

MINUTES of Meeting held on Monday 13th March 2023 at Pike Hill Golf Club, Tadcaster Road, Askham Bryan, York

PRESENT

Mr A P Sykes (In the Chair)
Mr C E Mills
Mr R F Hildreth
Mr S Barnes
Mr J Sanderson
Mr J B Blacker
Mr A Percy
Mr P Bramley
Mrs S Wiseman
Cllr D Carr
Cllr A Warneken

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

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr S E Jackson, Mr S Wragg, Cllr J Galvin and Mr C Clayton.

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 for inspection and update as required.

MEMBERSHIP

Position with Vacancies for Elected Members

The Clerk confirmed that currently the Board had twelve Elected agricultural members and two vacancies. The Board however was reducing its overall membership number and the elected membership will reduce to nine however it is currently uncertain when this formal reduction will be formally in place.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Mr R F Hildreth proposed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th January 2023, a copy of which had been sent to all Members, be taken as read and recommended for approval at the next meeting so they can be forthwith signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Mrs S Wiseman seconded the proposal of Mr R F Hildreth and was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED by the Board.

MATTERS ARISING

New North Yorkshire Council Nominated Members

Cllr A Warneken informed he had recently attended a meeting of the new council. At this meeting he had raised the matter of Council nominated IDB membership. In this he had asked for the Councils constitution for appointment of Members to outside bodies to be changed to additionally include parish councillors in North Yorkshire. This potentially increasing the numbers of Members who can be nominated. This also requiring the relevant Councillor nominating the individual to the Councils Democratic Services for formal appointment on the Board. He is hopeful the Council we be able to ratify the change at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

The Clerk thanked him for this information and informed that ADA National had also been discussing this matter with the Council. In this they were hoping for the short term the Council might be able to sustain existing nominated Members.

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

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 had a meeting with Mr R Shepherd, its Health and Safety Advisor, reviewing and updating its Health and Safety Policy and arrangements on 17th February 2023.

BOARDS BOUNDARY CHANGE AND CHANGES IN THE BOARDS MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS

The Clerk informed the administrative work agreeing the changes and required consultation document was progressing slowly. The Environment Agency Solicitor working on agreeing and publicising the required documentation for the changes. The Clerk was informed because of the change of the Boards boundary a map was required of the change. He therefore has worked with the Environment Agency to produce the required map which has been given to the Environment Agency solicitor. As the change is reasonably small, a reasonably detailed map has now been provided.

RATES

The Clerk reported that the total rates collected up to the 10th March 2023 are as follows:

(a) Special Levy	-	£330,083.63	(100%)
(b) Direct Levy	-	<u>£ 66,605.94</u>	(97.0%)
		<u>£396,689.57</u>	

The Clerk gave an overview on court actions and larger sums outstanding. He further 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.

MAINTENANCE WORKS

New Mapping Software

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 a licence out in new mapping software. This creates a web address which links to an online map on a view only basis highlighting the work being progressed. The work for last year being highlighted which can be saved for reference in the future. He further offered to demonstrate the system after the meeting if required.

Maintenance Report

The Engineering Assistant had circulated a report with the Agenda which he ran through highlighting the items raised.

Priority Drain Flailing Considerations

The Engineering Assistant referred to his report circulated about a potential change in the Boards approach to watercourse flailing. In summary the proposal suggests that watercourses can be set in three categories:

- High Priority Lengths
- Priority Lengths
- Lower Priority Lengths

He informed the report was based on the old district of North Wharfe. The watercourses being divided into the above three categories. The flailing work carried out by the Boards contractors can be directed to reflect the watercourse category and priority. The details of the possible approach in each category being explained in the report along with the benefits and potential cost savings for North Wharfe being included in the report.

The Engineering Assistant highlighted that on North Wharfe as an example the Main Foss was a high priority to maintain but a different priority downstream of the tidal defence in the portion in the Ings. In relation to any savings to be achieved for flailing it will be on the contract cost but this is hard to estimate for the entire Board as the watercourses have not all been categorised and the work has not yet been put out to tender.

Members discussed this approach and the biodiversity and habitat improvements were noted along with a potential saving in cost. The options of the approach to either carry it out as a trial perhaps in North Wharfe or more widely across the drainage district was given consideration.

