

## **Sow and Penk Internal Drainage Board**

Chetwynd Room  
Stafford Borough Council  
Civic Centre  
Riverside  
STAFFORD  
ST16 3AQ



### **Meeting Papers**

*Wednesday 9 November 2016  
Meeting at 11:00am*

**Shire Group of IDBS  
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## Meeting Papers

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**Engineer to the Board**

Reviewed by ..... Ian Benn HNC/D, Dip NEBOSH, PG Dip H&S  
/Env Law, Grad IOSH, MCQI CQP

**Clerk to the Board**

## Purpose

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# 1. Governance

## 1.1 Apologies

## 1.2 Declaration of Interest

Board Members are advised to declare a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest on any item in the Agenda.

## 1.3 Appointment of Chairman

## 1.4 Appointment of Vice Chairman

## 1.5 Declaration of Interest

## 1.6 Complaints and FOI

There have been none received.

## 1.7 Minutes of Meeting 22 June 2016

### Present

Ray Sutherland (RS)  
John Hilderley (JH)  
Neil Brown (NB)  
Andrew Harp (AH)  
Anthony Parrott (AP)  
Ralph Cooke (RC)  
Royston Wright (RW)

### Also in attendance

### In attendance on behalf of JBA Consulting, Clerk, Engineer and Environmental Adviser:

Ian Benn (Clerk to the Board)  
Craig Benson (Finance Officer to the Board)

### Apologies for Absence

**2016.24** Apologies for absence were received from Frances Beatty, Graham Bower, Helen Dale, Jonathan Price and Geoff Rowlands. Apologies were also received from Phil Bates and Phil Gammon, both of Stafford BC, and from Paul Jones from JBA Consulting.

### Declaration of Interest

**2016.25** There were no declarations of interest.

## Complaints and Freedom of Information Requests

The Board had received one FOI request that related to work undertaken by the Board on Doxey Marshes. Members noted the Engineer's response that was contained in the meeting papers.

## Minutes of the Last Meeting

**2016.26** Minutes of the last meeting held on 10 February 2016 copies of which had been previously circulated to members with the meeting papers were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.

## Matters Arising

**2016.27** There were no matters arising.

## Clerks Report

The Clerks Report, copies of which had been circulated to members with the last meeting papers, was considered and adopted.

**2016.28 Data Sharing Agreement and Data Sharing Policy** – The CEO requested that members approve the policy that would allow landowner details to be shared with the Board's contractor to assist with maintenance operations. The CEO confirmed that the information would be telephone numbers, addresses and email details. The board unanimously agreed to adopt the policy.

**2016.29 Training Session** – It was agreed by the Board to defer the training session to the next meeting when there would be a full complement of members in attendance.

## 2016.30 Pevensey and Cuckmere Water Management Board

The CEO confirmed that the Board were unsuccessful in their offer to managed the P&C WMB. It was a very good exercise and promoted the positive approach of this Board.

**2016.31 Isle of Axholme Strategy** – The Chairman and CEO updated members on the recent ADA Trent Branch AGM where the strategy was discussed. There were two areas in the country that were being used as a pilot study for the transfer and demaining of asset from the EA to IDBs. This process was fully supported by Defra. The CEO informed members of a Total Catchment Approach to managing the Board's operations. It was agreed that the CEO would circulate his notes on Total Catchment Management to members.

**2016.32 Election** – Members noted that this year saw the end of the three year term of office for the elected members. The Board approved the following:-

- i) Confirmed the appointment of JBA Consulting as returning officer
- ii) Approved the Register of Electors
- iii) Last date to receive nomination papers is Friday 7 October 2016
- iv) Date of the election, if required, is Friday 28 October 2016.

**2016.33 Board Website** – The Chairman confirmed that he had received an email with regard to the procurement process from North Lincolnshire Council, which detailed the prices that had been received. The Chairman added that he had responded to the email on behalf of the Board and read out his reply.

**2016.34 Key Performance Indicators** – The CEO confirmed that the KPI's shown were produced by Defra as a tool to measure IDB performance.

## Financial Report

The Financial Report, copies of which had been circulated to members with the last meeting papers, was considered and adopted.

## Matters Arising

**2016.35 Rating Report** – The Board were given an update as to the current position and noted that the balance stood at £53,887.21.

**2016.36 List of Cheques** – The Board approved the list of cheques that had been signed since the last meeting totalling £26,640.13 of which £80.00 were approved by the Clerk only and a further £202.96 that were paid direct from the Bank Account.

**2016.37 Audit** – Internal Audit. The FO confirmed that the audit was now complete and no issues were raised. The report will be included in the next Board's meeting paper for review.

**2016.38 Annual Governance Statement – Section 1 Annual Return** – Members were asked to consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement that was circulated to members with the meeting papers. Members approved the Statement.

**2016.39 Accounts for the Year Ending 31 March 2016** – Members reviewed the Accounts that were circulated with the meeting papers and they agreed to approve the accounts as presented.

**2016.40 Accounting Statements – Section 2 Annual Return** – Members were asked to consider and approve the Accounting Statement that was circulated to members with the meeting papers. Members approved the Statement.

