**Melverley Internal Drainage Board**

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| R L R Jones FRICS FAAV |  | 17 Rowton Road |
| SURVEYOR & CLERK |  | Shrewsbury |
|  |  | SY2 6JA |
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| Our ref: RLRJ/JS/MIDB |  | Tel: 07980 785111  Email: rlrj@melverleyidb.org.uk |
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| Date: 26 June 2025 |  |  |

**REPORT ON MEETING**

**HELD AT KINNERLEY PARISH HALL**

**ON WEDNESDAY 25 JUNE 2025 AT 7:00 PM**

**Members Present:**

B Cambidge (Chairman)

B Edwards (Vice Chairman)

A Kynaston

R Frank

C Green

R Jones (Clerk and Surveyor)

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|  | **Apologies for Absence:** |
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|  | These were received from A Jones and D Ward. |
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|  | **To Approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 April 2025** |
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|  | On a motion proposed by C Green and seconded by B Edwards, the Board unanimously approved the Minutes. |
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|  | **Matters arising** |
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|  | The revised Policy Statement for the Board, which had been previously circulated to members, was adopted by the Board on a motion proposed by A Kynaston and seconded by R Frank. |
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|  | **Clerk’s Report** |
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| **4.1** | Bank Statement as at 24.03.25  Current Account £34322.61  Business Premium Account £10,375.19  Total **£44697.80** |
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| **4.2** | Receipts since 24.03.25.25 |
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|  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Rates Collected | £6778.10 | | Interest (2.6.25) | £34.46 | | Defra Grant Aid | £7143.51 | |  |  | |  |  | | Total: | **£7737.56** | |
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| **4.3** | Payments since 24.03.25 |
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| **4.4** | Bank balances as at 10.06.25 |
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|  | Current Account £37824.79  Business Premium account £10409.65  Total **£48234.44** |
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| **4.5** | 2024/25 Rates  Since the last meeting we have collected a further £6778.10 in rates making a total of £47958 11. This includes the MOD rates. Arrears now stand at approx. £8000.00 which is in line with the arrears level of previous years Some of this income came in after the financial year end and so our arrears look high for 2024/25 |
| **4.6** | DEFRA – Storm Damage and Asset Improvement Scheme |
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|  | The third instalment of grant (£925.00) under this scheme towards the cost of the Little Sarn argae and culvert renewal has been received. This makes £17325 in total covering the full cost. |
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| **4.7** | Planning |
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|  | There have been no planning applications requiring comment since my last report. |
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| **4.8** | Special Levy invoice for £10132.06 for 2025/26 has been submitted to Shropshire Council but has not yet paid. |
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| **4.9** | The Clerk reported that he had recently been informed that following the recent Shropshire Council elections, their representatives appointed to the Board are:  Duncan Borrowman – Lib Dem - Llanymynech and Pant Division  Ed Potter – Conservative – Loton Division  The Clerk would write to them welcoming them to the Board and explaining the work of the Board and invite them to the next Board meeting in October. |
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|  | **Surveyor’s Report** |
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|  | Proposed Maintenance Schedule – 2025/26 |
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|  | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | W/C No | Name | Length(m) | Last Cleaned | Remarks | |  |  |  |  |  | | 6 | Upper Turfmoor | 2425 | 4 yrs |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | 9 | Edgerley Sarn | 3260 | 4 yrs |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | 15 | Stonebridge to Penyparc | 680 | 4 yrs |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | 19 | Maesbrook Isaf | 3945 | 4 yrs | less 250m done in 2024 | |  |  |  |  |  | | 21 | Pwll | 900 | 4 yrs |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | 24 | Common Lane + Simms | 1740 | 6 yrs |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | 27 | Wern Llydan | 3050 | 4 yrs |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | 31 | Knockin Brook  (Kinnerley to Knockin) | 1560 | 4 yrs |  | |  |  |  |  |  | | 33 | Sheepwash (part) | 770 | 4 yrs |  | |  |  |  |  |  | |  | Total: | 18330m |  |  | |
|  | I also recommend that No 13 Melverley Brook between Argoed road bridge and Wernlas road bridge (1425m) should be desilted this year rather than only weed cut in light of the silt deposition found in the Melverley Brook downstream.  I anticipate this will cost circa £32500 which with £8000 towards work on the River Morda uses most of our 2025/26 maintenance budget figure |
