

MINUTES of Annual General Meeting held on Monday 15th January 2024 at Pike Hills Golf Club, Tadcaster Road, Askham Bryan, York

PRESENT

Mr S E Jackson (In the Chair)
Mr A P Sykes
Mr C E Mills
Mr R F Hildreth
Mr S Barnes
Mr J Sanderson
Mr J B Blacker
Mr A Percy
Mr C Clayton
Mr P Bramley
Cllr C Steward
Mr S Wragg
Cllr A Paraskos
Dr H Ferguson

The Clerk – Mr W Symons
Engineering Assistant – Mr N Culpan

SAD LOSS OF A MEMBER

The Chairman informed of the sad loss of Mr B Clayton who had been a Member and Chairman of the historical South Wharfe Internal Drainage Board for many years. The Board's catchment now being part of the Ainsty (2008) IDB.

The Clerk informed Mr B Clayton's first meeting of the South Wharfe Internal Drainage Board was on 19th September 1968, which was held at the Ulleskelf Arms Public House.

The Chairman invited the meeting attendees to stand in silence for a minute to reflect on the loss and the time and commitment Mr B Clayton had given freely to the community and the Drainage Board.

The meeting attendees stood for a minute's silence.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs S Wiseman, Cllr M Nicholls and Cllr A Warneken.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

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

MINUTES OF MEETING

It was proposed by Mr A Percy, seconded by Cllr A Paraskos and RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th November 2023, a copy of which had been sent to all Members, be taken as read and approved and that they are forthwith signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk reported that no matters were arising from the Minutes of the last meeting which were not covered on the Agenda.

MEMBERSHIP

The Clerk informed he had followed up the Board's formal reduction in membership numbers and the realignment of its catchment boundary at the historical British Sugar Site with the Environment Agency's Solicitor. The boundary change being required to incorporate a realigned culvert on this site so it is retained in the Board's drainage district. At this stage he has no further progress to report.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Clerk advised that there have been no reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive (RIDDOR) since the date of the last meeting.

RATES

The Clerk reported that the total rates collected up to the 15th January 2024 are as follows:

(a) Special Levy -	£353,943.17	(100%)
(b) Direct Levy -	<u>£ 71,037.12</u>	(96%)
	<u>£424,980.29</u>	

The Clerk having a list of accounts with sums outstanding and court action being taken at the meeting which he shared with the Chairman.

The Clerk confirmed that any outstanding rates will be pursued for payment and any remaining sums or credits at year-end will be included in next year's rate demands.

TRANSFER TO SPECIAL LEVY AND WRITE OFF

The Clerk informed that he annually updated the land for consideration for transfer to 'Special Levy' and the resultant write-off of agricultural rates which cannot be raised.

Special Levy

The Clerk had circulated maps and a summary table with the Agenda for the Board's consideration.

City of York Council

Members gave consideration of:

- Land which was now a garden on account 10-0059-3;
- Land which is now several properties on account 40-0546-2;
- Land which is now several properties on account 40-0318-9.

The above reducing the Board's agricultural rateable value by £1,313.63 and increasing the Council's Special Levy rateable value by £4,082.24.

North Yorkshire Council

Members gave consideration of:

- Land which is now part of a golf course on account 40-0558-3.

The above reducing the Board's agricultural rateable value by £393.56 and increasing the Council's Special Levy rateable value by £19,068.20.

The Clerk explaining the financial implications shown on the summary table.

Members discussed the land and its location.

Amounts to be Written Off

An overall sum in drainage rates remaining on land transferred to Special Levy which cannot be collected amounts to £90.86, which is requested for consideration of writing off.

The transfer to Special Levy and sums to be written off was considered by Members. The Clerk having explained the implications on the Special Levy demand for City of York Council and North Yorkshire County Council.

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to the transfer to Special Levy for City of York Council and North Yorkshire Council as per the maps provided along with the write off of £90.86 in drainage rates.

STAFF

The Clerk reported the Board had recruited a new excavator driver, Mr D Mortimer.

The Assistant Engineer reported he had settled in well and has been doing drone surveys for the Board as he is also a drone enthusiast.

CONSORTIUM ARRANGEMENTS

Meeting Date

The Clerk confirmed the next meeting of the Consortium Management Committee will be held on **6th February 2024** at the **Escrick & Deighton Club, 63 Main Street, Escrick, York, YO19 6LQ**. This is prior to the next meeting of the Board on 11th March 2024 which gives an opportunity to address any matters which could be raised at the meeting prior to the start of the next financial year.

