

MINUTES of Meeting held on Monday 8th January 2024 at the Strensall and Towthorpe Village Hall, Northfields, Strensall, York

PRESENT

Mr J P Coverdale (In the Chair)
Mr D R Brotherton
Mr D J E Sherry
Mr P E Clark
Mr M Kemp
Mr I Ridsdale
Mr R J Burnett
Mr D M Crossley
Mr C Chambers
Mrs S Wiseman
Mr M Lumley-Holmes
Mr J Dent
Mr S Wragg
Cllr D Needham

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

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr J Sowray, Mr M Cockerill and Cllr M Warters.

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.

MEMBERSHIP

City of York Council

The Chairman welcomed Mr J Dent from St Nicks as a new Member to the Board nominated by City of York Council.

MINUTES OF MEETING

It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED and RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 6th November 2023, 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.

Site Visit and Inspection of the Foss Storage Area

Mr D R Brotherton asked about the potential arrangements for Board Members to visit and view the Foss upstream storage works at Lilling Green.

Mr S Wragg informed that currently conditions were very wet and the contractors were off site so it was probably worthwhile leaving a visit until ground conditions improve.

The Engineering Assistant informed he could try to obtain aerial drone footage to be shown at the next meeting of the Board.

Members were in agreement to this approach.

Mr S Wragg noted that the work on the storage area was not fully complete so it was uncertain at the current time, with the flooding, the implications on its current function.

Impact of Recent Floods

Mr D J E Sherry asked following the recent floods if flow and water levels were dropping.

The Engineering Assistant informing this appeared to be happening in the River Foss catchment.

The Clerk informing that it was much wetter in districts which are impacted by ground water such as the Beverley and North Holderness IDB.

River Derwent

The Chairman informed he was very concerned about flow conveyance in the River Derwent following the wet weather and how the Barmby Barrage is being operated.

Mr I Ridsdale noted that channel conveyance was holding water back at Bubwith and upstream and he did not believe it was being caused by the operation of the barrier. He however believed that channel conveyance was restricted due to a lack of maintenance. This resulting in water being held back at Sutton and as far upstream as Stamford Bridge.

The Engineering Assistant informed that the level monitor at Elvington has consistently been reading 1.6m to 1.5m but is not dropping off upstream of Bubwith. He informed the Board's concerns about this matter have been logged with the Environment Agency.

Mr M Kemp informed the National Farmers Union (NFU) are arranging a meeting with farmers and the Environment Agency at the Barmby Barrage.

Mr I Ridsdale hopes he will be able to attend this meeting. He however believes the IDB should also be asked to come to bring everyone together which is not happening.

The Clerk reported that no further matters were arising from the Minutes of the last meeting which are 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.

The Clerk reported that the total rates collected up to the 5th January 2024 are as follows:

(a) Special Levy -	£352,886.82	(100%)
(b) Direct Levy -	<u>£ 55,114.77</u>	(100%)
	<u>£408,001.59</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.

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 had circulated maps and a summary table with the Agenda for the Board's consideration.

Members gave consideration of the sports field on account 70-0205-5 which had been built upon and was now two properties. The location is near Storking Lane near Wilberfoss Village. The land transfer would be from Agricultural Drainage Rates to Special Levy. As the land is in East Riding of Yorkshire Council's district the payment will then be included in the Council's 'Special Levy' demand.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

RATES

TRANSFER TO SPECIAL LEVY AND WRITE OFF

The Clerk explaining the financial implications shown on the summary table.

Members discussed the land and its location.

Amounts to be Written Off

An overall sum in drainage rates remaining on land transferred to Special Levy which cannot be collected amounts to £6.32. The details of which were circulated in a table with the Agenda which is requested for consideration of writing off.

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to the transfer to Special Levy to the East Riding of Yorkshire Council as per the maps provided along with the write off of £6.32 in drainage rates.

