

MINUTES of the Annual General Meeting held on Monday 9th January 2023 at the Strensall and Towthorpe Village Hall, Northfields, Strensall, York

PRESENT

Mr S Stark (In the Chair)
Mr D R Brotherton
Mr J Sowray
Mr D J E Sherry
Mr M Kemp
Mr I Ridsdale
Mr R J Burnett
Mrs S Wiseman
Mr D M Crossley
Mr C Chambers
Mr S Wragg
Cllr T Fisher

The Clerk – Mr W Symons

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr J P Coverdale, Mr P E Clark, Cllr D Sykes, Mr N Culpan and Mr A S Richardson.

The Clerk thanking Mr S Stark for chairing the meeting and apologised that Mr N Culpan was unable to attend the meeting.

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 UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th November 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.

MATTERS ARISING

Cllr T Fisher reported he had visited Barr Lane a location with ongoing pollution discharge problems. He noted the consent to allow treated effluent discharge and had recently checked the location finding the smell had gone but flows were reasonably high. It will need looking at again when flows are lower to see if the smell returns but it appears very much better.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

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

The Clerk advised that there have been no reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive (RIDDOR) since the date of the last meeting. He further informed he was organising a review of the Boards Health and Safety Policy.

Health and Safety Policy Review

Mr D R Brotherton asked if the Board had an annual review of Health and Safety and working practices.

The Clerk informed that he and Engineering Assistant had an annual health and safety review or more frequently when required. This being carried out on a consortium basis for consistency in the York area. It is hoped this meeting will be held reasonably soon. The Board also advancing with Health and Safety training identified for the workforce.

RATES

The Clerk reported that the total rates collected up to the 15th December 2022 are as follows:

(a) Special Levy -	£329,026.74	(100%)
(b) Direct Levy -	<u>£ 51,965.13</u>	(100%)
	<u>£380,991.87</u>	

The Clerk having a list of accounts with sums outstanding at the meeting.

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 noted no land for transfer to Special Levy had been identified this year.

Amounts to be Written Off

The Clerk had circulated a list of sums to be written off with the Agenda. In summary the sums on the list have both small debits and credits which either cannot be collected or refunded which amounts to -£0.11 in total which is requested for consideration of writing off.

Members considered the sum to be written off and UNANIMOUSLY AGREED for all the credits and debits in the table cumulatively in the sum of -£0.11 in drainage rates to be written off.

STAFF

The Clerk informed that the ADA Lincolnshire Branch were in negotiation for the 2023/24 pay increase. The Boards workforce and shared consortium employees are contractually linked into these negotiations. At the current time the employer's side had made an offer of a percentage increase and a lump sum (Unconsolidated). This offer has been rejected by the staff side. It is a little uncertain how these negotiations will progress. The Boards estimates for next year's budgets include for the offered increase with a small contingency but clearly the overall costs will be influenced by the terms eventually agreed.

CONSORTIUM ARRANGEMENTS

Meeting Date

The Clerk confirmed the next meeting of the Consortium Management Committee will be held on 7th February 2023 at the **Escrick & Deighton Club, 63 Main Street, Escrick, York, YO19 6LQ**. This is prior to the next meeting of the Board on 6th March 2023 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 Boards 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 J P Coverdale and Mr D J E Sherry. The two Members being willing to attend and act on behalf of the Board.

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to sustain the above arrangements for Mr J P Coverdale and Mr D J E Sherry 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 Clerk informed that the Boards maintenance policy was important as it set the foundation for the allocation of resources. This deciding on the work to be contracted out and conducted in house by the Boards workforce. The Board then using this to establish the required workforce resources such as plant renewal and equipment. The Board currently contracting its Maintenance flail mowing out as it is cheaper. The Board retaining its existing flail mower and tractor for small amounts of occasional work as and when required. The Boards workforce of three then focus on channel works with its two excavators and other equipment along with the other usual manual maintenance activities. The Boards budget estimates and plant renewal being developed on this basis.

Members noted this policy had been in place for several years and were in support of it being sustained.

PLANT RENEWAL

Plant Renewal Sheet

The Clerk had circulated a suggested plant renewal and replacement programme sheet up to 2028/29 with the Agenda. The shaded portion highlighting financial year 2023/24. This being based on the current maintenance policy.

Financial Year 2022/23

The Clerk confirmed that the Board had purchased a new 18 tonne Hyundai excavator and delivery is expected before the end of the financial year.

The Clerk also explained that the Board would seek to purchase an extension arm for its 8t excavator. This arm being made so it can continue to be used on any future replacement machine.

Mr D J E Sherry asked about the safety of the arm for the machine as it extends its reach.

The Engineering Assistant informing that the arm will be appropriately designed and operated as directed by the supplier.