Sustaining the Board's Nominated Members on the CMC Committee

The Clerk asked the Board if it wished to sustain its two nominated Members for the meeting who are Mr S E Jackson and Mr A P Sykes.

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to sustain the above arrangements for Mr S E Jackson and Mr A P Sykes to remain its two nominated Members for the Consortium Management Committee. The Members being given authority to act on behalf of the Board.

MAINTENANCE POLICY

The Board's workforce of three will focus on channel works with its two excavators along with the other usual manual maintenance activities.

The Board retaining its existing flail mower and tractor for light duties. To then continue contracting out flailing across the Board's district.

The Board's budget estimates and plant renewal being developed on this basis.

Plant Renewal Sheet

The Clerk has circulated a suggested plant renewal and replacement sheet up to 2030/31 with the Agenda. The shaded portion highlighting financial year 2024/25. This being based on the Maintenance Policy.

Financial Year 2023/24

The Clerk informed the Board was intending to replace its 2018 Isuzu DMax 4x4 vehicle shortly.

Financial Year 2024/25

The Clerk informed that the Board's 8T Kubota excavator was approaching five years old with roughly 3,000 hours run time on the clock. If it was decided to replace, the order to delivery is likely to be reasonably long as the machine is specifically built to the Board's requirements.

Plant Replacement and Board's Reserves

The Clerk noted the importance of sustaining the Board's workforce productivity with reliable, modern equipment. The table showing replacement of the Board's excavators on a five-year basis. It clearly needing funding for the change in the future. The economics of the sale and price to replace influencing the decision. The Board also has some equipment which is used occasionally such as the Volvo backhoe excavator and tractor which are clearly getting older, however they are maintained and repaired as required.

Mr R F Hildreth asked about the Volvo backhoe excavator and tractor and why the Board did not sell them.

The Engineering Assistant informed they both continue to be sustained and can be used when required. If they become unreliable or too expensive to maintain they could be replaced with second hand equipment. The alternative is to hire equivalent equipment in when required. At the current time sustaining the existing appears to be the best approach as it is readily available when required.

The Board's current plant reserve funds are £174,805 at the end of financial year 2023/24 and will reduce to £139,805 at the end of financial year 2024/25. As the Board is forecasting a surplus from its estimates at the end of 2023/24 this will be used to increase the plant reserve by roughly £27,763. This allocating more funding for future purchases and replacements. In relation to the Board's plant and equipment replacements, this roughly requires £30,000 or more per year. This sum including the costs of replacing the pickup trucks when required.

The Board Members considered the Board's position with its plant renewal sheet and future funding needs and UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to the approach suggested by the Clerk and noted the funding requirements.

BUDGET 2024/25

The Clerk had circulated a budget sheet and notes with the Agenda for the forthcoming financial year. The budget forecasting the out turns for financial year 2023/24 and advising on a potential budget for financial year 2024/25. The Board's budget including for salary increases, plant replacement costs as planned above and funds, as a shared Consortium expenditure, for new drainage rating software (DRS). The budget forecasting the out turns for financial year 2023/24 and advising on a potential budget for financial year 2024/25. The budget given was based on a rate of 4.78p in the £. an increase of 3.91% and provided details as to the budget's composition.

The Clerk went through the budget sheet line by line. He noted the surplus created at the end of 2023/24 which can be used to increase the Board's plant renewal funds by an estimated £27,763 for 2024/25 financial year. The estimates then include an increase in the Board's drainage rates to 4.78p for 2024/25 financial year. On the basis that the Board makes the purchases of equipment as per the plant renewal programme, the Board's reserves would decrease to £797,644. This including the earmarked reserves at the end of financial year 2024/25. This equating to a decrease in reserves over the financial year of £76,541.

The Clerk noting the increased income from the Highland Water Contribution and savings in Consortium staff and costs. These factors have helped significantly to create a surplus in financial year 2023/24. It is unlikely the Environment Agency will make an increased payment of Highland Water Contribution as it is unlikely further funds can be found from its revenue budget with the current wet conditions.

The Clerk noting that if the year 2024/25 is also favourable and the estimated expenditure is less, the deficit may reduce. The Board however at this stage has an element of uncertainty which could be unfavourable. This as an example includes if the tendered rates for flailing are higher than estimated in 2024/25 or fuel prices increase. If, however the year is favourable the deficit at the year-end could decrease and thus the Board's forecast reserves would be higher.

Board Members discussed this matter in detail along with the position on the Board's reserves and the proposals for purchasing of plant.

The Clerk highlighted that the Board needed adequate reserves to sustain plant purchase in the future and maintenance works. It also has opportunities to contribute to partnership funding if required to progress studies or work it considered appropriate. This along with other responsibilities such as employment costs and asset refurbishment and repair as it arises.

