

MINUTES of Meeting of Finance Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 20th January 2015 at the Ouse & Derwent Offices, Crockey Hill, York

PRESENT

Mr R E Britton (In the Chair)
Mr J Hopwood
Cllr B Marshall
Cllr J Cattanach
Mr S Wragg

The Clerk – Mr W Symons
Finance Officer – Mrs F Bradley

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Mr J Daniel.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on the 7th October 2014, were considered at the Meeting a copy of which had been sent to all Sub Committee Members.

It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that they be taken as read and that they be forthwith signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk noted that confirmation of Selby District Councils Board Nominations had not yet been made which was raised at the last meeting.

Cllr J Cattanach informed the Sub-Committee that the Council was reducing the number of Councillors to 31 in the Selby District. In view of this the Council will then be considering its future nominations to the three drainage Boards in its area.

There were no further matters arising from the minutes which were not covered under the agenda items.

RATES

The Clerk reported that one rate payer has a rate account outstanding which the Board will be taking to Court to obtain payment. This is in compliance with the Boards policy on advancing court action.

The Clerk further noted that only one account was over £15, this relating to newly transferred land. A few accounts were in credit where overpayments have been made. Any remaining sums or credits at year-end will be included in next year's rate demands.

TRANSFERS TO
SPECIAL LEVY AND
WRITE OFF

Land Transfer to Special Levy

The Clerk referred to the list and maps of the locations circulated with the agenda. This along with the write off of drainage rates which cannot be recovered and land transfers to special levy from the Boards agricultural rating.

GW Atkinson Account Resolution (90-0407)

The Clerk had circulated a sheet showing the events on the account of GW Atkinson, the issue dating back to 2009.

The Finance Officer explained that historically a duplicate credit has been created in the system following two land transfers in 2008. This had made an artificial credit on GW Atkinson's account which had been retained for a number of years. The value of the credit was £279.74. Therefore the proposal requires the removal of the current credit of £234.41 along with the write off of £43.34 in lost rate income.

The Sub Committee Members UNANIMOUSLY RECOMMENDED to the Main Board the proposal for the removal of the current rate credit of £234.41 on GW Atkinson's account along with the write off of £43.34 in lost rate income.

Mr WR Platt Account (90-0508)

The Clerk explained that Mr Platt has informed the Board that he believes he is paying drainage rates on an area of land greater than in his holding. Mr Platt has attended the Boards office to inspect the Boards maps and a number of required land transfers have been identified and are currently being carried out. The Board has also identified that land held under assessment number 0214840 is duplicated in another assessment of Mr WR Platt which appears to have occurred over a period of eight years.

The Clerk proposed to resolve the situation with the overpayment by crediting Mr WR Platt's Account in the sum of £542.35 which is the calculated overpayment. This along with reducing the Boards overall rateable value by £1,590 for the land duplicated in the Boards records.

The Sub Committee Members UNANIMOUSLY RECOMMENDED to the Main Board the credit in the sum of £542.35 to Mr WR Platt and the removal of the duplicated land which results in a reduction of the Boards rateable value by £1,590.

Fulford School Playing Fields

The Clerk referred to the map circulated with the agenda of the playing fields of Fulford School. The playing fields to date had been included in an agricultural account which had been highlighted to the Board in a land query.

The Clerk asked the Sub Committee if they could consider if the field should remain for payment of drainage rates rather than being transferred to special levy. The Clerk informing that the field was reasonably large and could still be used as agricultural playing fields which he would consider would be appropriate.

The Sub Committee Members AGREED with the Clerk regarding the playing field and its usage and RECOMMENDED to the Main Board that at the current time the Board will continue to raise drainage rates on the land.

CONSORTIUM ARRANGEMENTS

The Clerk reported that the annual meeting of the Consortium Management Committee (CMC) will be held on 17th February 2015. The Board at last year's meeting was represented by both the Chairman and Cllr J Cattanach. They both agreed to represent the Board again at the forthcoming annual meeting if the Board wishes. The arrangements require the Board to nominate two Board Members with the power to act on behalf of the Board. The Clerk informed the Sub Committee that the Boards administration costs in this year's estimates are presented on the basis of the costs of the consortium arrangements which will be discussed at the CMC annual meeting. The meeting will further include consideration of the renewal of the office lease between the Consortium and the Board.

The Sub Committee's RECOMMENDATION if accepted by the Board is to nominate both the Chairman and Cllr J Cattanach for them to attend the annual CMC meeting.

Consortium Lease Renewal

The Clerk asked the Sub Committee how the Board would wish to renew the lease on the Boards office with the Consortium. The options are as follows:

- 1) To continue with the existing lease as is;
- 2) The Clerk to produce a new lease based on the old lease for a further three year term with the dates of starting and finishing updated;
- 3) To ask the Solicitor to provide a new lease on similar terms to the current lease.

The Sub Committee Members AGREED to RECOMMEND to the Board that the Clerk be instructed to produce a new lease based on the old lease for a further three year term with the dates of starting and finishing updated.

Derwent House Improvements

The Clerk reported that most of the windows in the office have now been replaced. The replacement of one of the buildings boilers has not yet been replaced. However both of the buildings boilers are failing and becoming unreliable. Quotes are being obtained for the replacement of both boilers. The Clerk forecasts expenditure of £3,500 towards the end of the current financial year and an estimated budget of £11,000 is proposed. The building needing outside painting and gutter repairs/replacement as well as the boiler replacement.

The Clerk discussed possible adaption to the Boards outside buildings for developing more storage for the Consortium records. The Members discussed the management of documentation and its storage.

