**Rea Internal Drainage Board**

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| R L R Jones FRICS FAAV |  | 75 Rowton Road |
| SURVEYOR & CLERK |  | Shrewsbury |
|  |  | SY2 6JA |
|  |  |  |
|  |  | Tel: 07980 785111 |
|  |  | Direct Line: |
| 1 November 2019 |  | Fax: |

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT VICTORY HALL, YOCKLETON**

# ON THURSDAY 31 OCTOBER 2019

Members Present:

A Bebb (Chairman)

C Sandells

A Jones

J Morris

J Dale

B Roberts

D Evans

N Manning

Councillor R Evans

R L R Jones (Clerk & Surveyor)

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|  | **Apologies for absence** | |
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|  | These were received from Councillor N Hignett | |
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|  | **Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 20 June 2019** | |
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|  | These were approved by the members and the Chairman signed them as a correct record. | |
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|  | **Matters Arising** | |
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|  | There were none, other than those covered by agenda items. | |
|  | **Maintenance Report** | |
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|  | The Surveyor reported that Matthew Bishop had undertaken all the work included in his 2019 maintenance contract. He had completed the week cutting and de-silting work on the Rea Brook was very opportune in the light of the recent extreme flooding event.  The September meeting had been an outdoor walk along the uppermost lengths of the Rea Brook from Wilmington drain down to Lea Bridge and saw the extreme week growth and high water level, which was unusual for the time of year and the real need for the week cutting work. | |
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|  | **Clerk’s Report** | |
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|  | Bank balance as at 4 October 2019 - £27,639.27  Payments since last meeting - £2,682,25, as per attached schedule  Receipts since last meeting - £8,998.44, as per attached schedule | |
|  | Some £7,798.91 of rates had been collected. This represented circa 73% of our total. | |
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|  | Arrears stood at £2,924. However, if the five largest arrears were paid, another £1,850 would come in leaving the arrears at £1,073, meaning 90% had been collected. | |
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|  | A response from the solicitor acting for the Reps of Purslow had been received regarding the debt and this would be paid when funds were obtained from the property sale. | |
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|  | Low Value Rate Demands | |
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|  | The Clerk explained that he had spoken with the Chief Executive at Water Management Alliance who provide the draining rating system that the Board now utilise. Their method for dealing with low value demands was to keep the ratepayers on the books and thus be liable for payment of rates. However, they only submit a demand once the rates accrued reach a threshold figure. Thus, they would not necessarily receive a demand every year. The Clerk had suggested a figure of £2.50 and it was on this basis that the rate demands had been sent out this year. The Clerk confirmed that the annual Governance and Accounting Return had been submitted by 30 June to PKF Littlejohn. The audit had been undertaken and papers approved without any comment. The AGAR had been advertised as required and the audit fee paid.  The DEFRA annual return had been submitted by 30 September.  Online Banking  The Clerk reported that he had contact Barclays Bank over the procedure for having online access to our account and what the procedure would be to have the ability to make payments by BACS from the account. The Rea Internal Drainage Board account was a two signatory account and thus, the Clerk would enter payee details including the bank account and the money to be paid and authorise the payment online. Barclays would then hold these instructions until such time as the second authorised signatory, Andrew Bebb, went online and then pressed his authorisation button. Only when the second authorisation was activated would Barclays make the payment to the payee’s bank account. The Board approved the movement of the Barclays account to an online payment system, with two authorised signatories. | |
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|  | **Correspondence** | |
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|  | The Clerk reported this was mostly from ADA.   1. 4 July 2019, ADA response to FCERM Strategy Consultation together with FCERM update paper from EA. ADA had submitted a lengthy response, particularly stressing the requirement for regular maintenance and called for sufficient funding for regular maintenance of watercourses and flood defence assets. | |
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|  | 1. 7 August 2019 – changes to DEFRA’s ministerial team. With Michael Gove moving from Environment Secretary, Theresa Villiers was appointed in his place. Therese Coffey was now Minister of State responsible for drainage matters. George Eustace, Minister of Agriculture. | |
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|  | 1. 7 August 2019 – Rationalising the Main River Network Project update. Selected watercourse in pilot locations have officially changed from main river to ordinary watercourse under this project. Management of several stretches of watercourse have now been transferred from the Environment Agency to local IDBs. All of these sections of watercourse are not associated with major rivers or major population centres and the changes in designation aim to strengthen local decision making.   . Whilst the EA now undertake very little or no maintenance to the Rea Brook, it was not thought financially sensible for us to seek to de-main the river and take on full responsibility for the river. Our financial resources would not be sufficient to do this. It was thought best to continue in the way that we are currently operating, undertaking limited works to certain sections of the Rea within our powers. | |
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|  | **Environment Agency IDB Liaison Meeting** | |
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|  | The date of this would be 26 November. A Bebb hoped to attend, but if not J Dale would deputise. The Clerk would also attend. | |
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|  | **REA Action Project** | |
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|  | The Clerk reported that this project was now up and running. They had a budget of £235,000 for works by farmers in the catchment area, with a remit to reduce diffuse pollution, improve water quality and reduce sediment reaching the watercourses in the catchment. He explained that farmers once having had a water management plan undertaken by the Project Office Katie Pearcey, they were eligible to applying for a percentage of grant aid towards projects on their land. The project had to date supported works such as fencing off of watercourses, pond creation, pond cleaning to act as sediment traps, rainwater harvesting, dirty and clean water separation systems. There were not too keen on simply concreting areas, as this can merely quicken runoff into the watercourses. The hope was that the measures would also slow the flow of water. The Clerk had been asked to join a panel assessing the applications. Andrew Bebb was a member representing farming interests and providing local knowledge to the panel. Whilst some members had applied, other members were encouraged to consider applications for appropriate projects. | |
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|  | **Any Other Business** | |
|  | Recent Flooding | |
|  | Discussions on the extreme flooding experienced in the Rea Valley weekend of 26 and 27 of October 2019 took place. J Dale reported that the level of Marton Pool rose by at least one metre and the surface area probably grew from circa 25 acres to 40 acres. He had about 80 acres under water at its worst The weed cutting and de-silting work by M Bishop had definitely helped and water was draining back more quickly and this work had probably also allowed water to backup into Marton Pool as a water storage measure. | |
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|  | Worthen Brook broke its bank in the village and flooded the area near the old people’s bungalows, but was not thought that any properties actually flooded.  Aubrey Jones reported that he had probably had circa 120 acres flood and was now circa 70 to 80 acres still under water. He had recorded 70mm rainfall from Thursday night through to Saturday 2pm  Andrew Bebb, at the bottom of the Rea, felt the water levels were probably the third highest over the last 50 years with circa three inches of water into the residential property adjacent to his ford, with a water depth across the ford toward two metres. Some 80 acres of his ground was flooded, but this had now reduced to circa 10. It was felt that continuing our work on the Rea downstream from the Worthen Brook would be good policy for 2020 maintenance. | |
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|  | **Date of Next Meeting** | |
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|  | This was set for Thursday 23 January 2020. Two other dates were also set, Thursday 9 April and Thursday 25 June 2020. | |
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| There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:25 pm. | | |
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