**2016.41 Five Year Budget Estimate** - The FO reviewed the Board's five-year income and expenditure estimates and it was noted that the Board continued to be in a position to meet its projected expenditure levels.

**2016.42 Additional Financial Information** – Members reviewed the graphical data that was contained with the report detailing the income and expenditure costs of the Board.

## Engineers Report

The Engineer's Report, copies of which had been circulated to members with the last meeting papers, was considered and adopted.

## Matters Arising

**2016.43 Watercourse Maintenance** – Members noted the comments in the papers and confirmed that expressed their satisfaction of the contractor's work.

**2016.44 Planning** – The Chairman informed members of an email that he had received from the Engineer confirming that he would report and comment on all applications. The Chairman thanked the Engineer for his comments.

## Health and Safety Report

The Health and Safety Report, copies of which had been circulated to members with the last meeting papers, was considered and adopted.

## Matters Arising

**2016.45** There was none.

### **Environmental Adviser's Report**

The Environmental Adviser's Report, copies of which had been circulated to members with the last meeting papers, was considered and adopted.

### **Matters Arising**

**2016.46** There was none.

### **Miscellaneous Correspondence**

**2016.47** There was none.

### **Any Other Business**

**2016.48** There was none.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

**2016.49** The next meeting will be held on 9 November 2016 at Stafford Borough Council Offices.

The subsequent meeting will take place on:

8 February 2017.

## **1.8 Matters arising there from not elsewhere on the Agenda**

## 2. Clerk's Report

### Recommendation:

- Members note information contained in the Report

### 2.1 Training Session

Following the conclusion of the Board meeting a training session will be given to discuss Riparian Ownership Responsibilities.

### 2.2 Policy

Nothing to report

### 2.3 Legislation

Nothing to report

### 2.4 Defra

#### 2.4.1 Demeining and Asset Transfer

Defra has confirmed the Environment Agency will deliver the Main River Pilot Strategies by 2018.

#### 2.4.2 Humber Flood Risk Management Steering Group – Update

A short presentation will be given at the meeting on the Strategy extension

#### 2.4.3 The Isle of Axholme Strategy – Implementation.

An update will be given at the meeting.

#### 2.4.4 Environment Agency West Midlands Area

The Chairman and CEO received the following update on the changes in the structure of the Environment Agency.

“I would like to introduce our new Environment Agency West Midlands Area. I’ve enclosed a map of the new area for your information. (See Attached at Appendix B) I’m absolutely delighted to have been appointed Area Manager.

The new Area will enable us to deliver a more integrated service across the West Midlands. We will continue to do all we can to protect and enhance the environment and address flood risk for the people and communities we serve. Working closely with yourselves and other partners is key to us all achieving our outcomes and delivering more for communities and the environment.

You’ll understand that I am going to need to balance the time I can spend with all our stakeholders across the new large Area. To make sure that the Sow and Penk IDB get the support needed I’ve asked Anthony Perry, Operations Manager, to lead in working with

you. Anthony can be contacted via 01684 864 355 or [anthony.perry@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:anthony.perry@environment-agency.gov.uk) if you have any questions or would like to arrange a meeting.

Or of course you can also contact my office directly on 0203 025 3135 or email [lisa.pinney@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.pinney@environment-agency.gov.uk) or [Engagement\\_WestMids@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Engagement_WestMids@environment-agency.gov.uk)

Thank you for all that you've done with us in the past to deliver great outcomes for the people and communities we serve. I'm really looking forward to us achieving even more together in the future."

## 2.5 The Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA)

### 2.5.1 Technical & Environment Committee

Discussions included:

- Greater representation by IDB Members at FloodEx
- Eel regulation and potential IDB funding contributions toward Hull International Fisheries Institute research work
- Proactive IDB approach toward Health & Safety
- Driver for delivery by 2018 of de-maining/asset transfer pilot projects
- Developing guidance for IDBs on de-maining and asset transfer
- Cost of updating ADA website

Wording for BAPs incorporating aims and objectives of Biodiversity 2020

### 2.5.2 Policy & Finance Committee

Discussions included:

- Production of new IDB Policy statement
- Proposed new IDBs in Cumbria
- Local Authority 100% retention of business rates
- Assistance provided to Local Authorities to understand Special Levy
- Alternative approach to valuation of non-agricultural land
- ADA Business Plan

Subscription renewals

### 2.5.3 ADA Conference 2016

This year's ADA Conference and AGM will take place on Thursday 17 November, once again at [One Great George Street](#), Westminster, London, the home of the Institution of Civil Engineers. The Conference will bring together delegates from across the flood and water level management industry, including the Environment Agency, internal drainage boards, local authorities, Natural Resources Wales, Rivers Agency Northern Ireland and many suppliers.

Guest speakers confirmed include:

[Emma Howard-Boyd](#), Acting Chair of the Environment Agency

[Neil Parish MP](#) for Tiverton and Honiton and Chair of the [House of Commons Environment Food & Rural Affairs \(EFRA\) Select Committee](#), and

[Minette Batters](#), Vice President of the National Farmers' Union.