The Sub Committee Members UNANIMOUSLY RECOMMENDED the proposed budgets for expenditure of the Boards building to the Main Board. This being the responsibility as the landlord of the lease held by the Consortium Board.

PLANT RENEWALS/ PURCHASE

The Clerk presented the plant renewals schedule, which had been circulated with the Agenda.

2014/15 Purchases and Plant Reserves

The Clerk reviewed the Boards plant and equipment on the list and its replacement. This with a view to consider the amounts the Board should be building in its plant reserve funds to be able to replace its equipment when required. The Board having purchased a 9 ton excavator in 2014/15. This leaving a plant reserve fund of £65,643 to carry forward at the start of 2015/16 financial year.

Consideration of Plant Purchase in 2015/16

The Clerk asked the Sub Committee to consider purchasing a weed bucket for the Boards 9 tonne excavator. The Boards expenditure for 2015/16 financial year would be £5,000 including an allowance of £1,000 for small tools if this purchase was progressed. The Board would then have plant reserves of £95,643 at year end if £35,000 funds were added to increase the sum.

Replacement of the Boards Herder Mower and Tractor

The Clerk noted in the plant replacement schedule the replacement of the Boards 2011 Tractor and 2009 Herder Mower in 2017/18. The costing being based on purchasing a self-propelled mower such as a Spearhead. The Sub Committee noted the on-going costs of sustaining the Herder as it was getting older. This in the future could influence an earlier replacement.

Sub Committee Recommendation

The Sub Committee Members considered the plant replacement programme. It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to RECOMMEND the acceptance of the plant replacement programme and approval to progress the purchase of a weeding basket for the Boards excavator.

BUDGET 2015/2016

The Clerk referred Members to the budget paper, which had been circulated with the Agenda.

The Finance Officer ran through the budget estimate line by line. This showed the budgets for financial year 2014/15 along with the anticipated out turns and estimates for financial year 2015/16.

The Chairman asked Members of the Sub Committee if they had any queries on the table.

The Clerk noted difficulties in contracting the Boards sludging work in that experienced drivers in our industry are in short supply. This could see an increase in contracting costs for the service the Board requires. The Board however could in the future do more work internally and the reduction in fuel costs is also likely to be in the Boards favour.

The Clerk further noted the Boards position in the uncertainty with obtaining a grant FDGIA (Flood Defence Grant In Aid). In that a grant for Hagthorpe Pumping Station is included in the figures provided for £20,000 however the Board is uncertain if this will be achieved and it is unclear at what rate the grant will be paid. If the Board is therefore unsuccessful in its grant application and award the Boards reserves could be up to £20,000 lower at the year end.

Staff - A private and confidential matter was discussed

(SEE APPENDIX TO MINUTES)

RECOMMENDATION
FOR THE RATE FOR
2015/16

BANKING
STRATEGY

ACCOUNTS FOR
CONFIRMATION

The Sub Committee Members considered the Budget proposals and the rate of a sum of 4.38p with no increase over the rates of 2014/15. The Proposal was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to recommend approval to the Board.

The Clerk highlighted that due to the concerns about the Yorkshire Bank and its proposed sale by the Bank of Australia. The Clerk wishes to run funds down in the Yorkshire Bank to £85,000 on deposit as it is believed this sum is guaranteed. The additional funds being returned to Barclays Bank.

The Clerk reported on the Boards direction with seeking greater interest on the Boards deposits. It was noted that the Nationwide Building Society is currently offering a one year deposit account with 1.4% gross interest (The Yorkshire Bank equivalent is currently 1.2%) To open an account to deposit the Boards funds the Nationwide will require Bank Mandates from the Board which will need identification of the Clerk, Finance Officer, Chairman and Vice Chairman to progress.

The Clerk would also wish to seek further deposit accounts to invest the Boards funds. The Clerk asks if the Board would be prepared to delegate the Boards Authority to open deposit accounts with alternative banks and building societies and to authorise the mandates for the Accounts to the Chairman and the Vice Chairman. This giving the ability to invest the Boards funds to achieve a higher rate of return on amounts up to £85,000 in each account and for a report on the action taken to be made to the next meeting of the Board. This action is intended to prevent the Board having to organise a special meeting to open further accounts. The Boards current bank accounts are mandated for 'The Clerk and Finance Officer to authorise withdrawals up to the sum of £4,000. Clerk to the Board or Finance Officer and Chairman or Vice Chairman £4,000 or over.' Any accounts opened would include the same authorisation signing in the mandate instructions to the bank or building society as the Boards other accounts.

The Sub Committee Members considered the Clerks proposal and UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to RECOMMEND the approach to the Board.

The accounts for confirmation were reviewed by the Committee in detail.

The Committee considered the list of accounts for confirmation and AGREED to recommend approval to the Board.

(SEE APPENDIX TO MINUTES)

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 2nd June 2015 at 1pm. This being prior to the Board meeting on 16th June 2015.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesday 6th October 2015 at 1pm. This being prior to the Board meeting on 20th October 2015.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Review Of Policy Statement

The Clerk informed the Board that the documents for the Policy Statement required review. The Clerk has circulated a copy of the documents for the Sub Committee Members to consider with the Agenda.

The Clerk further noted that due to changes which had occurred with the Floods and Water Management Act the generic document on which it was based needs updating. However the documentation requires review as the Boards Policy Statement and is recorded as part of the Boards annual return.

The Sub Committee Members reviewed the documentation and it was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to RECOMMEND to the Board that it should again adopt the Policy Statement.

Election

The Clerk advised the Board that 2015 is election year for the agricultural 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
25 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 2015.
- (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 by the Sub Committee that the proposed timetable and actions be approved by the Board.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the Meeting closed.

(APPENDICES TO FOLLOW)