STAFF

Staff and Workforce Pay Increase

The Clerk informed that he had received information that the ADA Lincolnshire Branch pay increase was likely to be for financial year 2024/25 as follows:

- Consolidate £1,130 of the unconsolidated payment from 2023/24 from 01 April 2024.
- To apply a pay award to the 2023/24 Salary rates and the £1,130, of 6.45% (being the 12-month average of the average weekly earnings figure for the public sector published by the Office for National Statistics).

CONSORTIUM ARRANGEMENTS

Meeting Date

The Clerk confirmed the next meeting of the Consortium Management Committee will be held on 6th February 2024 to be held at **Escrick & Deighton Club, 63 Main Street, Escrick, York, YO19 6LQ**. This is prior to the next meeting of the Board on 4th March 2024 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 Board's 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.

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to sustain the above arrangements for Mr D J E Sherry and Mr J P Coverdale 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

This was based on the Board retaining its existing flail mower and tractor for light duties. To then continue contracting out flailing across the Board's district. The Board's workforce of two/three will focus on channel works with its two excavators along with the other usual manual maintenance activities. The Board's budget estimates and plant renewal being developed on this basis.

Mr M Lumley-Holmes raised concerns of Earswick Parish Council and the Board's conservation trials in relation to some locations with public footpaths. He believed the Board had not agreed the extent it had been carried out and it looked a mess, detracting the area from its amenity value. He believed the trial had gone beyond the scope of the authorised remit for the works. He also believed the Parish Council should be engaged on any alterations to the approach.

Mrs S Wiseman agreed with Mr M Lumley-Holmes.

The Engineering Assistant informed the Board's work for the first year was a trial and it would be useful if the Parish Council could send an email in detailing the concerns which could then be considered at the forthcoming Sub-Committee Meeting. He further apologised if the Parish Council did not believe that they were adequately informed but clearly, they can join in the wider discussion about the objectives of the trial.

The Chairman believed that this was very much work in progress and a more in-depth discussion was required.

Mr M Lumley-Holmes believes the Board should move to having a published programme to stop any uncertainty about the work being carried out.

DRAINAGE RATING SOFTWARE

Mr S Wragg recognised the difficulties in implementing this type of alternative approach. He noted it was important for the Board to establish from the trial if true access for the public is being impacted or if as a result just a wider visual impact. The Board deciding on its approach from the trial. It however is important that it communicates the approach it is taking and why. This along with taking on Board relevant feedback.

The Engineering Assistant informed that the first Sub-Committee Meeting will be the appropriate time to consider these matters to develop a plan and recommendation for the 2024/25 maintenance season for consideration by the Board.

The Clerk informed drainage boards use some bespoke software to hold statutory data on its rated land and properties. The database being used to generate the Board's rate demands and manage the income against the individual rate accounts when they are paid. The current software is owned and supported by an individual Board providing a service to many other drainage boards. The software however is old and in need of updating. The Board providing the software has given notice that the system will no longer be supported after 1st April 2025. In the letter of notice they inform they believe and seek the future development of the software should be progressed by ADA National. They however are offering to continue to host equivalent software with the data being held on the supporting Board's computer servers and users having to login on the internet for day-to-day usage. This solution however does not address the software being old and in need of updating, it also stops the data and information being held on our Board's systems.

The Clerk in summary believes time is very limited to develop new software to sustain the functionality critical for running the Boards of the York Consortium. The situation could be further delayed if ADA takes responsibility. The issue relating to project funding, scope, governance, and system ownership is not easy to resolve which is likely to take a significant amount of time. In view of this with the time constraints he is considering the options available. He further highlighted the options and supporting documents the Board was progressing to be able to move forward. He also highlighted the potential issues with funding software ownership and governance in matters such as development.

Plant Renewal Sheet

The Clerk has circulated a suggested plant renewal and replacement sheet up to 2030/31 with the Agenda. The shaded green portion highlighting financial year 2024/25. This being based on the Board's Maintenance Policy.

