

MINUTES of Meeting of Finance Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 14th January 2020 at the Ouse & Derwent Offices, Crockey Hill, York

PRESENT

Cllr J Cattanach (In the Chair)

Mr J Daniel

Mr R E Britton

Mr S Wragg

The Clerk – Mr W Symons

Finance Officer – Mrs F Bradley

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Clerk reported that an apology for absence was received from Mr J Hopwood.

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 at the meeting for inspection and update as required.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on the 1st October 2019, 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

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

RATES

The Clerk reported the position of this year's outstanding drainage rates. The Board is not progressing any court actions currently from the 2019/20 drainage rates. Any action if taken would be in line with the Boards policy on outstanding rates. However, one account remains which the Board does not have the contact details of the landowner. The Board further has two accounts not paid where one rate payer has deceased.

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.

The Sub Committee Members REVIEWED the list and AGREED with the Clerk to recommend the transfer to Special Levy:

1. The land on account 90-0044-5 shown in the circulated list to Selby District Council as a garden along with the write off of £0.44
2. The land on account 90-0637-1 University land developed shown in the circulated list to City of York Council with the write off of £6.57 in Heslington.
3. The land being developed by Persimmon Homes at Germany Beck in relation to City of York Council. This was noted in previous years at the Boards AGM as a significantly large development which will potentially take up to 15 years to complete. Sub Committee Members recognising that property completion will be phased over a period of time and much of the site will remain undeveloped initially. The land however will be unable to be used for agricultural purpose as it will be in the early stages of development. In view of this it was recommended for this year 1/15 of the land area is transferred to Special Levy. This also including the remaining land not transferred having its drainage rates written off. The Boards AGM three years ago agreeing to this recommendation. The Clerk suggesting in the enclosed report the Board for the third year considers 1/15 of the land area is transferred to Special Levy. This also including the remaining land not transferred having its drainage rates written off. The details of which were included on the summary sheet.

The Clerk informed the transfers will take place from 1st April 2020 to reflect the land no longer being used for agricultural usage.

The Sub Committee RECOMMENDED to the Main Board that the land should be transferred to Special Levy (Selby District Council and York City Council) as above, this along with writing off the sum of £110.55.

CONSORTIUM ARRANGEMENTS

The Clerk reported that the annual meeting of the Consortium Management Committee (CMC) will be held on 11th February 2020. The Board at last year's meeting was represented by Mr R E Britton 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 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 Sub Committee's RECOMMENDATION if accepted by the Board is to nominate both Mr R E Britton and Cllr J Cattanach for them to attend the annual CMC Meeting.

PLANT RENEWALS/ PURCHASE

The Clerk presented the Plant Renewals Schedule, which had been circulated with the Agenda.

Proposed Approach to Maintenance Works

It is intended that the Board will again contract out all the flailing works, which will be put out to tender as usual. The Board now has its own two tracked excavators so the Board's workforce can concentrate on sludging and tracked excavator maintenance works.

Plant Replacement Frequency

The Clerk noted that the machinery replacement needs review in relation to changing market conditions. The Board seeking to get best value for selling its existing plant whilst purchasing replacements at the best possible price. The timing of the change being intended to make the most of machine warranties provided when new. The Board needing to change the machines to sustain productivity to avoid diminishing reliability and increasing maintenance costs. At the current time the Boards excavators with continued usage replacement should be considered after five years if significant hours are run.

2019/20 Plant Replacement

The Board has purchased a new Isuzu Eiger pick up truck following the private sale of its 2003 Landrover 90. It has further part exchanged its old Ifor Williams trailer and purchased a new one.

2020/21 Plant Replacement

The Board intends to purchase an all-terrain vehicle/buggy primarily to assist in the Boards weed spraying work. A provision of £13,000 being made.

The Sub Committee discussed the potential equipment and its usage for spraying in detail.

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. It is hoped in this financial year a surplus of £16,036 will be achieved which could contribute towards plant reserves which are intended to include £30,000 annually to sustain the Boards productivity with new and modern equipment.

The Sub Committee discussed the five-year replacement of the tracked excavators and the equipment such as extended arms and buckets etc being retained when the excavator is replaced if the same machine is purchased.