It is hoped to confirm a speaker from Defra in the coming weeks. This year will see an increased opportunity for questions and discussion on key topics in the form of an expanded 'ADA Question Time' session where audience participation will be key to its success. Question Time panel members will include representatives from ADA, the Environment Agency, and Defra.

ADA is keen to attract a full crowd of members to this year's Conference. So we are pleased to announce that the delegate fee has been frozen at the 2015 rate of £112+VAT. This represents excellent value for money including the usual lunch in the surroundings of the Great Hall and of course, the opportunity to network with fellow industry friends and colleagues<sup>1</sup>.

## 2.6 Election Year

Due to the fact that the Board did not receive more nomination papers than seats available, all existing members have been re-appointed to the Board. Helen Dale has intimated that she would be standing down and a letter of thanks has been sent to her on behalf of the Board.

## 2.7 Board Website

The website is currently being populated by Officers following initial formatting issues.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.ada.org.uk/news\\_detail.php?id=744](http://www.ada.org.uk/news_detail.php?id=744)

## 2.8 Board Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators		Inadequate	Work to be done	Adequate	Good	Very Good	
SOW & PENK INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	Management of the Board	Compliance with Audit Requirements					
		Health & Safety					
		Partnership Working					
		Overall					
	Reduction of waterlogging & Flood risk to assets	Asset Management					
		Flood Risk management strategy					
		Flooding- Learning Outcomes					
		Overall					
	Environment	Water Framework Directive					
		Invasive Species/Designated Sites					
		Conservation & Biodiversity					
		Biodiversity Action Plan					
		Overall					
	Supporting	Financial Statements					
		Receipt of Drainage Rates					
		Governance Documentation					
		Overall					
	Overall Performance						

### 3. Financial Report

**Recommendation:**

- To note the information contained in this report
- To approve the schedules of payments
- Ratification of decision to alter Financial Regulations Section 11 p4, to permit the Clerk to spend up to £5,000 (Item 3.5)

#### 3.1 Rating Report

Details of the Rates and Special Levies issued and payments received up to and including 25<sup>th</sup> October 2016: -

	£	£
Balance Brought forward at 1 April 2016		669.31
<b>2016/2017 Drainage Rates and Special Levies</b>		
Drainage Rates		10,848.68
Special Levies		
Stafford Borough Council	97,699.00	
South Staffordshire District Council	3,504.00	101,203.00
<b>Total Drainage Rates Due</b>		<b><u>112,720.99</u></b>
<b>Less Paid: -</b>		
Drainage Rates		9,686.06
Special Levies		
Stafford Borough Council	48,849.50	
South Staffordshire District Council	3,504.00	52,353.50
<b>Total Drainage Rates Paid</b>		<b><u>62,039.56</u></b>
<b>Balance Outstanding as at 25<sup>th</sup> October 2016</b>		<b><u>50,681.43</u></b>

## 3.2 List of Cheques

DATE		CHEQUE NO.		PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL CHEQUE		
							£	
<b>2016</b>								
May	31st	000797	11	Leon Coach Travel	Tour of Inspection Costs	175.00	*	
Jun	21st	000799	10	Environment Agency	Flood Defence Levy	2,158.75		
	22nd	000800	14	The Hollybush	Meeting Expenses	119.25	*	
Aug	1st	000801	12	Brodericks GBC	Internal Audit Fees 2015/16	774.00		
		000802	13	JBA Consulting	1/4 Salary & Expenses	4,971.56		
	18th	000803	15-16	Littlehales Plant Hire Ltd	Maintenance	2,700.00		
Sep	27th	000804	17	Environment Agency	Flood Defence Levy	2,158.75		
		000805	18	JBA Consulting	Fee Account - Doxey & Tillington Marshes	900.00		
		000806	21	Littlehales Plant Hire Ltd	Maintenance	33,877.38		
Oct	12th	000807	23	JBA Consulting	1/4 Salary & Expenses	5,179.79		
		000808	22	PKF Littlejohn	External Audit Fee	480.00		
<b>Total Amount of all Cheques</b>						<b>53,494.48</b>		
<b>* Total Amount of Cheques sent out signed by the Clerk Only</b>						<b>294.25</b>		

## 3.3 Other payments

DATE			PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL	
					£	
<b>2016</b>						
Jun	15th	-	NatWest	Bankline Fees	27.50	*
	30th	-	NatWest	Bank Fees	17.45	*
Jul	15th	-	NatWest	Bankline Fees	27.50	*
	29th	-	NatWest	Bank Fees	9.53	*
Aug	15th	-	NatWest	Bankline Fees	27.50	*
	31st	-	NatWest	Bank Fees	7.29	*
Sep	15th	-	Bankline Fees	Bankline Fees	27.50	*
	29th	20	Danvm Drainage Commissioners	Legal Advice - Powers of Entry	178.66	*
		19	Doncaster East IDB	Cardnet Fees	28.28	*
	30th	-	NatWest	Bank Fees	7.98	*
<b>Total Amount of all Payments</b>					<b>359.19</b>	
<b>* Total Amount of Cheques sent out signed by the Clerk Only</b>					<b>359.19</b>	

## 3.4 Audit

### 3.4.1 Internal Audit

The internal audit of the Board's financial statements and accounts is complete. The report is attached at Appendix A.

