

1. Governance

1.1 Apologies

1.2 Declaration of Interest

1.3 Public Forum

1.4 Minutes of Meeting 28 January 2026

Present

MEMBER	28.5.24	19.11.24	29.1.25	18.6.25	19.11.25	28.1.26
Frances Beatty FB	√	A	A	√	A	A
Graham Bower GB	√	√	A	√	A	√
Neil Brown NB	A	√	√	A	√	A
Paul Edwards PE	√	A	√	√	√	√
Victor Kelly VK	√	√	√	√	√	
Angela Loughran AL	√	√	A	√	√	A
Brendon McKeown BMK	√	√	A	√	√	A
Anthony Parrott AP	√	A	√	√	√	√
Julie Read JR				New	√	√
Jeff Sim JS	√	A	√	√	√	A
Scott Spencer SS		A		Resigned	Resigned	
Ray Sutherland - Chair	√	√	√	√	√	√
Tim Williams TW	√	A	A	√	A	√
Mark Winnington MW – Vice Chair	√	√	A		√	√
Other Attendees						
Phil Bates (SBC Officer) PB	√	√	√	√	√	A
Anne Hobbs AH				√		
Member of the Public				√		

Attended √	Apologies A	No Apologies
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In attendance on behalf of JBA Consulting, Clerk, Engineer and Environmental Adviser:

Craig Benson	Clerk
Paul Jones	Engineer
David Blake	Senior Finance Officer

Chair advised Members of a recent email he had received from Angela Loughran with regards a health issue. Clerk to arrange for some flowers to be sent on behalf of the Chair and Board.

GOVERNANCE

Apologies for Absence

2026.1 Apologies were received from Frances Beatty, Angela Loughran, Brendan McKeown, Neil Brown, Jeff Sim and Phil Bates.

Declaration of Interest

2026.2 None.

Public Forum

2026.3 No representations from Members of the Public had been received.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

2026.4 Minutes of the last meeting held on 19 November 2025 were considered, proposed as a true record by JR and seconded by PW.

Matters Arising

2026.5 None.

Complaints and FOI

2026.6 No complaints or FOI had been received since the last meeting.

CLERK'S REPORT

Information for note with the following added.

2026.7 Policy – Clerk advised of the minor changes to the GDPR policies with approval proposed by MW and seconded by TW with All in favour.

2026.8 Legislation – Information noted.

2026.9 ADA Conference – Information noted.

2026.10 Stafford County Show – Information noted but Clerk added will ensure apply in time for next year. AP asked if consideration had been made for a place on the balcony inside the hall. Discussions took place with TW to provide further information to the Clerk for Officers to investigate.

FINANCIAL REPORT

2026.11 Rating Report – FO advised current outstanding balance of £739.91 equating to 94% collected with £329 currently with Solicitors.

2026.12 Proposed Rate Removal – FO advised Members that land had been transferred to special levies with arrears of £4.05 needing Board approval to remove. **Proposed by GB seconded by TW and All in favour.**

2026.13 Schedule of Payments - Approval proposed by AP and seconded by PE with All in favour.

2026.14 Audit – Information noted.

2026.15 Risk Register – FO took Members through with approval proposed by PE and seconded by JR with All in favour.

2026.16 Rates and Special Levies for Year Ending 31 March 2027 – FO took Members through advising that due to increased maintenance costs there would be a £10,000 increase against the budget which would be offset by reserves. This would result in a break-even balance with a revised reserve level of £62,949 equating to 41% with the Boards target set at 50%. FO then advised of the budget for the new year stating that with the rate at the current level this would generate a deficit whilst increasing the rate by 1pence would result in a surplus of £13,000 thereby increasing the reserves to £73,000, around a 45% reserve level. He therefore recommended an increase of 1p. Discussions took place with MW proposing an increase to 9p. FO then took Members through the Five-Year Forecast confirming that the proposed 9p increase would result in a surplus of £22,000 with the reserve level around 50%. **Further discussions took place with MW 9p proposal being seconded by PE and TW.**

Expenditure Budget Comparison for the year Ending 31 March 2027

The Board considered an Estimate of Income and Expenditure for the year ending 31st March 2027, copies of which had been previously circulated to members.

