

MINUTES of Meeting held on Monday 16th June 2025 at Pike Hills Golf Club, Tadcaster Road, Askham Bryan, York

PRESENT

Mr S E Jackson (In the Chair)
Mr C E Mills
Mr R F Hildreth
Mr J Sanderson
Mr J B Blacker
Mr A Pearcy
Mr P Bramley
Cllr M Nicholls
Mr M Henderson
Dr H Ferguson

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

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr A P Sykes, Mr S Barnes, Mr C Clayton, Mrs S Wiseman and Cllr C Steward.

Meeting Not Quorate

The Clerk informed Members that with nine Members in attendance, a quorum of ten Members was not present.

The Clerk informed Members that the Board had to consider signing off its annual accounts and Governance Statements for submission to the External Auditor before a specific date. To meet this financial requirement Standing Order 27, to suspend SO 4(a), could be invoked by resolution of at least 75% of the Members present.

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED Standing Order 27, to suspend SO 4(a), could be invoked.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership Confirmation

The Clerk informed the Board had received an email confirmation dated 28th May 2025 from the City of York Council regarding its nominated Members which remain the same.

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

The Clerk noted that that the meeting held on 10th March 2025 was not quorate so no formal decisions were made. The meeting however made recommendations for consideration of the Board at this Meeting.

Members who had attended this meeting UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 10th March 2025, 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.

BOARD APPROVAL OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10th MARCH

Members UNANIMOUSLY ACCEPTED and APPROVED the RECOMMENDATIONS of this meeting held on the 10th March 2025.

MATTERS ARISING

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

RATES

The Clerk reported that the Board had sent out its rate demands for 1st April. The Board's rate demands having been generated on the old drainage rating software (DRS) and sent out. The drainage rates had then been generated on the new system (RMS) and compared. The drainage rates for all of the Consortium Boards are now reliant on the new system with drainage rate and Special Levy payments being recorded in it. The old system continues to function in the background.

The first direct debit payments in the new system have been generated and transferred to the Board's Barclays account and then drawn. The first rate reminders will be sent out shortly.

The Clerk reported that the total rates collected up to the 6th June 2025 are as follows:

(a) Special Levy	-	£193,797.87	(50.0%)
(b) Direct Levy	-	£ 66,684.07	(82.0%)
		£260,481.94	

The Clerk having a list of accounts with sums outstanding at the meeting a copy of which he shared with the Board's Chairman.

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.

Timber for Piling and Bank Stabilisation

Mr J Sanderson asked about timber supply for piles and backing boards.

The Engineering Assistant explained the Board had been having difficulty getting the quality and cut required for the work at a reasonable cost. He further informed it was now getting easier but was having to purchase piles when they were available and slightly different backing boards.

(SEE APPENDIX TO MINUTES)

Meeting Becomes Quorate

Mr R F Hildreth arrived at the meeting at this stage and the meeting became quorate.

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. The Board's Health and Safety Advisor is working on updating the Board's Health and Safety Policy and it is hoped to be able to bring it to a future meeting of the Board for consideration.

REVIEW OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR CERTIFICATE

The Clerk reminded Members of a letter from the Audit Commission which was circulated a few years ago. The letter clearly highlighted the requirements, which the Clerk has reflected in the Agenda items since, for the returns for the 2024/25 year-end audit. This is to try to ensure compliance and to avoid audit prequalification.

The Clerk had circulated with the Agenda a copy of the External Auditor's comments of 2023/24 (Section 3) in the IDB Audit Return for reference. The top box of the form includes that the External Auditor believes 'On the basis of our review of the annual return, in our opinion the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.' In the second box 'Other Matters Affecting the External Auditors Opinion' no comments are made.

The Clerk reported that no comments were made by the Internal Auditor in Section 4 of the form for Financial Year 2024/25.

REPORT ON THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROLS

Review the Effectiveness of Internal Control

The Clerk noted that the Board had previously agreed for its Internal Auditor to review and report on the Board's System of Internal Control. The Clerk had circulated a copy of the report for the year ending 31st March 2025 with the Agenda.

The Clerk noted the matters raised included continuity of service in the York Consortium, segregation of duties and representation at Board meetings in decision making particularly with 'Council Nominated Members.' These matters were reviewed and discussed at the meeting by Members and the report content noted.

Consider the Findings of the Review

The Clerk will consider the matters raised and incorporate in the Board's Business Risk Assessment for the current financial year. The document will be included for review at the next meeting of the Board.

The Committee considered the report and it was proposed by Mr R F Hildreth that the Board accepted the reports content. This proposal was seconded by Mr A Pearcy and UNANIMOUSLY AGREED by the Board.

APPROVAL OF THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Section 1 of the Annual Return

The Clerk informed the Audit Commissions Annual Return has been completed for 2024/25 which includes the Governance Statement Section 1. A copy of the Statement was circulated with the meeting Agenda.

The Committee considered Section 1 of the Annual Return and it was proposed by Mr C E Mills that the Board approve the Annual Governance Statement. This proposal was seconded by the Chairman and UNANIMOUSLY AGREED by the Board for the Chairman and Clerk to sign Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25.

ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

Consideration of the Accounting Statements

The Clerk reported that the Board's External Auditors are Littlejohn LLP for the accounts being considered. The Auditors are now contracted directly to audit IDB accounts. This being established through a framework contract open to small local public organisations such as parish councils and IDBs.

A copy of the accounts was circulated with the meeting Agenda for the year-ending 31st March 2025. The accounts having been internally audited, with the Auditor having completed and signed off Section 3 Annual Internal Auditor Report 2024/25 of the IDB Return.

The Clerk ran through the details of the Board's accounts and noted the reduced staff cost due to the Board not recruiting a new member of staff. This along with increased income arising from the Board's 'Highland Water' contribution from the Environment Agency for works carried out in 2023/24.