### **3.4.2 Internal Audit Review Meeting**

The internal audit review meeting will take place on 28 November 2016 at JBA Consulting, Epsom House, Doncaster commencing at 10:00am.

### **3.4.3 External Audit**

The external audit of the Board's financial statements is now complete. The auditor raised no issues or comments.

## **3.5 Financial Regulations**

### **3.5.1 Financial Regulations & Tillington Marshes Eel Pass**

In May/ June 2016 a repair/replacement was identified for the eel pass on Tillington Marshes and a quotation was obtained from Aquatic Control Engineering Ltd. to supply and install a replacement. Although 100% Grant in Aid funding the quotation was above £2,000 in which the Clerk has the authority to approve.

Revised Financial Regulations permitting the Clerk to authorise up to £5,000 had been prepared but not yet approved by the Board. A copy of the new draft regulations was issued along with these papers.

Approval was sought electronically by email through the Chairman and Members for the revised Financial Regulations and support was received from the following Members:

Cllr F Beatty  
Cllr R Cooke  
Cllr A Harp  
Mr A Parrot  
Mr J Hilderley  
Cllr R Sutherland

Based upon the support and abstentions the change was approved and requires ratification from the Board.

The board support the alteration to Financial Regulations Section 11 P4, to permit the clerk to spend up to £5000, up from £2000.

## 3.6 Budgets

### 3.6.1 Budget Comparison for the Year Ended 31 March 2016

Approved Estimate £	2016/17		20 October 2016		2016/17
	£	Actual To Date £	£	£	
				<b>INCOME</b>	
10,841		9,565		<b>Drainage Rates on Agricultural Land:-</b> 6.24p in £ on AV of £173,729	88.23%
				<b>Special Levy:-</b>	
97,699		48,850		Stafford Borough Council 6.24p in £ on AV of £1,565,683	50.00%
3,504		3,504		South Staffs District Council 6.24p in £ on AV of £56,159	100.00%
10,000		3,215		EA Grant - Doxey & Tillington Marshes SSSI WLMP	32.15%
<u>200</u>	122,244	<u>321</u>	65,454	Interest etc.	160.37%
				<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
8,900		6,476		Flood Defence Levy	72.77%
				<b>Conservation Budget:</b>	
3,000		0		Biodiversity Action Plan	0.00%
10,000		3,215		Doxey & Tillington Marshes SSSI WLMP	32.15%
72,500		36,521		Maintenance	50.37%
<u>23,000</u>	<u>117,400</u>	<u>11,788</u>	<u>58,001</u>	Administration	51.25%
	4,844		7,453	Surplus - (Deficit)	153.86%
	<u>126,897</u>		<u>130,908</u>	Balance Brought Forward	103.16%
	<u>6,000</u>		<u>0</u>	Transfer to Doxey & Tillington Marshes SSSI WLMP ACC	
	<b><u>125,741</u></b>		<b><u>138,361</u></b>	<b>Balance Carried Forward</b>	110.04%



## 4. Engineer's Report

### Recommendation(s):

- To note the information contained in this report

### 4.1 Asset Management

#### 4.1.1 Ordinary Watercourses

No performance or maintenance issues have arisen that require the attention of the Board and Ordinary Watercourse maintenance is currently 97% complete for the 2016/17 season with completion anticipated over the next few weeks.

#### 4.1.2 Main River

Further to the contact made by the new EA Area Manager we have emailed the EA Operations Managers as follows:



Please extend our thanks to the new Area Manager for contacting the Sow & Penk IDB with the information below.

It would be greatly appreciated if we could arrange a meeting in the near future to discuss Main River maintenance, precepts, and partnership working between ourselves through Public Sector Cooperation Agreements (PSCAs). As a Shire Group, we now have approx. 6 IDBs signed up to PSCAs, who are either considering or have completed maintenance on Main River.

The Sow & Penk IDB considered the attached presentation which was kindly informed by the EA back in February 2015, and Minuted as below. We understand that hydraulic modelling work was being undertaken on some Main Rivers associated with the IDB and we were awaiting any key outputs/ information from that modelling to assist the IDB in considering the benefits of maintaining Main River for key arteries of the Ordinary Watercourse system.

Now that PSCAs are available we would welcome a meeting with you when the modelling outputs are available to further discuss the opportunities for the IDB.

#### Engineers Report

The Engineer's Report, copies of which had been circulated to members with the last meeting papers, was considered and adopted.

**2015.14 Environment Agency precept** – The Engineer provided a presentation on EA precept in response to Minute 2014.69 with information kindly provided by the Environment Agency. This included an overview of where the IDB Drainage District falls into EA Flood Risk Management Systems, what the EA Maintenance/Operations allocations were in 2014/15 and what monies were applied for in 2015/16 (grant in aid and precept), that EA focus is on High Risk Systems such as Stafford, and that the IDB precept represented approx. 7% (£8,635) of EA spend after highland water deductions.