Mr C E Mills informed he was happy to support the Clerk's suggested rate increase but did not want to see it any higher. He therefore PROPOSED a rate of 4.78p in the £. an increase of 3.91%.

Mr C Clayton informed he was happy with the proposal of Mr C E Mills believing the Board gives good value for money and seconded the proposal.

The Chairman asked if any Member wished to table an amendment and no amendments were proposed.

Members were UNANIMOUSLY IN AGREEMENT to the budget and that the drainage rates had been set at 4.78p in the £.

LAYING OF THE
RATE & SPECIAL
LEVIES

The proposal of an increase in rates and levies at 3.91% was carried and RESOLVED that the proportion of their expenditure to be raised by drainage rates in respect of agricultural land and buildings and by Special Levies on Local Billing Authorities are 16.8% and 83.2% respectively.

THAT the Drainage Board do hereby make a Drainage Rate for the purposes chargeable thereon assessed on the Annual Value of agricultural land and buildings subject to the provisions of the Land Drainage Act. 1991 as hereunder set out that is to say: AN OCCUPIERS' RATE assessed at 4.78p in the £. for the period ending on the 31st day of March 2025.

A Special Levy chargeable to **NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL** in the sum of £82,093.64, for the period ending on the 31st day of March 2025. The Council replacing Selby District Council and Harrogate Borough Council from 1st April 2023.

A Special Levy chargeable to **LEEDS CITY COUNCIL** in the sum of £8,998.13, for the period ending on the 31st day of March 2025.

A Special Levy chargeable to **CITY OF YORK COUNCIL** in the sum of £277,807.94 for the period ending on the 31st day of March 2025.

AND that the Special Levies shall be payable in two equal instalments on the 1st May 2024 and the 1st November 2024.

THAT the purposes for which the said Rate and Special Levies are made and the amount in the £. for each of the purposes are as hereunder set out.

AND that the said Rate shall be payable on Demand.

AND that the seal of the Board be affixed on the said Rate and Special Levies accordingly.

AND that the Clerk be and is hereby authorised to take all necessary steps to demand and collect the said Rate.

PURPOSES under the Land Drainage Act 1991 for which the Rate mentioned is made.

AMOUNT of the Rate in the £. for the Occupiers' Rate.

- | | | | |
|----|---|---|-------|
| a) | Expenses of Administration under this Act. |) | |
| b) | Works of maintenance under the said Act. |) | 4.78p |
| c) | Improvement of existing works under the said Act. |) | |
| d) | New works under the said Act. |) | |
| e) | Precept of The Environment Agency under the said Act. |) | 4.78p |

ENGINEER'S REPORT

The Engineering Assistant had circulated a report with the Agenda of the work carried out for Members consideration. This included an electronic web link to the Board's GIS maps showing the work carried out. He further ran through the items included in the report.

Sensitive Flail Mowing of Watercourse Trial in North Wharfe District

Mr C E Mills asked about the trial outcome and the catchments performance during the recent wet periods.

Mr A Percy noted that conditions had been very wet and had caused a large number of extra debris causing channel blockages and obstructions but he did not believe the alternative approach had caused any serious concerns.

Ousegill Beck

Mr J Sanderson reported that a bank slippage had occurred which he was concerned about.

The Engineering Assistant informed him that he had requested the Board's Foreman should meet him in the near future to discuss his concerns and the Board's maintenance work proposals.

Hornington Manor Blockage

Mr C Clayton informed that Mr D Goodrich had spotted a blockage on Mr Spinks' land which was of concern, the water appearing to be held back.

The Engineering Assistant informed that he will investigate to see what can be done.

POLICY STATEMENT REVIEW

The Clerk informed the Board that it's Policy Statement on Water Level and Flood Risk Management was due for a review. A copy of which had been provided with the Agenda. The Board having adopted it as a policy on 13th June 2018. The document being produced based on a national ADA template also agreed by Defra. The template report being populated with the Board's specific data. The Board however is asked to review the document every three years. A confirmation of the policy review on this basis being asked for in the Board's Annual Return to Defra.

The Chairman asking if any Members, having reviewed the document, if anyone would wish to propose any amendments. No amendments were raised.

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED, having reviewed the document, that it should be accepted and continue as the Board's policy and should again be reviewed as required in the future.

The Board sustaining the adopted 'Water Level and Flood Risk Management Policy' as circulated with the Agenda with no amendments.

