

STRINE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD COMBINED ORDINARY & AGM

Held on Monday 12th April 2021 via Zoom

In attendance – Bruce Udale, (Chair), John Belcher (vice chair), Isabel Moseley, Chris Holman, Harry Gregory, Neil Phillips, Kate Mayne (clerk).

Election of board – a full election was not required this year, however 2 co-opted members -Chris Holman & Neil Phillips were considered for full board membership. John Belcher proposed that they be voted on as full members and this was seconded by Harry Gregory. All members of the board were in agreement. Chris Holman & Neil Phillips were duly voted in as full board members of the Strine IDB.

1. **Apologies** – None received
2. **Public participation** – no members of the public were in attendance
3. **Declarations of interest** – Isabel Moseley, Bruce Udale, John Belcher, Richard Hockenhull for maintenance invoices received.
4. **Consideration of minutes of the previous meeting 11th January 2021** – the board considered the minutes of the previous meeting and John Belcher proposed that they be accepted as a true record. This was seconded by Isabel Moseley
5. **Matters arising from the minutes** – The clerk has started mapping slips and areas of issue onto the Land App. Work is on-going. All other matters arising dealt with elsewhere in the agenda.
6. **Accounts for payment** –

Belcher	£1749.60 & £388.80
Hockenhull	£2688.00
Sydney Farms	£1982.40 & £8637.60
WH Gittins (clerk)	£783.84

Neil Phillips proposed that the accounts presented be settled & this was seconded by Chris Holman.
The chair discussed the new online BACS payment system which is now in use. To satisfy auditors we will need accounts for payment to be signed off by a member of the board before final bank authorisation by John Belcher. The clerk will implement this approach for all payments.
7. **Financial report** – the clerk presented cash flow accounts for the year ending 31st March 2021. Current cash in hand = £65,385.23. The cash flow includes all invoices for maintenance work undertaken in this financial year. Both income and expenditure were up on the previous year. Maintenance costs were up by over £3,000. The board discussed this difference, and it was noted that wet weather in the previous winter had hampered work, so the current cost is more inline with completion of all work by the board.
The clerk pointed out that income and expenditure look likely to exceed £25,000 this year which triggers additional audit requirement.
Rates – The clerk presented the current situation regarding rates recovery. There are a number of outstanding payments from more than one year which the board discussed. ACTION: Clerk will recover funds through small claims court where necessary after final warning letters are sent.
The clerk raised a query over 2 rate payers at the upper end of the Newport Strine who are currently charged rates despite their neighbours being zero rated in this area. The channel

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13/04/21

B. Udale
14/4/2021

there has not been maintained by the board for some years, due to the impacts of Sever Trent abstraction in the area. The board felt it was reasonable to zero rate these land owners, though it was noted that work may be required in the future to help with some flooding issues up towards Newport.