The presentation also covered what and where monies were spent by the EA, and highlighted an opportunity for the IDB to discuss works in Main River in the future with no precept payment. The Public Sector Cooperation Agreement will be key to achieving this and is currently being reviewed nationally by the EA in terms of IDB liability for any works. Once this has been reviewed further discussions would be held with the EA.

The Engineer offered two examples of potential Main River works; one on the River Sow from Eccleshall (where the IDB currently maintain Copmere Drain and Brocton Brook upstream) over 7km (estimated cost between £6-12k), and Silkmore Drain flowing into Rickerscote (where the IDB currently maintain Silkmore Drain upstream) over 1.5km (estimated cost between £1-2k).

Kind regards,

**For and on behalf of the Shire Group of Internal Drainage Boards,**

**Paul Jones** BSc (Hons) MSc (Eng)  
*Engineer to the Board*

Key slides from the presentation referred to in this email from the Board meeting in February 2015 are shown below for reference.

## Engineers Report Precept: Overview (Official Sensitive)



- **IDB Drainage District** predominately falls within **3 Flood Risk Management Systems**
- EA allocations in **2014/15** were **£209k** for **Maintenance/Operations** (incl. Precept) over the 3 Systems
- EA bid for **2015/16** is **£131k** for **Maintenance/Operations** (incl. Precept) over the 3 Systems
- EA focus is on **High Risk System of Stafford**
- **IDB Precept** is **£8,635** (7% of EA spend) after Highland Water

## Engineers Report Precept: Work Undertaken



**Funding Covers the following activities:** **Examples of EA work in 2014/15:**

- Incident Response
- Inspection of all flood defence assets
- Operation of any penstock / sluice gates / trash screens / flap valves
- Mowing of flood banks
- Removal of blockages
- Spraying of invasive species on any flood defences.
- Vegetation management on the Sandyford Brook
- Vegetation management on the Feathers ton Brook
- Blockage removal on the Kinston Brook
- Dredging (desilting) and vegetation removal on sections of the Rising Brook
- Blockage removal on the River Sow
- Currently looking at tree work on River Sow ( by Asda)

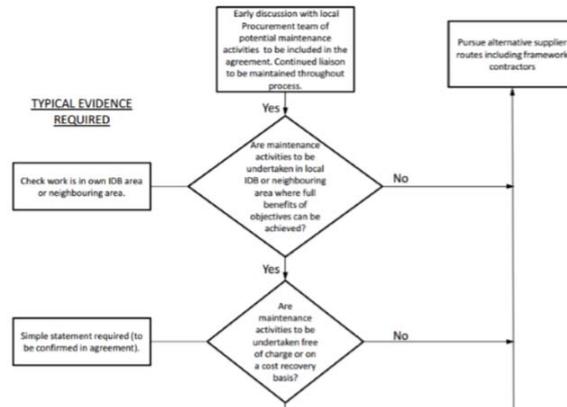
## Engineers Report Precept: Moving Forwards



- EA have suggested no IDB precept to allow the IDB to Works on Main River
- Public Sector Cooperation Agreement (PSCA)



### Public Sector Cooperation Agreements for IDB's to Undertake Maintenance Activities on Main River Assets – Checks for a Successful Working Arrangement

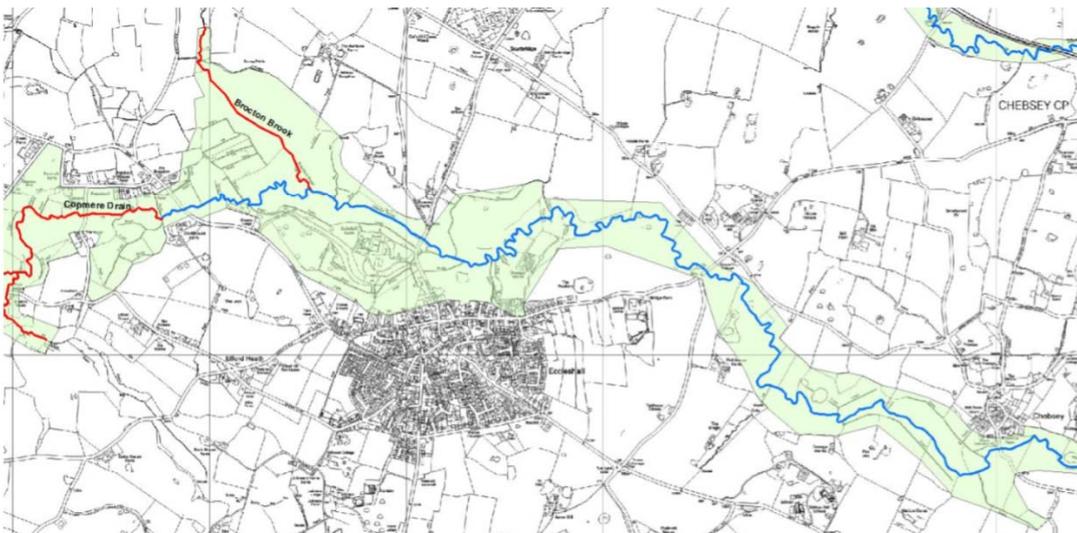


- 7 km River Sow, nr Ecceshall

## Engineers Report Precept: Moving Forwards



Potential Implications: 7 km River Sow, nr Eccleshall could cost **£6,000-£12,000**