The Engineering Assistant explained the required purchase of two fuel tanks for usage in the pick-up trucks for the excavators will be progressed. The old towing bowser (2007/8) but recently refurbished will be kept as a reserve rather than sold.

Financial Year 2023/24

The Clerk confirmed that the Board intends to replace its older pick-up truck and purchase an excavator flail head.

Plant Replacement and Boards Reserves

The Clerk noted the importance of sustaining the Boards workforce productivity with reliable modern equipment. The table showing replacement of the Boards excavators on a five-year basis. 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. The purchase of this excavator contributing to a forecasted deficit for the Board from its estimates at the end of 2022/23. The investment in the excavator creating a benefit beyond 2022/23 over the time it is in service. The expense of the equipment being purchased results in the Board being unable to increase plant reserves from income. To fund future years replacement of equipment roughly requires £30,000 or more per year. This sum including the costs of replacing the pickup trucks when required. It was further noted the long delivery times for equipment.

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.

FUEL USAGE AND CARBON EMMISSIONS

The Clerk informed he believed the Board investing in modern efficient equipment such as its excavators and vehicles should be keeping up with technology and fuel conservation. The Boards maintenance work largely currently being driven by fuel usage. At this stage consideration is being given to trying to establish its current carbon usage. He is also pressing ADA National for a common approach across IDBs in calculating carbon emission. ADA recently issuing guidance on how this can be progressed. Potentially in the future Boards public funding may need an input of carbon being emitted and approaches to reduce its emissions as a measure for the funds provided.

BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLANS

The Clerk informed he was advancing updating the Biodiversity Action Plan for York Consortium Member Boards. The plan covering all the Boards will be produced in one document. The work to date has consisted of populating an ADA National template.

A meeting was held on 24th November to review progress at Derwent House and good conservation advice and guidance was given from specialists and Members to help with the plans development.

Mr S Wragg offered assistance from the City of York Council's conservation officer if they were available.

Cllr T Fisher offering his interest and input to the development of these plans.

ADA National Environmental Good Governance Guide

The Clerk further informed that ADA National had also just published an Environmental Good Governance Guide. The content of which will be referenced in the Biodiversity Action Plan review work. A copy of which can be obtained from the ADA National website.

BUDGET 2023/24

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 2022/23 and advising on a potential budget for financial year 2023/24. The option given was based on a rate of 4.84p in the £. an increase of 7.32% and provided details as to the budget's composition.

The Clerk noted that inflation at the current time is above 10%, it being uncertain the longer term implications on the state of the economy and how prices will rise.

The Clerk went through the budget sheet line by line. He however noted the deficit forecast reduces the Boards reserves but has been driven by increased costs and plant purchase. The estimates then include an increase in the Boards Drainage Rates to 4.84p for 2023/24 financial year. On the basis that the Board makes the purchases of equipment as per the plant renewal programme the Boards reserves would decrease to £555,609 including earmarked reserves at the end of financial year 2023/24. This equating to a decrease in reserves over this and the next financial year of £97,649.

The Clerk noting the increased income from the highland water contribution and savings in Consortium staff and costs. These factors in turn helping to reduce the eventual deficit. It is also possible the Environment Agency may make a further payment of highland water contribution if eventual savings are made in its revenue budget.

The Clerk noting that if the year 2023/24 is also favourable and the estimated expenditure is less the deficit will be less than forecast.

The Board at this stage is estimating costs at a time of uncertainty which potentially could be unfavourable. As an example the Board has not yet tendered for 2023/24's flailing works which could be higher than anticipated if fuel costs continue to increase.

Board Members discussed these matters in detail along with the position on the Boards reserves and the proposals for purchasing 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 D M Crossley asked if the Board can afford to sustain the required equipment and employment responsibilities. This being based on the information provided by the Clerk. He believed that perhaps the Board should set a higher drainage rate to increase funds to contribute to plant renewal.

The Clerk informed that the Board was not creating a surplus to fund plant and equipment replacement currently. He noted that drainage rates are set annually and can be increased in the future. He recognised markets were uncertain with high inflation potentially increasing material, fuel and employment costs. He believed that these factors are impacting on the councils paying 'special levy' and the Boards drainage ratepayers. In reality he believed Mr D M Crossley is correct but a pragmatic approach was required because of the current uncertainties. It was hoped next year would bring greater stability in the economy and drainage rates can be set accordingly.

Mr S Wragg informing he could understand the drivers for increasing costs and highlighted the wider pressures the Councils funding was under along with highlighting the existing amount being paid however he accepted the pragmatic approach in the documents circulated for the meeting but believed it would be beneficial in future years to understand how the funds are being used.

Mr I Ridsdale believes the figures do not show the required longer term income to fund replacements as these are having to be funded from reserves. He further believed in the rates being charged it is important that ratepayers believe the work carried out by the Board is good value.