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|  | Weir Brook bottom end |
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|  | As reported at the last meeting R Morris has completed the extensive tree cutting work on the Weir Brook downstream of Bontain Bridge as far as the sluice into the River Severn and cleaned this length removing a lot of silt which should improve its flow capacity.  His invoice for this work is £6481.25 + VAT. Whilst this may appear at first sight a lot of money, it is many years (15+) since any work was done on this length which measures  c. 1000m . It has put it in the condition it should be in and he has left the site in a very tidy state. |
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|  | New Cut |
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|  | R Morris has also completed scrub vegetation removal from one side of the New Cut and levelling the top of the argae along this watercourse. This will allow safe and easier machine access to brush the bank side going forward to stop woody scrub regrowth and to clean this channel .  The cost of this work was E3637.50+VAT |
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|  | Tan-y-sarn Road Bridge over the Weir Brook |
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|  | Some of the loose big stones placed as rock armour to the bridge abutments have fallen into the channel bed causing some obstruction to flow. These will be removed and placed on the bank slopes |
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|  | Cluee Road Watercourse |
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|  | It appears that a culvert under the field access gateway into the field recently purchased by A Evans has been crushed by weight of farm traffic, I will arrange for this to be replaced before autumn flood season and extra stone cover to the pipe provided . |
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|  | 2025/26 Maintenance programme |
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|  | This was approved at the last meeting and this is shown on the separate schedule sheet attached. |
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|  | R Frank reported that watercourse No 55 Redwith, 950m, which had been down for inclusion in the 2024 programme, had not been done. The Surveyor therefore confirmed that it would be added to the schedule for this year. |
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|  | **To Approve the 2024/25 Accounts** |
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|  | The Clerk went through these, which showed a modest surplus with our bank balance increasing by approximately £2,300 on the previous year. The accounts, on a motion proposed by C Green and seconded by A Kynaston, were unanimously approved. |
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|  | **Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25** |
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|  | The annual Governance Statement was approved by the Board. |
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|  | The Accounting Statements were approved by the Board and the Internal Audit Report from Nathan Baker of Balfours, was duty noted. The Chairman was authorised to sign the return, which would be submitted to the auditors PKF Littlejohn before 30 June. The public inspection period for the accounts would run for 30 days from 1 July 2025. |
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|  | **River Morda Grant Scheme for Environmental Work** |
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|  | Betton Cambidge and the Clerk reported on progress with Lucy Wood, the Environment Agency officer, now promoting the scheme. They explained that they had had a meeting with her approximately three weeks ago following receipt of her draft Business Case, which would go to the Environment Agency once finalised. We had also invited Kate Mayne and Sarah Faulkner of Faulkner and Mayne, agricultural business consultants, to the meeting. The Chair and Clerk felt that Faulkner and Mayne would be an ideal firm to employ to manage the scheme on behalf of the Board. They wee keen to be involved and were prepared to undertake a certain amount of work prior to approval of the scheme happening. We had stressed to them that the Board were not in a position to pay monies to them should the scheme not proceed. A precis of the Business Case had been sent to Board members prior to the meeting. From this, it was evident that only works of an environmental nature were included and the Project as it stands included no real benefit for the Internal Drainage Board in improving capacity of the Morda to reduce flooding. At the meeting with Lucy Wood, it had been stressed greatly, that the scheme needed to include something which would benefit the Board and their ratepayers in addition to the environmental benefits which the EA want to see from it.  The Clerk only today had received an email from Lucy Wood, which did at last indicate that they understood the need for some flood reduction measures as wanted by the Board.  A Jones had spoken with the Clerk prior to the meeting and was concerned that the Business Case, as written, did not include any works to the River Morda channel, which would benefit his and other farmers’ land. Similarly, D Ward had also written expressing a similar concern.  