#### 4.2.2 Land Drainage Act 1991 Section 23 and 66 (Byelaw) Consents

Our email address for consent applications is [consents@shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk](mailto:consents@shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk)

6 no. consent has been issued on behalf of the Board between 25<sup>th</sup> May and 25<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

Applicant	Location	IDB	Proposal	Permanent / Temporary Works	Approved/Refused/ other	Date
JBA (QTS Group / Network Rail)	Shallowford, LEC4 138 0841	SPIDB	Lining culvert under the railway line	Permanent	Application withdrawn	
JBA (QTS Group / Network Rail)	Shallowford, LEC4 138 0608	SPIDB	Lining culvert under the railway line	Permanent	Application withdrawn	
Jonathon Cook (J Murphy & Sons)	Doxey Bridge, The Ridgeway, Stafford	SPIDB	Grit-blast & paint the steel beams underneath Doxey Bridge	Temporary (6 weeks)	Approved	14.09.2016
Ross Armstrong (Jacobs)	Creswell Viaduct, M6 J14, Stafford	SPIDB	Ground Investigation works	Temporary	Approved	04.08.2016
David Singer (Staffordshire County Council)	Doxey Marshes between River Sow and Creswell Flash, Stafford	SPIDB	To create additional flood compensation storage upstream of the town centre, including realignment of a 400m length of the River Sow	Permanent & Temporary	Approved	22.09.2016
David Singer (Staffordshire County Council)	Broad Meadow Drain between Timberfields Road and Doxey Road, Stafford	SPIDB	The realignment of a 56m length of the Broad Meadow Drain	Permanent	Approved	22.09.2016

## **5. Health and Safety Report**

### **5.1 Health and Safety Boards Contractor**

#### **5.1.1 Accidents and Incidents**

There have been no accidents or incidents to report since the last meeting.

## 6. Environmental Adviser's Report

**Recommendation:**

- Members note information contained in the Report

### 6.1 Legislation

Nothing to report.

### 6.2 BAP 2015-2020

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust BAP implementation on behalf of the Board can be viewed at Appendix B.

## 7. Any other business

## 8. Date of next meeting

## 9. APPENDIX A: Internal Audit Report

The report is show over the following pages.

## **Sow & Penk Internal Drainage Board**

### **Report of the Internal Auditor on the internal controls of the Drainage Board for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.**

Dear Sirs

We have audited the Internal Control System of Sow & Penk Internal Drainage Board operational for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

#### **1) Scope and Responsibility**

The Board is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Board also has a duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvements in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Board is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Boards functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

#### **2) The Purpose of the System of Internal Control**

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Boards policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

#### **3) The Internal Control Environment**

The key elements of the internal control environment, which the Board have addressed, are in ensuring that they:

- Prepare its accounting statements in the way prescribed by law.
- Make proper arrangements and accept responsibility for safeguarding public money and resources in its charge.
- Have only done things that it has the legal power to do and has conformed to codes of practice and standards in the way it has done so.
- Have given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the board's accounts.
- Considered the financial and other risks it faces and has dealt with them properly
- Arranged for a competent person, independent of the board's financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether these meet the needs of the board and reviewed the impact of this work.
- Responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
- Disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.

#### **4) Review of Effectiveness**

JBA Consulting are Clerks to the Board. Certain procedures are prescribed by statute. Our internal audit has covered the procedures and controls exercised by JBA over the Drainage Board. Our audit has been carried out on a test basis.

An assessment of the risks facing the organisation is being updated by JBA on an ongoing basis. This is then discussed with ourselves and reviewed on an annual basis and updated further as appropriate. The risk assessment is summarised using the following heads:

- ❑ Governance
- ❑ Operational
- ❑ Financial
- ❑ External
- ❑ Compliance with Law and Regulation

The risks identified are categorised depending on the assessment of their impact on the organisation and their likelihood of occurrence. Each area is been attributed an:

- ❑ A Denoting immediate action, or
- ❑ B Denoting consider action and have a contingency plan, or
- ❑ C/D Consider action or keep under periodic review.

The risk assessments are also currently reviewed and discussed as part of the 'Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Audit' meeting, which currently takes place annually in November.

In addition further work has been carried out in establishing the administrative and accounting procedures in terms of segregation of duties and recording of financial information.

### **Specific Internal audit review work**

The following areas relevant to Sow & Penk Internal Drainage Board were reviewed in detail in line with the principal of ensuring the standards and characteristics of an effective internal control system are evident:-

The Board's governance arrangements should include and ensure

- There is clarity of purpose and strategic direction.
- They act within their legal framework.
- Roles of officers and board members are clear and documented.
- Decisions are transparent and clearly reported
- Conduct of Board members and officers is of a high standard.

