

**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, 05 FEBRUARY 2024 AT 2 PM.**

**Directly Elected Members**

- J R Davison
- \* J Polhill
- \*v J M Ream
- \* 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**

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

- \*v S Jarvis
- \* Present (56%)
- \*v In attendance virtually

Doug McMurdo in the Chair

**In attendance:**

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

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

**Action**

**01/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

**01/24/01** Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Graeme Coombs, Jo Davison, Phillippa Martin-Moran-Bryant, Andrea Spice and Jim Weir. RESOLVED that this be noted.

**02/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**02/24/01** There were no declarations of interest reported to the meeting.

**03/24 MINUTES OF THE LAST BOARD MEETING HELD ON 06 NOVEMBER 2023**

**03/24/01** The minutes of the last Board meeting held on 06 November 2023 were confirmed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

**04/24 ENGINEERING REPORT**

**04/24/01** The Engineering Report was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). Arising therefrom:

**04/24/02 Quest Pit**

Anthony Brown questioned why the Board were yet to receive a response to the letters sent back in November 2023 to the applicant's agent and Chief Executive of Central Bedfordshire Council. Tracey Wye advised members that in her view it was now unlikely that the Quest Pit development would proceed, and this may be the reason for the lack of engagement. RESOLVED that this be noted.

**PC/DM****04/24/03 Hitchin Road, Henlow**

Members were pleased to note that the £50k commuted sum and full reimbursement of the Board's legal costs and staff time had been received in full. Anthony Brown questioned how urgent the movement of the UKPN live low voltage cable was, and the Principal Engineer advised that the works were not considered to be urgent and had been included within UKPN's programme of works. RESOLVED that this be noted.

**05/24 OPERATIONS REPORT**

**05/24/01** The Operations Report was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). Arising therefrom:

**05/24/02 PSCA Works**

Frank Firth expressed his support of working with the Environment Agency to undertake maintenance on their behalf but questioned the resource implications of this arrangement. The Operations Manager advised members that this work was only ever undertaken when the Board had sufficient capacity to do so and never at the expense of carrying out the Board's own work. Furthermore, the cost of undertaking all such work was fully reimbursed by the Environment Agency. RESOLVED that this be noted.

**05/24/03 Site Inspections**

Anthony Brown requested further details of the inspections carried out at Henlow Airfield - Hitchin Road, Henlow Airfield – Windsock Site and Henlow Airfield – Defence Estates. It was agreed that the Operations Manager would provide this information to Anthony Brown after the meeting.

**PL****05/24/04 Flooding in Tempsford**

Tracey Wye questioned if the Board had received notification of the raw sewage which was entering the Environment Agency's Main River at Tempsford following the recent flooding events. The Operations Manager advised members that he was indeed aware of the situation, but thankfully the pollution had not found its way into the Board's arterial network of watercourses. RESOLVED that this be noted.

**06/24 FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2023 TO 31 OCTOBER 2023**

**06/24/01** The Financial Report for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 October 2023 was considered in detail and approved (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). There were no matters arising.

**06/24/02 Income and Expenditure Account**

The Principal Accountant highlighted the projected net surplus of £106,986 for 2023/24. Members were advised that this was predominantly due to savings made within Joint Administration and higher interest received than expected. James Russell questioned if this was as a result of the current economic climate or changes to investments. The Principal Accountant confirmed investments were made into a fixed term account which expired on 31 March 2024 and had generated a higher-than-expected return. Members were advised that the Principal Accountant was due to meet with a Regulated Investment Advisor next week to discuss Investment opportunities that would be available to the Board after 31 March 2024. RESOLVED that this be noted.

**06/24/03 Environment Agency Highland Water Contribution**

Anthony Brown expressed his frustration with the lack of information provided by the Environment Agency on where the Board's precept money had been spent within the local area. He raised concerns that the funds were being placed within a central pot and no local benefit was being received. Everyone agreed.

