter into complex/costly legal agreements and seeking up-front (and ultimately inadequate) commuted sums from developers. i.e. to double the amount of Surface Water Development Contributions collected by the Group in 2023/24.
- (viii) To continue to monitor and report on carbon usage, in accordance with the Group's Carbon Management Plan.
- (ix) To support constituent Councils through ADA by actively lobbying DEFRA and DLUHC to disaggregate IDB Special Levies from the Councils' Revenue and Expenditure profiles.
- (x) To improve the collection of drainage rates and continue to reduce arrears during 2024/25.
- (xi) To continue to increase the number of followers and posts on the Group's social media platforms.

**31/24/08 Group's Carbon Management Plan**

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

**31/24/09 Group's Annual Carbon Report**

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

**31/24/10 Drainage Rating Management Software (DRS) Report**

The recommendations arising from the Drainage Rating Management Software (DRS) Report (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

**31/24/11 Policy Updates**

The following policies were considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising. It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED that the following charge out rates and policies be adopted with immediate effect:

Schedule of Charge Out Rates for 2024/25  
Financial Regulations  
Business Continuity Plan  
Condition of Service and Benefits  
Development Control Charges and Fees  
Document Retention and Destruction Policy  
Environmental Responsibilities  
Investment Strategy

**31/24/12 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 24 September 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.

**32/24 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

**32/24/01** 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.

**33/24 UNCONFIRMED CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (JMC) MEETING HELD ON 30 APRIL 2024**

**33/24/01** The unconfirmed confidential minutes of the last Joint Management Committee meeting held on 30 April 2024 were considered in detail, noted and approved. There were no matters arising.

**34/24 ANY OTHER CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS.**

**34/24/01** There was no other confidential business to discuss. The Chairman thanked members for their attendance and contribution, and declared the meeting closed