Financial Year 2023/24

The Clerk confirmed that the Board had purchased a new Isuzu D-Max 4x4 Pickup and part exchanged the old Toyota Hilux. The Board sustaining enough vehicles to help the Board's workforce work independently if required. The Board further as previously planned before the end of the financial year will seek to purchase:

- Extension arm for its Kubota 8T excavator. This will be intended to be continued to be used on any future replacement machine (this has recently been delivered);
- Excavator flail head;
- Two portable fuel tanks for usage in the pick-up trucks for the excavators. The old towing bowser (2007/8) which has recently been refurbished being kept as a reserve rather than sold.

Plant Replacement and Board's Reserves

The Clerk noted the importance of sustaining the Board's workforce productivity with reliable modern equipment. The table showing replacement of the Board's excavators on a five-year basis. The Board also has some equipment which is used occasionally and clearly getting older, however it is maintained and repaired as required. This including a Volvo backhoe excavator and tractor.

The Board's current plant reserve funds are likely to be low at the end of the financial year. As the Board is forecasting a small surplus from its estimates at the end of 2023/24 it is intended to increase the plant reserve by this surplus of roughly £5,851 to allocate funding for future purchases and replacements.

If inadequate allocations are made and additional funding required it will have to be drawn from the Board's reserves. In reality to fund future years replacement of equipment roughly requires £30,000 or more per year to fund intended replacements. This sum including the costs of replacing the pickup trucks when required.

Financial Year 2025/26

The Clerk informed that the Board's 8T Kubota excavator was approaching five years old with roughly 5,000 hours run time on the clock. If it was decided to replace, the order to delivery is likely to be reasonably long as the machine is specifically built to the Board's requirements.

Mr M Lumley-Holmes asked about the excavator five-year renewal programme.

The Engineering Assistant informed of the reasoning in relation to warranty, marginal cost to change and implications with older machinery breakdowns.

The Clerk informed that earlier replacement tended to update the Board's fleet to have the latest technology in emissions and safety features. It also then restarts the warranty period in the event of breakdown. The Board usually at a meeting considers the replacement cost and sale of the old equipment prior to any order being placed. This allows consideration by Members of the replacement cost and if it delivers value for money.

Mr I H Ridsdale informed he had done a quick calculation on the cost and depreciation and believed it was more economical than hiring the equipment in from the values presented.

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.

The Clerk had circulated a budget sheet and notes with the Agenda for the forthcoming financial year. The Board budgets including for salary increases, plant replacement costs as planned above and funds as a shared Consortium expenditure for new drainage rating software (DRS). The budget forecasting the out turns for financial year 2023/24 and advising on a potential budget for financial year 2024/25. The option given was based on a rate of 5.05p in the £. an increase of 4.34% and provided details as to the budget's composition.

The Clerk went through the budget sheet line by line. He however noted the small surplus which can be used to increase the Board's plant renewal funds by an estimated £5,851 for the end of 2023/24 financial year. The estimates then include an increase in the Board's drainage rates to 5.05p for 2024/25 financial year. On the basis that the Board makes the purchases of equipment as per the plant renewal programme the Board's reserves would decrease to £525,067 including earmarked reserves at the end of financial year 2024/25. This equating to a decrease in reserves over the financial year of £62,315.

The Clerk noting the increased income from the Highland Water Contribution and savings in Consortium staff and costs. These factors have helped significantly to reduce the deficit in 2023/24. It however was noted that the Environment Agency are unlikely to make an increased payment of Highland Water Contribution as further funds are unlikely to be found from its revenue budget following the recent heavy rainfall and flooding.

The Clerk noting that if the year 2024/25 is also favourable and the estimated expenditure is less the deficit may reduce. The Board however at this stage has an element of uncertainty which could be unfavourable. If the situation is more favourable the Board's reserves are likely to be higher.