Mr C E Mills believed that a consistent approach across all the districts of the Boards area for ratepayers was required.

The Chairman understood the reasoning for a consistent approach but believed that potentially North Wharfe could be progressed as an initial trial to minimise any risk of applying it as a new approach over the entire Board area.

The Engineering Assistant informing he believed the approach as a trial would be appropriate. If the work was unsatisfactory or extremely bad weather conditions are experienced causing problems a contingency could be held. This can then be used to conduct whatever other work was then needed and the contractors could provide the resources for the trial area. If applied across the Boards districts this may not be so flexible so initially a trial was required. In this approach the Board will still manage the watercourses and noted change can be difficult to manage but intended to keep an overview on maintenance and had no intention of allowing channel performance to deteriorate unless appropriate. The report also containing the potential pros and cons of changing the approach.

The Chairman agreed to the approach that the categorisation as proposed was useful. He believed a trial for one year would be a good initial approach.

Cllr A Warneken believed a contingency for this approach needs to be built into the Boards contracts.

Proposals for the Approach to the Boards Flailing Work

The Chairman (Mr A P Sykes) proposed a trial for one year in the North Wharfe district of the Board as per the Engineering Assistant's report.

Cllr A Warneken seconding the proposal of the Chairman.

The Clerk asked if any amendment to the motion proposed by the Chairman was made.

Cllr A Warneken asked for the motion to be directly voted on and if it was not in favour for, an alternative motion to be made.

Members being in support of this approach.

Vote on the Proposal

The Chairman put the motion to the vote and five voted for the motion and three against.

Mr J B Blacker abstaining from the vote.

The Chairman noted his vote was not required and informed the motion was carried.

Health and Safety Case Study

Members discussed health and safety issues arising out of the case study. This relating to competency and machinery training in its usage. It was particularly noted the difference in requirements of construction with CDM regulations and agriculture.

(SEE APPENDIX TO MINUTES)

PRECEPT

The Clerk advised the Board that the Precept has been confirmed by the Environment Agency in its letter which arrived at the Boards office on 21st February 2023 at £43,272.47 for financial year 2023/24. A recommendation of the Precept required by the Environment Agency being made and accepted by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC). This keeping the Precept at the same level which has been held for a number of years. The payment is required in two instalments on or before 1st August 2023 and 1st December 2023.

HIGHLAND WATER CONTRIBUTION

The Clerk informed that at a recent Regional Flood and Coastal Committee a decision was made in the Yorkshire Region to pay 74.92% of the IDB highland water claims. The Board's claim was made based on the sum of £67,946.90 on expenditure of £159,492.65 up to the end of financial year 2021/22. The Board being paid £50,905.14 to match the budget of the overall payments in the Yorkshire Region. The Environment Agency have considered if any efficiencies or savings have been made to increase the payment percentage made but the Clerk has been informed that this is unlikely to be possible with the current financial year closing shortly.

This returning of maintenance funds a year later is an important return income to the Board. The level of percentage paid in recent years has been high. It however, gives no certainty that the percentages will remain at this level in the future. However, the Board supports and appreciates the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) keeping the percentage contribution at a high level.

CONSORTIUM MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Clerk reported that a Consortium Management Committee Meeting was held on 7th February 2023. The meeting was attended by Mr S Jackson (Chairman) and Mr A P Sykes (Vice Chairman). A copy of the Consortium Agreement can be made available for Members to view if they wished. The meeting confirmed and agreed the Consortium staffing levels for financial year 2023/24 and the resources to provide the service.

The Clerk running through the items covered at the meeting. This including the potential to consider increasing the number of Boards in the overall Consortium. This, if the opportunity arises, would be intended to increase the administration efficiency of the consortium arrangements. This requires a reasonably sized Board for efficiencies to be achieved.

Committee Members gave the Clerk an open mandate to call a meeting of the Consortium should any appropriate opportunities arise.

The Clerk further highlighted the opportunities across the Consortium for partnership working under Public Sector Cooperation Agreements (PSCA) with our partners which this Board is clearly progressing.

The Chairman supporting the increased resource proposals for the Consortium.

The Clerk highlighting the agreement to an increased geographical mapping resource (GIS) across the Consortium Boards and the employment of a Field Works Supervisor for the three Boards in the York area.