**06/24/04** Anthony Brown noted the works completed under the Public Sector Co-operation Agreement however remained concerned that the IDB precept would continue to be charged by the EA with no benefit being seen in the local area. The Operations Manager confirmed that a breakdown of expenditure detailing where the precept was to be spent had been requested from the EA on multiple occasions with only limited detail ever being provided. The Operations Manager had recently been advised that the EA had appointed a Precept Officer to liaise with IDBs on where precept money was being spent, so was hopeful that the dissemination of information may improve in future.

**06/24/05** The Chief Executive confirmed that the Precept had to be paid, however an IDB may appeal against the charge if they felt it was unfair and could request details of how it was to be spent by the Agency. It was agreed and thereby **RESOLVED** that the Chair write to the EA expressing the Board's disappointment and requesting a copy of the scheduled works programme.

**PC/DM**

**06/24/06** Martin Towler requested this letter also be sent to local MPs to obtain their support. Tom Wootton, Mayor of Bedford supported the suggestion and added that he would be happy to co-sign the letter should members feel this would strengthen the letter. **RESOLVED** that this be noted.

**PC/DM &TW**

**07/24 TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE RATE ESTIMATES FOR 2024/25**

**07/24/01** The detailed Rate Estimates for 2024/25, (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book), were considered in detail and approved. Arising therefrom:

**07/24/02 Maintenance Works Programme for 2024/25**

The detailed Maintenance Works Estimate for 2024/25 as prepared by the Operations Manager, totalling £950,223 was considered in detail and approved.

**07/24/03 Administration, Technical Support & Other Expenses for 2024/25**

The Administration, Technical Support and Other Expenses Estimate for 2024/25 as recommended by the Joint Management Committee was considered in detail and approved. It was agreed and thereby **RESOLVED** to approve the charge of £497,899 in the Board's Rate Estimates for 2024/25.

**08/24 FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25**

**LAY AND SEAL THE DRAINAGE RATE AND SPECIAL LEVIES****08/24/01 Annual Values as at 31 December 2023**

It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to approve the aggregate annual values as at 31 December 2023, used for the purposes of raising and apportioning expenses from drainage rates and special levies for 2024/25 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book).

**08/24/02 Main Area**

It was proposed by James Russell, seconded by Anthony Brown and unanimously agreed to approve Option 3 as presented, which equated to a drainage rate increase of 4% and an average special levy increase of 8.98%, from 4.618 pence in the pound to 4.803 pence in the pound:

Reserves	£74,626
Occupiers Drainage Rates	£81,331
Bedford Borough Council	£730,645
Central Bedfordshire Council	£410,971
North Herts DC	£9,014
South Cambs DC	£180
	<u>£1,306,767</u>

**08/24/03 Indicative Five-Year Forecast**

The indicative five-year forecast was considered in detail and noted, (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). Arising therefrom:

**08/24/04** Anthony Brown noted an error in the formula relating to the average rate per acre in section 4 of the report. Members were advised an amended report would be circulated following the meeting.

*Post meeting note: An amended report was sent by email to members on 06 February 2024 and as requested, a comparative column had also been added within section 2 which included the hectareage per council as at the previous year end, which would now be included in the Estimates template in future.*

**08/24/05 Earmarked Balances and Reserves**

The adequacy and appropriateness of the Earmarked Balances and Reserves was considered in detail and noted (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book).

**09/24 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

**09/24/01** It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED for the Board to next meet on Monday, 20 May 2024 at 2 pm, to be held virtually via Microsoft Teams.

**10/24 ANY OTHER BUSINESS****10/24/01 Meadow Lane watercourse**

Tom Wootton requested officers' assistance in establishing the ownership of the watercourse along Meadow Land, Bedford, adjacent to the football club. It was reported that surface water flooding was currently impacting the area following the heavy rainfall. The Operations Manager advised members that he had been in contact with Melanie Bright, Bedford Borough Council's (BBC's) Senior Flood Risk Officer to discuss the matter who had confirmed that her Flood Risk team were shortly due to inspect the area to determine the cause. As no response had yet been received, the Operations Manager advised members that a follow up call would be made. RESOLVED that this be noted.