The Board's decision-making framework should include and ensure

- The board has a scheme of rules, including standing orders, which have been subject to minister approval.
- The make up of the board is in accordance with the land drainage act 1991.
- Adequate minutes of all board meetings are maintained.
- Adequate financial regulations are in place and followed.
- No conflicts of interest are evident.

### **Budgets**

The budget process undertaken by the board is reviewed in detail during the course of our internal audit work. This incorporates both the process itself and details comparison between the budget set and actual income and expenditure. This culminates in the calculation of any variances and then ascertaining the reasoning and explanations for these variances.

This is underpinned by the budgetary work undertaken on an ongoing basis during the course of the year by the clerks to the board as follows:

- On a monthly basis the sage 200 software is exported through to the formal accounts produced in order to ensure all items of income and expenditure are included.

- The figures from the accounts are then pulled through to the approved budget statement and a percentage comparison from budget to actual is calculated automatically on the spreadsheet.
- This is then reviewed fully by the clerk to assess the ongoing budgetary position.
- Reporting to the board can then be undertaken promptly as necessary.
- Within the November meeting all budget reports and reviews updated at that point in time are included within the meeting papers for discussion and ultimate approval.

## 5) Significant Internal Control Issues

In general, the Drainage Board is underpinned by a sound management and operational structure through the offices of JBA Consulting.

The following areas are identified as risk areas:

### **Risk areas**

#### ***Comments in relation to specific areas highlighted above***

#### **Decision-making: -**

The percentage of income contributed in respect of the special levy for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 represents around 82% of total income and is therefore the majority of the board's income.

At the June 2015 meeting there were 4 appointed and 4 elected members present (50% appointed member percentage), at the November 2015 there were 5 appointed and 5 elected members present (50% appointed member percentage) and at the February 2016 meeting 4 appointed and 3 elected members present (57% appointed member percentage).

The overall makeup of the board is in accordance with the Land Drainage Act 1991 and based on the attendance data of the above meetings, decisions are in general being taken by an appropriate board make up in line with the percentage of special levy income.

Brodericks GBC  
Chartered Certified Accountants and  
Registered Auditors  
Melbourne House  
27 Thorne Road  
Doncaster  
DN1 2EZ

Dated: 20<sup>th</sup> June 2016

## **10. APPENDIX B: Staffordshire Wildlife Trust BAP implementation report**

A copy of the report can be seen over the following pages.

## Sow and Penk IDB BAP monitoring

### Survey Results 2016



*Drainage ditch at Seighford Moor - SWT*



## **Outline methodology**

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) carried out surveys of watercourses within the Sow and Penk IDB BAP area in September 2016 to monitor the population of Flowering Rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) and Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*). The surveys set out to contribute toward the current baseline to provide an update and re-visit areas where there is already data to monitor change.

In total, 29.54km of watercourse was surveyed throughout the IDB area, 7.53km via terrestrial bankside surveys where surveyors walked along the banks of the watercourse and visually scanned for signs of *A. amphibius* and *B. umbellatus*. 22.01km was covered by in-channel surveys carried out on canoe (See maps 1 & 2).

## **Survey**

Surveys were carried out in September 2016, both *B. umbellatus* and *A. amphibius* would both still be present and visible at this time.

Survey was originally planned for earlier in the year, but high rainfall and generally poor weather conditions over the desired survey time of May-July meant that surveys were postponed due to high water levels and the low likelihood of seeing any signs of *A. amphibius*. Furthermore *B. umbellatus* would likely have been submerged beneath the water during periods of high water. September was preferred as the river levels had dropped and vegetation was beginning to die back providing a more ideal opportunity to observe signs of *A. amphibius* whilst they are still active. Vegetative material of *B. umbellatus* is still present at this time of year and would therefore be visible throughout the surveys.

## **Survey results**

No evidence of *A. amphibius* was seen throughout survey despite conditions being suitable on all days. There were some restrictions, particularly around Seighford (SJ888252) as the watercourses had been barbed wire fenced to 2-3m in some cases, meaning access to the top of the banks of the watercourse was limited to look for field signs, these areas will be revisited in future to gain better access to the watercourse. It was clear that in much of the upper Sow and Penk there is still plenty of suitable *A. amphibius* habitat despite the lack of any field signs.

Flowering Rush was not observed on any of the sections of watercourses surveyed, however the riparian flora in general appeared to be healthy in all watercourses surveyed.

Despite not observing either of the target species, observations of a number of other species were made throughout the surveys. Branched Bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*), Reed Canary Grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), Reed Sweet-grass (*Glyceria maxima*) and Floating Sweet-grass (*Glyceria fluitans*) were growing frequently in the margins throughout both the Sow and Penk; stretches of the River Sow also possessed some significant patches of Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*). Nettles (*Urtica dioica*) were frequent on the banks of the watercourses.