STAFF

Pay Award 2023/2024

The Clerk advised the Board that the ADA Lincolnshire Branch pay negotiations for 2023/2024 were being progressed and a 2.1% increase on all grades plus an unconsolidated sum of £1,800 payable in two half instalments. The offer currently being progressed is not yet agreed.

The Clerk noted at this stage agreement had not been achieved. He however hoped that the decision will be made or close to be being made in time for the next financial year. This would enable payment to be made in relation to the employers offer.

Members considered the position and agreed with the approach suggested by the Clerk but noted increasing costs and the need to retain staff.

ADA NATIONAL

Keeping Our Rivers Flowing Meeting – 29th March 2023

The Clerk informed the third meeting of this group is being organised. This will be held at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire at the show ground close to ADA's office. Tickets are available online and he will be attending on behalf of the York Consortium Member Boards. The meeting including representatives from CLA, NFU, ADA, EA and others.

Water Management Live

The Clerk informed that a potential ADA National Land Drainage Machinery and Equipment Demonstration is being progressed in 2023 at Dyson Farms in Carrington near Boston in Lincolnshire on 5th and 6th July 2023. This is going to be called Flood and Water Live 2023.

London Conference

The Clerk informed that an ADA National Conference is to be held on 8th November 2023.

ADA National AGM

The Clerk informed that this meeting will be held virtually away from the National Conference. This is being organised on 27th September 2023. Details and joining instructions can be provided by the Clerk if requested closer to the time.

ADA NORTHERN
BRANCH

Summer Meeting/Visit

The Clerk informed a summer meeting/visit is to be held at Cave Castle along with a visit on 19th May 2023. It being likely a site visit will be held in the local area.

ADA Northern Branch AGM

The Clerk informed this is likely to be on 24th November 2023 and will be held at the Ouse and Humber IDB Offices in Newport.

ADA Northern Branch Publicity

The Clerk reported that ADA Northern Branch will have a stand at the Driffield Agricultural Show on Wednesday 19th July 2023.

CORRESPONDENCE

Environment Agency Flood and Coastal Conference 2023

The Clerk reported that the Environment Agency Conference will be held from 6th to 8th June in Telford. The Clerk will be attending on the last day to represent the Boards who are Members of the York Consortium of Drainage Boards.

The Clerk reported that no further significant correspondence had been received by the Board 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.

Cllr A Warneken noted the change from district councils to the new North Yorkshire Council. The new Council taking on local planning in a new constitution and in the Boards district decisions only seven councillors are on the committee of which he is one.

The Clerk reporting that all this information was now digitised and a copy can be provided to Members if requested.

(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 to members if requested.

(SEE APPENDIX TO MINUTES)

BANK STATEMENTS

The Clerk produced the Bank Statements for the Board's Current Account with a credit balance of £698,264.10 with Barclays Bank as at the 17th February 2023.

The Virgin Bank Account Term Deposit has an additional credit balance of £154,176.25. The Board placing funds into a twelve-month deposit account which is achieving 1.9% gross per annum.

The Nationwide Building Society Account has an additional credit balance of £75,126.62. The Board placing funds in a 95-day business saver account which is achieving 2.80% increased from 1st February 2023.

The total balance of the Boards funds held in these accounts is £927,566.97.

The Clerk confirmed that Barclays Bank are 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 **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 Hill Golf Club, Tadcaster Road, Askham Bryan, York, YO23 3UW** on **Monday 19th June 2023** commencing at **6.30pm**.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Monday 11th September 2023
Monday 13th November 2023

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

York Local Elections

Cllr D Carr noted a local election in York shortly and thus uncertainty in the potential future nominations for York Council Board Members.

Brumber Carr Drain Railway Work

The Engineering Assistant was asked about the railway work and he informed that it was still ongoing and he was uncertain why the work was taking so long.

Reduced Flailing Work Trials

Mr C E Mills asked if the Engineering Assistant had had any consultation on the change of approach to the Boards flailing works.

The Engineering Assistant informed that he had not directly in the Boards district although he had discussed it with some farmers. In the Foss (2008) IDB district in some locations reduced cutting has been trialled. The approach being supported by the Environment Agency and conservation groups because of the conservation and biodiversity benefits.

The Clerk thanked Members for attending the meeting.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 6.32pm as there was no other business.

(APPENDICES TO FOLLOW)

**CLOSE OF
MEETING**