LAYING OF THE
RATE & SPECIAL
LEVIES

The Board needing to be careful to manage this position with any rate increase.

Cllr T Fisher **PROPOSED** a rate of 4.84p in £. an increase of 7.32% as he believed the sum is right for the current circumstances.

Mrs S Wiseman seconding the proposal of Cllr T Fisher.

The Clerk asked if any amendment to the proposal was to be tabled but none was forthcoming.

Members were **UNANIMOUSLY IN AGREEMENT** to the budget and that the drainage rates had been set at 4.84p in £.

Mr M Kemp believed it was necessary to put the rates up as agreed and believed that both the ratepayer and council would not have any surprises in the magnitude of the increase with the current economic pressures.

Mr S Stark believed the Clerk needs to keep a close eye managing the Board and its funds in the current economic situation.

The proposal of an increase in rates and levies at 7.32% 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 13.59% and 86.41% 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 4.84p in the £. for the period ending on the 31st day of March 2024. A Special Levy chargeable to **THE CITY OF YORK COUNCIL** in the sum of £329,195.71, for the period ending on the 31st day of March 2024. A Special Levy chargeable to **NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL** in the sum of £5,485.26 for the period ending on the 31st day of March 2024. The Council replacing Ryedale District Council and Hambleton Borough Council from 1st April 2023 who otherwise would have been charged a Special Levy of £4,431.74p and £1053.52p respectively.

A Special Levy chargeable to **THE EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL** in the sum of £18,205.85 for the period ending on the 31st day of March 2024.

AND that the Special Levies shall be payable in two equal instalments on the 1st May 2023 and the 1st November 2023.

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.

<u>PURPOSES</u> under the Rate Land Drainage Act 1991 for which the Rate mentioned is made.	<u>AMOUNT</u> of the in the £. for the Occupiers' Rate.
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|---|-------|
| a) Expenses of Administration)
under this Act.) | |
| b) Works of maintenance under)
the said Act.) | 4.84p |
| 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.) | 4.84p |

ENGINEER'S REPORT

The Engineering Assistant had circulated a report with the Agenda of the work carried out for Members consideration.

The Clerk apologised that no mapping of recent maintenance work was available for Members to view. This will be provided prior to the next meeting of the Board.

The Clerk highlighted the main aspects of the report.

Foss Upstream Storage Channel Proposals

The Clerk informed that the Environment Agency had met with the Board.

Cllr T Fisher asked about the proposal and if they would have any implications for the planning permission which had been granted.

The Clerk informed that no formal proposal had been made to the Board in relation to these potential scheme amendments.

ADA NORTHERN BRANCH

The Clerk reported on the Branch AGM held in November at the Ouse and Humber Drainage Board office. At this meeting a chairman was elected and a new Branch Constitution agreed. Branch Members also agreed that ADA's National Conference should be held in London.

Summer Meeting/Visit

The Clerk informed a summer meeting/visit is to be held which is likely to be at Cave Castle in Brough along with a visit and inspection on 19th May 2023.

AGM

The Clerk informed this is likely to be on 24th November 2023 but no venue has yet been decided upon.

FLOOD AND WATER LIVE 2023

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

CORRESPONDENCE

Formation of the North Yorkshire Council

The Clerk informed that Ryedale Borough Council and Hambleton Borough Council were joining the North Yorkshire Council as part of a wider merger.

Mrs S Wiseman asked why no Members were Nominated from either Council.

The Clerk confirming that the amount of Special Levy paid by the two councils does not give the combined authority eligibility to nominate a Member.

The Clerk reported there was no further 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.

(SEE APPENDIX TO MINUTES)

CONSENTS

The Clerk referred to the list of one Consent 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 £496,378.31 with Barclays Bank as at the 23rd December 2022.

The Virgin Bank account has an additional credit balance of £154,176.25. The Boards placing funds into a twelve-month deposit account which is achieving 1.90% gross per annum.

The Nationwide Building Society account has an additional credit balance of £64,110.62. The Board placing funds in a 95 day business saver account which is achieving 2.50% gross per annum.

The total balance of the Boards funds held in these accounts is £714,665.18.

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.

It was proposed by Mr C Chambers, seconded by Mr S Wragg 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 6th March 2023** commencing at **1.30pm**.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Monday 5th June 2023
Monday 4th September 2023
Monday 6th November 2023

ANY OTHER
BUSINESS

Mr M Kemp noted the farming award to Mr J Duggleby (Retired Beverley and North Holderness IDB Chairman) which was reported in the Yorkshire Post. He believed this was a good recognition for his work supporting land drainage and IDB's.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 2.38pm as there was no other business.

(APPENDICES TO FOLLOW)