ADA NATIONAL

ADA Environment Day 2024

The Clerk reported that ADA were organising an Environment Day on Friday 2nd February 2024 at Park Farm, Thorney, Cambridgeshire. The Clerk will be attending on behalf of the Board.

ADA Conference 2024

The Clerk informed that ADA National are organising a Conference on 13th November 2024 at the Institute of Civil Engineers at 10 Great George Street, London, SW1.

Mr C E Mills reporting on the 2023 ADA National Conference he attended with the Board's Clerk informing it was very good with interesting presentations.

ADA AGM

The Clerk informed that the ADA AGM would be a virtual Meeting and held on 3rd December 2024.

ADA NORTHERN
BRANCH

ELECTION

ADA Northern Branch AGM

The Clerk informed the AGM was held on 24th November 2023 at Yorkshire and Humber IDB offices. The Clerk was pleased to inform Members he will continue unchallenged as the ADA Northern Branch Director for a further three-year term.

ADA Northern Branch Summer Meeting and Trip

The Clerk informed this is likely to be on 7th June 2024 at venue to be decided.

The Clerk informed he had not received any further information regarding the progress of the Board's formal reduction in membership numbers. This including either from the Environment Agency or Defra Flood Management. In view of this as the progress is so slow, he recommends the Board progress its planned election in 2024 based on the existing membership. If, however, the formal reduction in membership numbers is concluded in time then the Board may be able to advance the election based on the reduced numbers of elected Members.

The Clerk presented an Election timetable, which is as follows:

1 April	-	Register of Electors Advertised
1 May	-	Board Approval of Register Advertised
July/August	-	Nomination Forms Issued
23 Sept	-	Nomination Forms Returned
23 October	-	Election Day
01 Nov	-	New Board Commences

The Board AGREED the following:

- (1) Approve the timetable, which authorise the Officers to undertake such in accordance with the Land Drainage Act 1991.
- (2) Approve the proposed Register of Electors prepared on the 1 April 2024.
- (3) Approve the proposed Register as the Register if no objections received by the Board's Officers.
- (4) To call a Special Meeting, if necessary, to deal with any matters relating to the approval of the Register.

It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that the proposed timetable be approved by the Board.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk reported there was no correspondence of significance received since the date of the last meeting.

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 Clerk reporting that all this information was now digitised and a copy can be provided at the meeting on a laptop computer instead of the paper records.

Leeds Airport Storage Area

Mr C Clayton noted that at this development the storage area was now drained by pipes through the embankment into the Board's maintained watercourse. He asked if these had been consented.

The Engineering Assistant informed he would investigate the matter further. In the planning application the developer proposed the site should be drained by a porous surface. He informed he will liaise with North Yorkshire Planning in relation to the drainage arrangements for the development.

Planning Inspectorate Visit for Greater Awareness of IDBs

The Clerk informed the Board had hosted a Christmas visit and meeting at the Board's office for some officers of the Planning Inspectorate.

(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 Clerk reporting that all this information was 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 £379,075.08 with Barclays Bank as at the 22nd December 2023.

The Board also having £200,000 in a Barclays Treasury Fixed Term Deposit Account which is achieving 2.44% gross per annum.

The Virgin Bank account has an additional credit balance of £307,105.59. The Board placing funds into a twelve-month deposit account which is achieving 4.3% gross per annum. It being noted the bank is very difficult to deal with regarding its deposit accounts and achieving its publicised interest rates. The arrangements being much worse for arranging deposits since the bank has changed from the Yorkshire Bank.

The Nationwide Building Society account has an additional credit balance of £77,322.55. The Board placing funds in a 95-day business saver account which is achieving 3.75% gross per annum.

The total balance of the Board's funds held in these accounts is £963,503.22.

The Clerk confirmed that Barclays Bank continue charging for its banking services.

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.

Mr C Clayton noted the court fees being charged.

Mr A Percy noted and asked about the variation in court costs.

The Clerk explained the fees were variable depending on the sum claimed.

It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED 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 Pike Hills Golf Club, Tadcaster Road, Askham Bryan, York on **Monday 11th March 2024** commencing at **6.30pm**.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Monday 17th June 2024

Monday 11th November 2024

Monday 16th September 2024 now being cancelled as agreed previously.

ANY OTHER
BUSINESS

Mr C E Mills asked about City of York Council's position regarding the release of beavers seen on local television.

Mr S Wragg informed this had come out of a study concerning catchment partnership working regarding natural flood management. At the current time the Council is not promoting any release of beavers and if in the future they did then it would be in areas upstream, which would be in locations unlikely to cause any flooding consequences.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.56pm as there was no other business.

(APPENDICES TO FOLLOW)