

MINUTES of Meeting held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at the Strensall and Towthorpe Village Hall, Northfields, Strensall, York

PRESENT

Mr J P Coverdale (In the Chair)

Mr S Stark

Mr D R Brotherton

Mr D J E Sherry

Mr M Cockerill

Mr M Kemp

Mr I Ridsdale

Mr R J Burnett

Mrs S Wiseman

Mr D M Crossley

Cllr M Warters

Cllr T Fisher

Cllr D Sykes

The Clerk – Mr W Symons

Engineering Assistant – Mr N Culpan

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr P E Clark and Mr C Chambers.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest related to the items listed on the Agenda.

The Clerk further informed Members that the Register of Members Interests was available at the meeting for inspection and update as required.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Mr D R Brotherton informed that the Minutes of the last meeting in relation to his comments on herbicide usage could be improved as follows ‘he stated that this year there was an enormous amount of weed growth and a second application of herbicide might be needed.’

Cllr M Warters noted the heading on the ADA National Demonstration could be improved with the inclusion of ‘machinery’ in the title.

Members accepting these changes.

Cllr D Sykes proposed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2022, a copy of which had been sent to all Members, be taken as read and approved and that they be forthwith signed by the Chairman as a correct record with the above amendments.

Cllr T Fisher seconding the proposal of Cllr D Sykes which was UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED by the Board.

## MATTERS ARISING

### Barr Lane Treated Effluent Discharge

Cllr T Fisher informed he had attended the location and was concerned about the stench of pollution.

The Engineering Assistant offered to investigate and report any noted sewage discharges or pollution to the Environment Agency. The Board not having powers to control pollution, whereas the Environment Agency is the recognised body for pollution and its control under powers in relation to the Environment Act.

Mr D M Crossley noted that several potential historical discharge outlets exist at this location beyond the new one discussed at the last meeting.

There were no further matters arising from the Minutes which were not covered in the Agenda.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Clerk confirmed no reportable incidents had occurred since the last meeting which would require reporting to the Health and Safety Executive (RIDDOR).

## RATES

The Clerk reported that since the report of the last meeting the sums raised in agricultural drainage rates and Special Levy had increased by £2,968.91. The total now collected up to the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022 are as follows:

(a) Special Levy	-	£164,617.11	(50.%)
(b) Direct Levy	-	<u>£ 51,329.40</u>	(99%)
		<u>£215,946.51</u>	

### Special Levy Payment

The Clerk reported the second part of the Special Levy payment is due shortly.

### Final Reminders

The Clerk reported that Court Pre-Action Protocol/Final Reminder letters had been sent to ratepayers. This includes the Boards information and the relevant forms for debtors to complete in the relevant time periods. The process being progressed so as to not delay final rate demand payments and court action if required. A list of outstanding rate accounts was shown to the Chairman at the meeting.

## MAINTENANCE WORKS

### Court Action

The Clerk will progress court action if required in line with the Boards policy for sums outstanding over £15 following the issue of Pre-Action Protocol letters if no queries or land transfers are outstanding.

### Maintenance Progress Mapping

The Engineering Assistant had circulated a report to Members with the Agenda along with a web link to electronic maps identifying the maintenance work carried out by the Board. He informed that the Board had taken out a licence in new mapping software. This creates a web address which links to an online map on a view only basis, highlighting the work progressed to date. The work for last year also being shown which can be saved for future reference.

### Grab for Tree Works

The Engineering Assistant recommended to Members the Board purchasing an excavator attachment grab for tree works for a 1/3<sup>rd</sup> contribution of £1,116.66 plus VAT. The purchase being shared with Foss (2008) IDB, Ouse and Derwent IDB and Ainsty (2008) IDB. Foss (2008) IDB intending to purchase and the costs including maintenance will then be shared. The purchase should create efficiency for the Boards moving cut materials such as tree limbs as noted in the report along with sharing the equipment.

Mr D M Crossley proposing the purchase contribution was authorised and approved.

Cllr D Sykes seconding the proposal of Mr D M Crossley which was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED by the Board.

### CCTV Surveys

The Chairman asked following the CCTV survey of Westfield Beck Culvert if further culverts and assets should be surveyed using this method.

The Clerk informed the Board had a budget for this type of work and the Engineering Assistant can consider a programme of work as required.

EXTERNAL AUDIT  
RETURN

**Biodiversity Action Plan**

The Clerk informed that the Consortium's Biodiversity Action Plan was currently under review and being updated to the ADA National guidance template for the document.

The Clerk referred to a copy of the External Auditors Certificate and Opinion for the accounts for financial year 2021/22. A copy of the External Auditors Certificate and Opinion had been circulated (Section 3 and 4) to Members prior to the meeting with the Agenda.

The Clerk informed Members that the return from the External Auditor does not raise any matters under Section 3 External Auditor Certificate and Opinion 2021/22.

**Completion of the Audit**

The Completion of the Audit has been advertised, as required. The Board acknowledged this outcome.

**Appointment of Internal Auditors**

The Clerk advised the Board that the audit of the Board's accounts is reasonably complex. In view of this any new auditor would require some time to understand the working arrangements currently in place.

The current Internal Auditors, Brodericks (Doncaster), who have carried out audits for a number of other Boards, are familiar with the Consortium arrangements along with the Audit of small body public accounts and the requirements of the external audit.

In view of this the Clerk asked if the existing Auditor is retained for the 2022/23 financial year audit because of the familiarity of our current systems. The cost of last year's audit, support and production of the required reports for the Board was £1,650 plus VAT. However the cost could increase depending on the requirements of the audit.