Lucy Wood wished to progress matters and had asked for a list of works which the Board would like to see on the Morda. The Surveyor had already prepared a list on the length downstream from A Jones’ farm bridge near The Wood down to the Llywntidmon to Dyffryd road bridge. We would check this and also add any further works which may be required, to include some desilting in areas.  The Chairman stressed that we were being used as something of a guinea pig by the EA in this scheme, in that they hoped to develop a template which they could use for other similar schemes elsewhere. We had consulted with ADA and they had stressed the importance that there must be something in it for the Drainage Board for it to be worthwhile for us to run the scheme  . After discussion, the Board, on a motion proposed by C Green and seconded by A Kynaston, approved that the Chair and Clerk continue discussions to develop this scheme, with a view to bringing a fully worked up proposal for the Board’s consideration at our next meeting in October. |
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|  | **Complaints** |
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|  | The Surveyor reported that he had received an email from Shropshire Council Drainage concerning a problem with water ponding on land near The Hendre. He would inspect shortly, but this was unlikely to involve a Board maintained ditch and would therefore be up to the riparian owners to resolve. |
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|  | **Correspondence** |
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|  | This was all mostly from the ADA News stream. |
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|  | 1. ADA welcomes further government funding to support floods recovery and water management. On 31 March the government pledged a further £16m towards helping internal drainage boards. 2. ADA responds to flood resilience in England enquiry. 3. The Environment Agency briefing: new national flood and coastal risk information for development planning. 4. BBC Shropshire news within the Telford and Wrekin area: monies have been secured to promote a wireless water butt tech scheme, which helps to limit flood risk. These water butts have electronic valves which can be activated by radio signals to release water prior to the arrival of heavy rain. 5. Baroness Brown, Chair of Adaptation Committee, says the country is not prepared for climate impacts. 6. The Corry review recommends a number of changes to the way environmental regulation operates. The system of governance needs to work for both growth and the environment. 7. Exemptions Reform to the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) regulations 2016. It is hoped these changes will simplify matters for IDB working. 8. Local audit reform: the government is responding to the consultation to overhaul local audit in England. There was pressure to increase the current £25,000 threshold for authorities to seek exemption from the limited assurance review. 9. Flood and Coast Conference Exhibition was held on 3 to 5 June at Telford International Centre. The Clerk had attended on two days, having obtained a free pass through ADA. He highlighted a talk from MPs Julia Buckley, Shrewsbury, Shaun Davies, Telford and the Chair of the APPG, He was recently elected, but had had 25 years’ experience in the water and drainage industry and certainly spoke with knowledge and authority. The Clerk also heard the minister Emma Hardy outline the government’s funding proposals for flood defence measures. 10. ADA have produced a new Good Governance A5 booklet, which has updated the previous edition produced about five years ago. Copies of the guide were distributed to members at the meeting. |
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|  | **Any Other Business** |
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|  | The Chair and Clerk reported on the ADA Marches branch meeting, which had been held at Gloucester on 4 June. This had been hosted by Lower Severn IDB. We visited a pumping station which had recently been replaced on the banks of the Severn together with another pumping station, which it was proposed to replace and a tidal flap leading to the tidal section of the River Severn. The cost of the new pumping stations, to comply with the eel regulations, was quite frightening; a figure of £1m being mentioned for what seemed to be a very small pump for a very modest watercourse. The tidal flap viewed was similar to a very small version of our New Cut sluice doors. In the afternoon, the Clerk and Chair had sat in on their Board meeting, which was helpful and interesting. The LS IDB gains a great majority of its funds from special levies from Councils and at the meeting it was the Council members who were most vocal. |
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|  | The date of the next meeting would be Wednesday 15 October at 7:30 pm. |
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| There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 8:30 pm.  Following this, members travelled to and viewed the Little Sarn culvert replacement and argae which had been rebuilt with the DEFRA grant aid covering its full cost. | |
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Signed: .............................................................

Dated: ..............................................................