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 as proposed above.

BUDGET 2020/2021

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

The Finance Officer ran through the budget estimate. This showed the estimated out turns for financial year 2019/20 along with estimates for financial year 2020/21. The budget included for the office repair and improvement works. The paper being based on the Board sustaining its existing rate.

The Finance Officer explained that the Board had engaged a building surveyor to scope and tender on the open market a package of work to address the issues at Derwent House. This work including remediation to the walls of the downstairs hall following the damp, making an internal access to the gent's toilet, refurbishing the ladies and gents' toilets along with also conducting work on one of the buildings chimneys which has slight damp problems on the ground floor. This Board had received two tender returns from four requests of £45,000 and £57,000 which was clearly a large sum.

It was therefore decided to allocate expenditure of an additional £12,500 for the current financial year and also the next. The Board seeking prices from local contractors for work and will be progressed for particular trades more on an item by item basis. If the work is undertaken this way it is hoped to reduce the cost of the work overall. The Board is also investing in a new alarm system and CCTV to improve security in the office building. The budgets and estimates include provision for this work on this basis for financial year 1919/20 and 2020/21.

The Clerk being aware of recent break ins in the North Yorkshire region with small hand tools such as chain saws and strimmer's being stolen.

Sub Committee Members were supportive of progressing the work in this way and agreed to making provision in the budget to try to address these items in the sums proposed.

The Clerk explained the Boards position of having to obtain planning permission for the shed extension which had caused a delay in it being progressed.

The Clerk noted that RPI at the current time is about 2.6% and with the uncertainty of Brexit could go up to 3% in the future. This highlighting a risk and being indicative of rising costs.

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

(SEE APPENDIX TO MINUTES)

The Sub Committee Members considered the Boards balances held along with the Budget proposals and the rate of a sum of 4.38p for 2020/21 with no increase over the rates of 2019/20. The Proposal was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to RECOMMEND approval to the Board.

PROPOSALS FOR LAYING OF THE RATE 2020/21

RECONSTITUTION
OF THE BOARD TO
REDUCE
MEMBERSHIP
NUMBERS

HEALTH AND
SAFETY POLICY

ACCOUNTS FOR
CONFIRMATION

DATE OF NEXT
MEETING

FUTURE MEETINGS

The Clerk reported that limited progress had been made. An Email update on progress from the Environment Agency had been provided with the Agenda for Members reference. However, it was expected the process will take some time to conclude.

The Clerk tabled a draft revised and updated Health and Safety Policy. The policy being developed with assistance from the Boards Health and Safety Advisor. The policy taking the form of two parts:

Part 1 being the local Health and Safety responsibility;
Part 2 being the specific Health and Safety guidance and policy.

Mr R E Britton asked about the hierarchy of the Policy and its links to the Chairman.

The Clerk informed that the intention is that this was covered in Part 1 of the policy as advised by the Boards Health and Safety Advisor.

Mr R E Britton noted it was difficult to identify changes to the document and he asked in future reviews if it was possible to track changes to the document.

The Sub Committee considered the updated draft

Mr R E Britton proposed that the draft be recommended to be adopted as the Boards current Policy.

The Chairman seconding the proposal of Mr R E Britton and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to recommend that the Board adopt it subject to minor editing as required and the Boards Chairman and Clerk are authorised to sign it.

The Chairman leaving the meeting at this stage.

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

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

(SEE APPENDIX TO MINUTES)

Tuesday 26th May 2020 at 1pm. This being prior to the Main Board meeting on 16th June 2020.

Tuesday 29th September 2020 at 1pm. This being prior to the Main Board meeting on 27th October 2020.

ANY OTHER
BUSINESS

The Finance Officer raised that locally the Parish Council had installed two defibrillators. Local business contributing £250 inclusive.

Mr RE Britton noted the number of people passing on the A19 and proposed the Board could make a contribution to the overall cost of a one-off payment.

The Sub Committee Members RECOMMENDING UNANIMOUSLY that the Board could make a contribution to the Parish Council.

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

(APPENDICES TO FOLLOW)