Mr M Lumley-Holmes asked about costs in 2023/24 for staff and the actual lower estimated out-turn and the estimated costs for 2024/25 and if they were adequate to fund the ADA Lincolnshire pay increase.

The Clerk explained as described in the budget notes the Board's workforce has had a vacancy for a few months following one of its excavator drivers leaving which it has now filled. The Board further having a vacancy for most of the year as a shared Consortium staff Member, the cost of which is shared with other Boards.

Mr M Lumley-Holmes asked the Clerk to check if the estimates and the sums presented were correct.

Board Members discussed the estimated costs and out turns in detail along with the position on the Board's reserves and the proposals for purchasing of 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.

The Chairman informed the Clerk had suggested a drainage rate increase to 5.05p in the £ an increase of 4.34%.

Mr S Wragg informed that the increase was less than last year and he highlighted the City of York Council's difficulties. These including an £11million budget pressure with future years being potentially even harder as seen in the York Press. He believed it was important to demonstrate the value for money achieved along with a restricted percentage increase. He however informed all precepts were being questioned and needed to show the benefits for the funds. He further informed he had no alternative proposal for the drainage rate to be made.

Cllr D Needham informed that East Riding of Yorkshire Council had identified a £9million budget challenge which had required a review of what the Council can progress. So, he welcomed a rate increase below 4.99%.

The Clerk also highlighting the difficulties in the agricultural community with crop loss and land damage from recent flooding.

Mr M Lumley-Holmes PROPOSED a rate of 5.05p in the £. an increase of 4.34%.

Mr M Kemp seconding the proposal of Mr M Lumley-Holmes.

Members were UNANIMOUSLY IN AGREEMENT to the budget and that the drainage rates had been set at 5.05p in the £.

LAYING OF THE
RATE & SPECIAL
LEVIES

The proposal of an increase in rates and levies at 4.34% 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 5.05p in the £. for the period ending on the 31st day of March 2025.

A Special Levy chargeable to **THE CITY OF YORK COUNCIL** in the sum of £343,479.00 for the period ending on the 31st day of March 2025.

A Special Levy chargeable to **NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL** in the sum of £5,831.48 for the period ending on the 31st day of March 2025.

A Special Levy chargeable to **THE EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL** in the sum of £19,016.98 for the period ending on the 31st day of March 2025.

AND that the Special Levies shall be payable in two equal instalments on the 1st May 2024 and the 1st November 2024.

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.

PURPOSES under the Land Drainage Act 1991 for which the Rate mentioned is made.

AMOUNT of the Rate in the £. for the Occupiers' Rate.

- | | | | |
|----|---|---|-------|
| a) | Expenses of Administration under this Act. |) | |
| b) | Works of maintenance under the said Act. |) | 5.05p |
| 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. |) | 5.05p |

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.

BP Pipeline

Mr P E Clark asked about the BP pipeline and the bank erosion.

The Engineering Assistant informed this matter is likely to be addressed when the crops are off and the Board will work closely with BP who may help fund the work.

Flooding Damage

Mr I Ridsdale was concerned following the storms and high flows the potential for damage to road bridges both public and private. He noted in the flood areas numerous bottles and floating items and sand had been washed up. He noted recent top soil which had been stripped in Pocklington for development and was uncertain what material had been washed away. This along with potentially millions of earthworms killed in land submerged by flood water ruining the natural ground conditions. This situation being caused by up to ten weeks of continuous floods.

Foot Bridge

Mrs S Wiseman asked about a public foot bridge she had concerns about following the high flows. The Engineering Assistant informed she would probably be best contacting the Council's Public Rights of Way Officer (PROW) to make them aware of her concerns.

POLICY STATEMENT REVIEW

The Clerk informed the Board that its Policy Statement on Water Level and Flood Risk Management was due for a review. A copy of which had been provided with the Agenda. The Board having adopted it as a policy on 4th June 2018. The document being produced based on a national ADA template also agreed by Defra. The template report being populated with the Board's specific data. The Board however is asked to review the document every three years. A confirmation of the policy review on this basis being asked for in the Board's Annual Return to Defra.

