

### Apologies for Absence

2024.1 Apologies were received from Neil Brown.

### Declaration of Interest

2024.2 There were none. It was agreed that the Board Member register of Interest form be resent to Members to complete.

### Public Forum

2024.3 The member of the public present was interested in becoming a Board member if a vacancy arose.

### Minutes of the Last Meeting

2024.4 Minutes of the last meeting held on 15 November 2023 were considered, proposed as a true record by MW, seconded AL and approved by the Board.

### Matters Arising

2024.5 There were none.

### Complaints and Freedom of Information Requests

2024.6 There were none.

### CLERK'S REPORT

2024.7 Policy – The Clerk confirmed that the IDB policies would be reviewed before the end of March 2024 and those that required amendment would be brought to the Board for approval at the May meeting.

2024.8 Legislation – It was noted that the Ministerial approval of the Ratings Statutory Instrument had been delayed due to the recent Storm Events and change of Minister. Members discussed the implications of extending the IDB district to the hydraulic catchment. It was agreed that the water entering into the Board's district from the upper catchment needed to be restricted, by a variety of means, and improvements made to the lowland systems to allow water to be evacuated. It was noted that the members of the public do not always know who they should contact to resolve issues that they are facing. It was agreed to bring more information on the opportunities and process to the Board, if they did agree to extend their district.

2024.9 Key Performance Indicators – The Clerk confirmed that these had not changed since the updated in November.

### FINANCIAL REPORT

2024.10 Rating Report – FO advised that the current balance was £815.39. There were two proposed rate removals totalling £85.24. The FO advised members the reasons why the debt had not been collected. FB proposed that the accounts are removed, this was seconded by MW and approved by the Board.

2024.11 Schedule of Payments – Members reviewed the schedule of payments made since the last meeting that totalled £97,554.61 of which £695.31 were approved by the Clerk and FO. **Approval proposed by AL, seconded FB and approved by members.**

2024.12 Internal Audit Review Meeting – Minutes of this meeting were included in the meeting pack and noted by members.

2024.13 Risk Register – The FO informed members of the change made to the document and invited comments from them. MW proposed to approve the document, this was seconded by JS and approved by the Board.

2024.14 Rates and Special Levies for the Year Ending 31 March 2025 – The FO compared the budget against the current figures that indicated income and expenditure were in line with budget. It was noted that the bank interest received was increasing. The FO then took members through the various options with regard to the rate setting and the implications of these options. Following discussion MW proposed to increase the rate to 7.5p, this was seconded by AL and approved by the Board.

**2024.15** Five Year Budget Estimate – The FO reviewed the document confirmed that the forecast was in line with the Board’s reserve policy target.

#### **ENGINEER’S REPORT**

**2024.16** Asset Management – Eng. advised that the actions from the last meeting remain in progress and that the Board were working closely with the Environment Agency and the outputs from the hydraulic model to consider current risk and the future of the District in terms of maintenance, improvements and storage.

**2024.17** Ordinary Watercourses - Eng. confirmed that the maintenance works were substantially complete, with some areas inaccessible due to ground conditions and storm events.

**2024.18** Land Drainage Act 1991 Section 23 and 66 (Byelaw) Consents – It was noted that a consent application within the Board’s district had been consented by Staffordshire County Council, which the IDB Officers had queried. The discharge from the development was restricted on site, so will not have an adverse effect on the Board’s systems. SCC acknowledged and notified the Applicant and the IDB have provided Consent.

#### **HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT**

**2024.19** The Health and Safety policy statement would be reviewed and any proposed changes would be brought to the Board for approval at the next meeting.

**2024.20** There had been no incidents, accidents or near misses reported since the last meeting.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT**

**2024.21** Legislation – there had been no environmental updates that impact on the Board’s polices or activities.

**2024.22** Biodiversity Action Plan – JS commented on the project to reintroduce Black Poplar trees to the county. This project had been running for a few years and had been successful. PB advised that there were trees on Stafford Borough Council’s land and JS confirmed that he would inspect the site.

**2024.23** Stafford Brooks Project – JS advised members that he was attending a meeting the following day, where it was hoped funding for the next year would be approved. Highways Agency, who were funding the project, had delayed approval as they wanted to include Biodiversity Net Gain methods into the project. BNG also offers opportunities for landowners to access funding for implementing BNG projects on their land.

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**2024.24** GB enquired as to the impact the storms had on the annual maintenance activities. Eng. confirmed that not all the programmed work was completed due to ground and environmental conditions.

**2024.25** Tour of Inspection – It was suggested that the tour would take place around August/September and this would be discussed further at the next meeting.

**2024.26** VK raised the issues faced by Councils would the installation of solar farms across the district and whether the councils had undertaken and reviews. FB confirmed that SBC had undertaken reviews on the farms within their jurisdiction.

#### **DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

**2024.27** 28 May 2024, Derrington Village Hall  
20 November 2024, Tonge Suite, Stafford County Showground

Chair thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.