In accordance with Section 37 of the Land Drainage Act, the Board determined that aggregate annual value of chargeable properties in the district on the aggregate value of all other land in the district as at 31st December 2025 for the financial year beginning 1st April 2026 as follows:-

a) Aggregate annual value of chargeable properties	£ 1,795,997
b) Aggregate value of all other land	£ 164,651

It was agreed that for the purpose of defraying costs, charges and expenses etc. incurred by the Board under the Land Drainage Act 1991 for the period 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027, and in pursuance of the Internal Drainage Board (Finance) Regulations 1992, that the Board make a drainage rate for their district in respect of agricultural land and agricultural buildings and a Special Levy as follows:-

The amount of the Board's expenses to be met by drainage rates was £14,818 by way of an Occupier's rate of 9p in the £ on the basis of the annual value of agricultural land and agricultural buildings in the district.

The amount of the Board's expenses to be met by Special Levies was:-

Stafford Borough Council	£ 156,288
South Staffordshire District Council	£ 5,351

The Chairman and Clerk were authorised to seal the rate and the Special Levy on the Local Authority in accordance with the Act and the Finance Regulations.

The Clerk, or their representatives, were authorised to negotiate and carry out proceedings for the recovery of any rates unpaid.

Members agreed that if additional expenditure is required above the agreed budget, it is taken from balances.

2026.17 Five Year Budget - Information noted as discussed above.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Eng advised his report was for information with the following added.

2026.18 Hydraulic Modelling – Eng confirmed that the EA model was now complete (which included outputs from the Board model) and final outputs had been presented to the Trent RFCC on 22 January. These highlighted the need for the defences on the River Sow in the centre of Stafford to be increased over the next 10 years. The EA were more confident with the outputs as they had all river gauges calibrated although there were a number of gauges out of action which they have raised to both regional and national level. Outputs are available and accessible now to all. Eng confirmed he had spoken directly with Ian Cook at the EA and he was to send some of the outputs to him however, Ian Cook had suggested a joint presentation could be given to the Board in Summer with invitations also sent to representatives from Lead Local Flood Authorities.

2026.19 Main River Maintenance – Eng advised that now the EA model was available the plan was to look at low priority main river systems to see if the Board could assist in any way, i.e. the EA fund the works for the Board contractor to undertake or another yet to be agreed scenario. Eng raised the issue with Silkmore Drain near FJ tyres and confirmed the EA were aware of the issues and that he and Ian Cook were to have a separate meeting to discuss this matter. Eng confirmed the EA already had a quote from the IDB contractor so was hopeful this could be completed. Further discussions took place with TW asking if under the bridge at Radford Bank had been cleared out yet. Eng advised that this was a Highways issue and the Board had written to them numerous times and it was supposed to have been added to their jetting programme but as far as he was aware had not been done. TW asked if the Board could do the work and send them the bill. Eng said theoretically, the Board could choose to send them a notice but advised he would write to them again in the first instance to see what response was received before issuing a notice. He added that if they failed to respond to the notice it would then be a Board decision to undertake

the works and pursue a recharge, which could be pursued in Court but whether they would get reimbursed was questionable.

2026.20 Development on Acton Road – Eng advised of a proposed development south of Doxey Brook with the proposed developer believing they were building in Flood Zone 1 however, both the EA and IDB models indicated the area was in Flood Zone 3 and there was a dispute regarding the bridge under Acton Road. Eng advised the Board and EA had surveys which matched so they were in a strong position to deflect the developers demands. Further discussions took place.

HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

2026.21 Information noted.

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

Information noted with the following added.

2026.22 ADA Environment Day – Clerk confirmed that three Environment Officers from JBA would be attending and feedback would be provided at the next meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

2026.23 TW advised that since the biodigester at Penkrudge had not been working the River Penk had been running clean apart from when there was excessive flooding from the sewage works which turned it slightly brown however, when the biodigester was working it ran black.

2016.50 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

2026.24 17th June 2026, subject to change if attending the Stafford Show. The Clerk also proposed, due to the quick turnaround between meetings, to move the November meeting, apart from when an Election was due, to October suggesting any tour of the district could also be held then. **Chair requested it be added to the Agenda for discussion at the next meeting.**

1.5 Matters Arising Therefrom Not Elsewhere on the Agenda

1.6 Complaints and FOI

There have been no complaints or FOI requests since the last meeting.