The Clerk noted that the external audit will continue to be under the local framework contract with PK Littlejohn. In this sustaining continuity of the internal audit is likely to help if any problems arise with these arrangements.

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that the Board re-appoint the Internal Auditors, Brodericks (Doncaster) for the 2022/23 financial year.

## **Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Control**

The Clerk referenced the historical concerns of the External Auditor regarding the review of the effectiveness of internal control.

The Clerk asked if the Board would wish to continue to review its effectiveness of internal control in financial year 2022/23 with the report being prepared by the Internal Auditor. This is because the internal auditor is believed to be impartial to the interests of Members and the Boards Consortium staff. This therefore avoids any potential conflict of interest. However the Board's Clerk should review the documentation and scope of this report to ensure that the audit compliance requirements are fully covered.

The Board Members **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** for the Boards Internal Auditors work to additionally include the review of the effectiveness of internal control as carried out in the previous financial year 2021/22.

### **PLANS**

The Clerk referred to the list of Planning Applications commented upon since the last meeting of the Board, which had been circulated to all Members with the Agenda. The supporting information is now digitised and a copy can be provided at the meeting on a laptop computer instead of the paper records.

**(SEE APPENDIX TO MINUTES)**

### **CONSENTS**

The Clerk referred to the list of Consents granted since the last Meeting of the Board, which had been circulated to all Members with the Agenda. The supporting information is now digitised and a copy can be provided at the meeting on a laptop computer instead of the paper records.

**(SEE APPENDIX TO MINUTES)**

### **BANK STATEMENTS**

The Clerk produced the Bank Statements for the Board's Current Account with a credit balance of £529,491.16 with Barclays Bank as at the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

The Virgin Bank account has an additional credit balance of £154,176.25. The Boards now gaining 1.9% gross per annum.

The Nationwide Building Society account has an additional credit balance of £63,911.21. The Board placing funds in a 95 day business saver account which is achieving 1.6% gross per annum.

The total balance of the Boards funds held in these accounts is £777,578.62.

ADA NORTHERN  
BRANCH  
CONFERENCE

**Northern Branch Annual General Meeting**

The Clerk as ADA Northern Branch Director is giving notification that a Northern Branch AGM will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at Yorkshire and Humber Drainage Boards new office. It is hoped at this meeting a new Chairman will be elected and nominations will be sought prior to the Branch meeting. This along with agreement to a New Branch Constitution which the Clerk is currently preparing as the Branch Secretary.

ADA NATIONAL  
CONFERENCE

**ADA National Conference**

The Clerk informed that the ADA National Conference is being organised on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at Dyson Farms, The Hive, Nocton, in Lincolnshire. Arrangements can be made for Members to attend which can either be in person or by virtual meeting. The Board agreed to pay the Members conference fee if they wish to attend.

FLOOD AND  
WATER LIVE 2023

**Machinery and Products ADA Demonstration in 2023**

The Clerk informed that an ADA National land drainage machinery and equipment demonstration is being organised in 2023 at Dyson Farms Centre at Carrington near Boston in Lincolnshire on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023. This event is being called Flood and Water Live 2023.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk reported that no further significant correspondence has been received by the Board since the date of the last meeting.

ACCOUNTS FOR  
CONFIRMATION

The Clerk referred to the list of accounts paid since the date of the last Meeting, which had been circulated to all Members with the Agenda.

It was proposed by Mrs S Wiseman, seconded by Mr S Stark and **RESOLVED** that payment of these accounts be confirmed.

**(SEE APPENDIX TO MINUTES)**

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was directed that the next Meeting of the Board is due to be held at the Strensall and Towthorpe Village Hall, Northfields, Strensall, York on **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023** commencing at **1.30pm**.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023  
Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023  
Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023  
Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**Inflation and Uncertainties in Board Cost**

Mr I Ridsdale asked about the Boards provision for funding of increased costs in relation to increasing inflation and energy costs.

The Clerk informed that the Board has reserves and sets its budget rates and expenditure at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) which is usually early in January. This Board also does not have any pumping stations so direct electricity cost increases are only at the depot and offices however costs clearly will rise indirectly. The Board further has been awarding its flailing maintenance contracts on a year-by-year basis so this year's rates have been on a fixed rate for the year. It however is clear that costs are rising and this will need considering at the AGM in January. This will then require consideration of increasing the Boards drainage rates and special levy along with considering the scope of the work to be carried out. The Boards out turn costs for financial year 2022/23 and budget estimates for financial year 2023/24 will be based on the best available information available towards the end of December 2022.

**York Outer Ring Road A1237 Improvements**

Mrs S Wiseman asked about the consultation in relation to the A1237 York outer ring road improvements. This was in relation to protecting the Boards maintenance watercourse byelaw fringes and sustaining adequate safe routes for machinery access. She informed the issue had been raised at a local open parish meeting on the proposals being progressed for consideration of planning permission.

The Engineering Assistant noted the Board had responded previously to these proposals highlighting its requirements generally, however consultation on more detailed proposals is required when the information becomes available. This including gaining safe access for equipment to unload and maintain along with controls on surface water runoff. If the proposals have progressed then it is hoped the Board will be consulted shortly. If this does not occur the Board will be responding to any planning application made in an advice letter to the relevant planning authority.

CLOSE OF  
MEETING

The Chairman closed the meeting at 2.55pm as there was no other business.

**(APPENDICES TO FOLLOW)**