8. **Maintenance report 2020-2021 & management of slips** – The board completed all the work they planned to undertake. The Newport Strine through Bridge Farm was not cleared this year; Steve Belcher is keeping an eye on this section and will inform the board when work needs carrying out next. Bruce has worked on some slips on the Newport Strine on Andrew Crow's land, and John B has been attending to slips elsewhere in the drainage district. A large slip on Phillips's land will be investigated this year to see what can be done to stabilise it. The chair and clerk visited Alan Smith from the Hincks, who has been experiencing some severe flooding in the last few winters. Mr Smith usually contracts Banks's to clear this section and re-charge the board. This didn't get done this winter. Mr Smith is concerned about culvert pipes holding up water. The chair has asked Mr Smith to employ Banks's as soon as possible in the autumn to clear a few blockages in the brook here. The board will then be able to better assess the capacity of the culverts. ACTION: clerk to get back in touch with Mr Smith in July.
9. **Complaint regarding board activity** – On 25th February 2021 the board received complaints from a number of organisations (Environment Agency, Shropshire Wildlife Trust and ADA) regarding work being carried out on the Wall Brook off Buttery Lane. The complaints all came from one originator who borders the brook. At the point at which the complaints were initially received none of the organisations mentioned had been on site. Work was in response to a request made to the board by Harry Gregory, riparian owner, around 3 years ago to attend to blockages on this section of the Wall. The board was turned away 2 years ago when it requested access to the neighbour's land (the complainant), to undertake some clearance work; and the board was told that the landowner would make arrangements to do necessary clearance work themselves. The board duly offered to reimburse the cost of any work undertaken. No work was evident and material accumulating in the brook was having a negative impact to land drainage above the section in question, so the board again made arrangements to undertake some channel clearance. On this occasion (February 2021) the board was stopped by the complainant the day before work was due to commence. Arrangements were therefore made to clear the channel from Harry Gregory's side of the brook. The work required the removal of a number of scrubby bushes to gain access to the channel; removal of some branches which were hanging in the channel and removal of debris and silt in a few locations. The clerk received phone calls from the EA on the morning of 25th February threatening to call the police if work did not stop immediately. Channel work halted until the EA were on site to inspect. The EA could not find any major cause for concern when they visited the site and this was reported back to the clerk later that day. One specific issue raised was around a badger sett next to the channel. The contractor was not in breach of any rules with regard to this; operating at an appropriate distance away. The board discussed this incident at length and agreed that it remains as important as ever to clear channels in the drainage district due to increasing pressure on the whole system from flashy urban generated water. John B suggested the board needs to consider the suitability of all our drainage assets for the future, in light of climate change.

10. **Maintenance plan: 2021 – 2022** – all contractors are happy to continue maintaining the same channels this winter (clerk confirmed with Richard Hockenhull after the meeting). There is a length at the Hincks which was not cleared last winter, but will be included in the maintenance plans for winter 2021-22.
11. **Severn Trent, Strine Low Flows study** – The clerk has been in touch with Guy Pluckwell (EA) regarding the mitigation work STW wish to carry out in the Strine district in response to findings in their Low Flow Study. We understand STW want to create wetlands, though as yet the clerk has received no further information. The clerk has been following up on a number of leads with potential projects to put forward. The board expressed the importance of staying informed on this, to ensure any initiatives do not impact on ratepayers who are not participating. One area where STW intervention may help is on the upper reaches of the Newport Strine, where abstraction has created a complex challenge of peat drying out in places and flooding occurring elsewhere. ACTION: the clerk will keep the board informed on activity.
12. **Health & safety** – The clerk refreshed the board on a number of Health & Safety matters after watching some useful webinar presentations on the ADA website. The webinars cover responsibilities of the board, H & S leadership and risk assessments. Though the board does not employ >5 members of staff it is appropriate to review the need for risk assessments from contractors and for the IDB itself. The clerk has identified a Risk assessment refresher course available online. The board agreed it would be appropriate for the clerk to undertake this course and to look into risk assessments for contractors.
13. **Correspondence & meeting reports** – The clerk attended a Shropshire Middle Severn CaBA meeting in March, where there was mention of funding for the River Tern. ACTION: clerk will keep the board informed on this. STW funding for work in the Strine was also discussed (see point 11).
Neil Phillips and the clerk looked at the MOD suds feature with TWC, in response to concerns about the amount of water flowing down the ditch from there.
14. **Report from Lucinda Lycett** – not in attendance
15. **Any other business** – John Belcher expressed his concern that the SUDS features being installed by developers are not properly understood and therefore not properly installed. The board discussed concerns over SUDS features which has been raised with TWC.
16. **Date of the next meeting** – 14th June 2021 at Kynnersley Village Hall (unless otherwise advertised).

Board members:

Mr B Udale - chair
Mr N Phillips
Mr R Hockenhull
Mr C Holman

Mr J Belcher – vice chair
Mr CH Gregory
Mr A Crow
Mrs I Moseley

Y. R. Mclach
14/6/2021