The Chairman asking if any Members, having reviewed the document, would wish to propose an amendment.

Mr M Lumley-Holmes informed that section 4.3 catchment area number was not populated.

The Clerk informed this was not populated as the information was not available.

Mr M Lumley-Holmes believed this should be stated.

Mrs S Wiseman proposed the Board having reviewed the document, which is produced based on a national template, should be agreed to be accepted and continue as the Board's policy and should again be reviewed as required in the future.

Mr C Chambers seconding the proposal which was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** by the Board.

The Board sustaining the adopted 'Water Level and Flood Risk Management Policy' as circulated with the Agenda with no amendments.

ADA NATIONAL

ADA Environment Day 2024

The Clerk reported that ADA were organising an Environment Day on Friday 2nd February 2024 at Park Farm, Thorney, Cambridgeshire. The Clerk will be attending on behalf of the Board.

ADA NORTHERN
BRANCH

ELECTION

ADA Conference 2024

The Clerk informed that ADA National are organising a Conference on 13st November 2024 at the Institute of Civil Engineers at 10 Great George Street, London, SW1.

ADA AGM

The Clerk informed that the ADA AGM would be a virtual Meeting and held on 3rd December 2024.

ADA Northern Branch AGM

The Clerk informed the AGM was held on 24th November 2023 at Yorkshire and Humber IDB offices. The Clerk was pleased to inform Members he will continue unchallenged as the ADA Northern Branch Director for a further three year term.

ADA Northern Branch Summer Meeting and Trip

The Clerk informed this is likely to be on 7th June 2024 at venue to be decided.

The Clerk advised the Board that 2024 is an 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
23 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 2024.
- (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 that the proposed timetable be approved by the Board.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk reported there was no 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.

Electrical Installations and Toxic Release in the Event of a Fire or Emergency

The Clerk explaining this was slightly removed from the Board's remit in responding to planning applications but recognised it could be a problem.

Mr S Wragg noted he had seen applications which have contained significant silos of water which if suddenly released could cause problems.

Planning Inspectorate Visit for Greater Awareness of IDBs

The Clerk informed the Board had hosted a Christmas visit and meeting at the Board's office for some officers of the Planning Inspectorate.

East Riding of Yorkshire Council Officers in Relation to Drainage Planning and Flooding

Members asked about the officers in East Riding of Yorkshire Council.

The Clerk informed in relation to flood policy and strategy it was a Mr B Kirby. In relation to drainage and drainage planning responses it was Mr S Charlton, Mr G Frisby and Mr M Kitchen.

(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 £295,704.85 with Barclays Bank as at the 22nd December 2024.

The Board also having £100,000 in a Barclays Treasury Fixed Term Deposit Account which is achieving 2.44% gross per annum.

The Virgin Bank account has an additional credit balance of £207,105.59. The Board placing funds into a twelve-month deposit account which is achieving 4.3% gross per annum.

The Nationwide Building Society account has an additional credit balance of £66,066.06. The Board placing funds in a 95-day business saver account which is achieving 3.75% gross per annum.

The total balance of the Boards funds held in these accounts is £668,876.50.

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 Mrs S Wiseman, seconded by Mr D M Crossley 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 4th March 2024** commencing at **1.30pm**.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Monday 3rd June 2024 (possible visit to Foss Storage Area)
Monday 9th September 2024
Monday 4th November 2024

ANY OTHER
BUSINESS

Sow Dyke

Mr P E Clark asked about the dual carriage way and if the Board had contact with the Environment Agency.

The Engineering Assistant informed he would discuss the matter with Mr P E Clark after the meeting.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 3.20pm as there was no other business.

(APPENDICES TO FOLLOW)