Approval of the Accounting Statements by Resolution

The Committee considered the Annual Return and accounting statements it was proposed by Mr J B Blacker that the Board approve the Annual Accounting Statement for 2024/25. This proposal was seconded by Dr H Ferguson and UNANIMOUSLY AGREED by the Board.

Authorise the Chairman to Sign and Date the Statements

The Committee considered Section 2 of the Annual Return with the accounting statements and it was proposed by Mr A Pearcy, seconded by Mr C E Mills and UNANIMOUSLY AGREED by the Board for the Chairman and Clerk to sign and date Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25.

The Board further authorised the Chairman and Clerk to sign and date the balance sheet of the accounts.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INTERNAL AUDIT

The Clerk had circulated a draft document for the Scope for the Board's Internal Audit with the Agenda. This document following the Audit Commissioner's guidance is required to be able to review the effectiveness of the Internal Auditor if required when the Internal Audit is complete.

The Clerk noted that the guidance from ADA on the Governance and Accountabilities in Internal Drainage Boards in England a Practitioners Guide (2006) updated 2007 has been updated more recently but this now puts the onus on the Board to define the scope of its own Internal Audit.

The Board considered its content and UNANIMOUSLY AGREED the acceptance of the Board for the Scope of the Internal Audit to be able to formally review the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit for financial year 2025/26.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS REVIEW

The Clerk informed some changes in the Board's 'Financial Regulations' were required. This included how banking was changing with local branches closing causing difficulties with daily branch banking. This along with quotes only being provided with machinery and electricity services and markets becoming harder to obtain numerous quotations and tenders. In view of this the Clerk had prepared and circulated with the Agenda a draft of new Financial Regulations for consideration of the Board.

It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Mr C E Mills and RESOLVED that the Board adopts the new draft Financial Regulations as its 'Financial Regulations.' The Board's Chairman being Authorised to sign the document.

INSURANCE

The Clerk had circulated indicative costs for the Board's insurance covers which he has scoped, which are due for renewal in early June. He has asked Towergate as the Board's Insurance Broker to seek covers to sustain the Board's policies.

This year the Board was moving to combine insurance for Professional Indemnity to cover the Boards more widely rather than just Foss (2008) IDB as the turnover covered on the Foss (2008) IDB as a shared Consortium cost was the same.

The Plant Policy (not road vehicles) for the three Boards in the York area in the York Consortium can also be shared reducing cost (estimated part cost to the Board). The estimates being produced on this basis.

It was noted the Management Liability had increased because the cover for Fidelity Insurance was no longer included in the Contractor's Combined Policy.

Mr C E Mills asked why the insurance total in 2024/25 did not appear to match the sum quoted by Towergate.

The Clerk informed that the Board's policies do not renew at the start of the financial year. This results in the sum included in the Board's accounts being pro-rata from the two years premiums providing cover in the financial year.

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to the approach and the covers provided for the Board's insurance and further asked for analysis on two previous years accounts for insurance.

ADA NATIONAL

ADA National Conference

The Clerk informed that an ADA National Conference is to be held on 25th November 2025. Details and joining instructions can be provided by the Clerk if requested closer to the time.

ADA National AGM

The Clerk informed that the ADA AGM would be a virtual Meeting and held on 2nd December 2025.

Publication of ADA Good Governance Guide

The Clerk informed that ADA National had published an updated Good IDB Governance Guide. A copy was available at the meeting but can also be viewed on the Association of Drainage Authorities website.

ADA NORTHERN BRANCH

Summer Meeting/Visit

The Clerk informed the summer meeting/visit on 6th June was cancelled.

AGM

The Clerk informed this is likely to be on 21st November 2025 at the Ouse and Humber IDB office near Howden.

Driffield Show 2025

The Clerk informed that the ADA Northern Branch will be hiring a stand at the Driffield Show on 16th July 2025 to raise ADA's Northern Branch for general IDB awareness.

CORRESPONDENCE

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

Capital Grant Allocations

Members discussed the possible changes being progressed for allocation of Capital Grant.

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.

(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 £607,607.66 with Barclays Bank as at the 6th June 2025.

The Board also having £200,000 in a Barclays Treasury Fixed Term Deposit Account which is achieving 2.42% gross per annum.

The Virgin Bank account has an additional credit balance of £320,419.67. The Board placing funds into a twelve-month deposit account which is achieving 4.5% gross per annum.

The Nationwide Building Society account has an additional credit balance of £81,918.76. The Board placing funds in a 95-day business saver account which is achieving 3.69% gross per annum.

The total balance of the Board's funds held in these accounts is £1,209,946.09.

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

Board's Reserves

The Clerk confirmed he had discussed the level of reserves held by the Board with the Internal Auditor. This considering the risks and assets the Board holds. The advice given from the Internal Auditor was the Board's reserves were adequate.

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 RECOMMENDED by the Board to RESOLVE 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 Hill Golf Club, Tadcaster Road, Askham Bryan, York, YO23 3UW on **Monday 10th November 2025** commencing at **6.30pm**.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Monday 26th January 2026 (AGM)

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Quotations for Fuel and Energy

Mr C E Mills requested that the Board should explore BATA to see if they could provide fuel or electricity more cheaply.

The Clerk noted in the past a number of these organisations are unable to provide the rates for electricity until used. The Board currently gets direct quotes (usually three on the same day for Consortium pumping and Mining Remediation pumping stations from the electricity suppliers before awarding one or two-year contracts (large and small stations). He further noted that the demand cost had become a much larger component of the electricity bill in addition to the unit rate.

The Board having success in negotiating these factors directly.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.41pm as there was no other business.

(APPENDICES TO FOLLOW)