**PL****10/24/02 Marsh Leys**

Tom Wotton requested a meeting with the Board's officers to try and resolve the ongoing matter of Marsh Leys. Members were informed that officers had recently been in communication with Keith Maidlow, BBC's Team Leader Corporate Estate Management to advise of the reasons why the Board had not been able to adopt the ponds at Marsh Leys. These included:

- The Board has not received the commuted sums due, and reimbursement of its legal costs as stated within the agreement.
- There was a large amount of remedial work to do to get these ponds into a fit state for adoption, given that 20 years had passed since the infrastructure was built. This will need to be done by someone and paid for by the landowners.
- The agreement was signed back in 2019 by a former Chief Executive and would therefore need to be resigned by our current Chair and Chief Executive.
- The commuted sums due included in the agreement will need to be recalculated using today's rates.
- The Board need Defra's Secretary of State to approve all such commuted obligations, in accordance with the Land Drainage Act 1991. This approval has not been obtained.

**10/24/03** It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED for the Chief Executive, Chair, Vice-Chair and Principal Engineer meet with Tom Wotton (Mayor of Bedford Borough Council) to try to finally resolve the matter.

**PC, DM, JR, TS & TW****10/24/04 Planning Objections**

Nicola Gribble thanked officers for circulating planning objections to Appointed Members, she felt the reintroduction of this practice had allowed for better engagement and support from members which could only strengthen the Board's position on planning matters. RESOLVED that this be noted.

**11/24 OPEN FORUM: TO HEAR FROM ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC, WITH LEAVE OF THE CHAIRMAN**

**11/24/01** There were no members of the public present at today's meeting.

**12/24 CONSORTIUM MATTERS**

**12/24/01 Unconfirmed minutes of the Joint Management Committee (JMC) meeting held on 04 December 2023**

The unconfirmed minutes of the Joint Management Committee meeting held on 04 December 2023 were considered in detail, noted and adopted. There were no matters arising.

**12/24/02 JMC's Operations Report**

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

**12/24/03 JMC's Schedule of Paid Accounts**

The JMC's Schedule of Paid Accounts for the period 01 April 2023 to 31 October 2023 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved for publication on the Group's website. There were no matters arising.

**12/24/04 JMC's Financial Report**

The JMC's Financial Report for the period 01 April 2023 to 31 October 2023 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

**12/24/05 JMC's Projected Out-turns and Estimates**

The JMC's Projected Out-turns for 2023/24 and estimates for 2024/25 (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) were considered in detail and approved. There were no matters arising.

**12/24/06 Annual Review of Development Contributions**

The Annual Review of Development Contributions Report (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book) was considered in detail and approved. Arising therefrom:

**12/24/07** It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to increase the unattenuated surface water development contribution rate/impermeable square metre to £9 (an increase of 21.3% on the previous year) with effect from 1 April 2024.

**12/24/08** It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED for commuted sums to be determined on a case-by-case basis and to authorise the Chief Executive to negotiate on this basis.

**12/24/09 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 30 April 2024. Should members wish to raise any item for discussion at the next meeting, they should contact any of the Board's representatives, Doug McMurdo, Jo Davison, Frank Firth, James Russell or the Chief Executive directly.

**13/24 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

**13/24/01** 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.

**14/24 UNCONFIRMED CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (JMC) MEETING HELD ON 04 DECEMBER 2023**

**14/24/01** The unconfirmed confidential minutes of the Joint Management Committee meeting held on 04 December 2023 were considered in detail, noted and approved. There were no matters arising.

**15/24 ANY OTHER CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

**15/24/01** There was no other confidential business to discuss. The Chairman thanked members for their attendance and contribution, and declared the meeting closed