The upper River Sow was heavily vegetated by *P. arundinacea*, *G. maxima* and *G. fluitans* with very little visible open water, a number of Willow trees had also fallen into the watercourse. Several fish were observed swimming in eddies and slower flowing water.

Numerous fauna species associated with riparian habitats were observed throughout the course of survey. Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) were numerous throughout the IDB area with more than 6 observed on a short section of the Penk; a flock of approximately 20 Lapwing were observed on a field directly adjacent to the River Sow near Brancote sewage works (SJ958220). Several Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*) were seen on the upper River Sow, particularly in the more dense stands of *G. maxima* and *P. arundinacea*. The watercourses appear to be healthy with plenty of marginal vegetation and the additional casual sightings suggest that there is sufficient habitat to support a good range of species throughout the IDB area.

Invasive species were infrequent throughout the canoe surveys, Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) was present in a few small patches on both the Sow and Penk. No other invasive species associated with watercourses were observed through the surveys.

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**IDB survey areas (North)  
 September 2016**

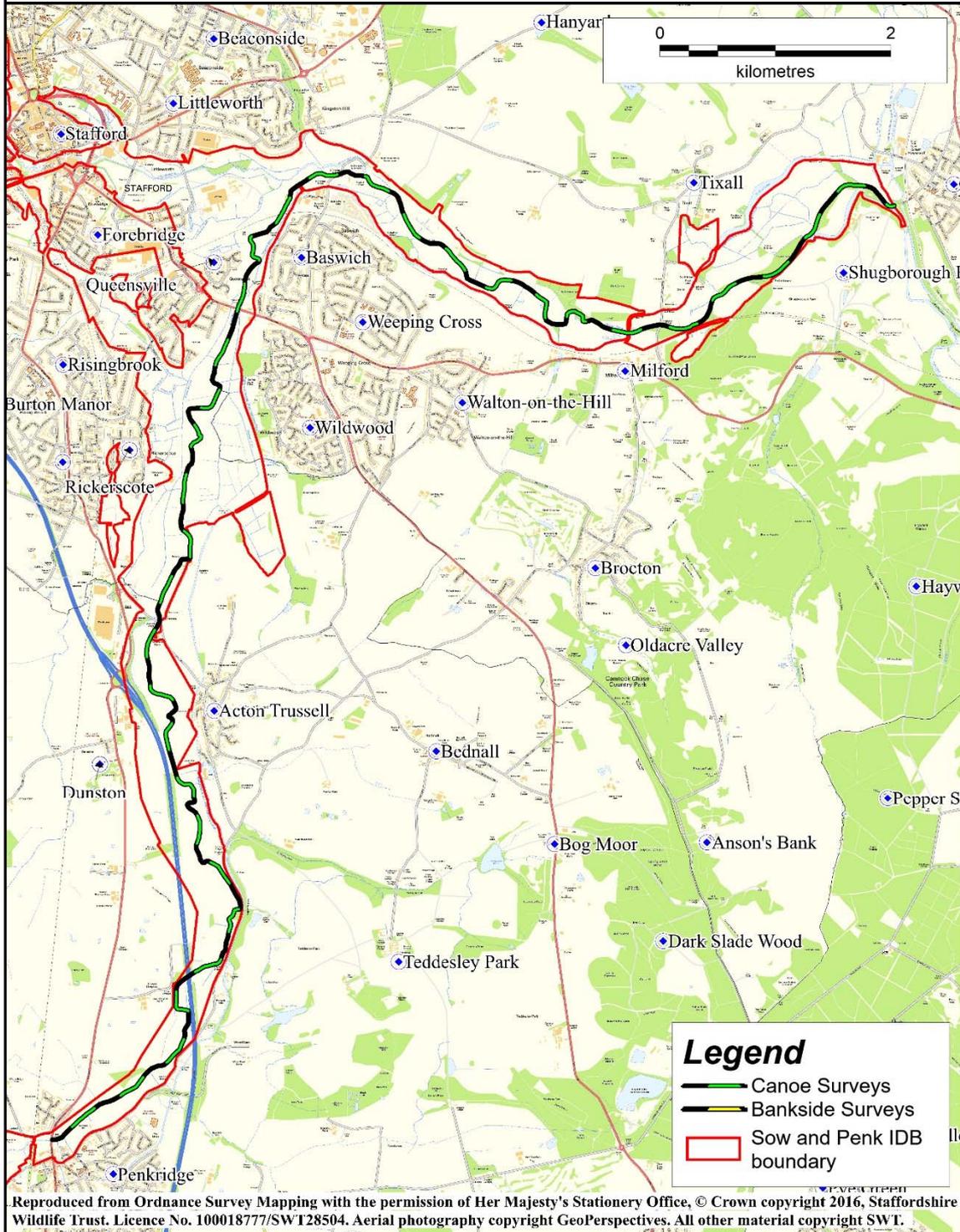


Map 1: Sections of watercourse surveyed as part of Sow and Penk Internal Drainage Board (IDB) 2016 (North)

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**IDB survey areas (South)  
 September 2016**



Map 2: Sections of watercourse surveyed as part of Sow and Penk Internal Drainage Board (IDB) 2016 (South)



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