

MINUTES of Meeting of Finance Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 15th January 2019 at the Ouse & Derwent Offices, Crockey Hill, York

PRESENT

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

The Clerk – Mr W Symons
Finance Officer – Mrs F Bradley
Engineering Assistant – Mr N Culpan (Part Meeting)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Clerk reported that an apology for absence was received from Cllr B Marshall.

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 2nd October 2018, 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 2018/19 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 at Cliffe near Newlands Farm. The occupier/owner living somewhere else.

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 90-0239 shown in the circulated list to Selby District Council along with the write off of a credit of £35.65 near York Road.
2. The land on account 90-0435 The Ranch Caravan Park shown in the circulated list to Selby District Council with the write off of a credit of £42.04 in Cliffe Common.
3. The land on account 90-0622 The Land is split into a garden shown in the circulated list to Selby District Council along with the write off of a credit of £4.07.
4. The land being developed by Persimmon Homes at Germany Beck in relation to York City 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 two 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 2019 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 £194.24.

CONSORTIUM ARRANGEMENTS

The Clerk reported that the annual meeting of the Consortium Management Committee (CMC) will be held on 12th February 2019. The Board at last year's meeting was represented by Mr R E Britton although Cllr J Cattnach was also nominated he was unable to attend. 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 Cattnach 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.

2018/19 Plant Replacement

The Board has purchased a new Ford Ranger following the write off of its 2016 model. It has further sold its 2006 Land Rover; part exchanged its ride on lawn mower for a new one and now before the year end intends to part exchange or sell its 8t Kubota excavator to get a new one to the same specification. The Board has also purchased a flail head for use on the Hyundai HX140 excavator. This making further use of the extra reach with the extension arm purchased earlier.

2019/20 Plant Replacement

The Board intends to sell its 2003 Land Rover. It then wishes to purchase another 4x4 pickup truck to upgrade the Board vehicles and provide better facilities for the workforces operations. This along with part exchanging its Ifor Williams trailer with a replacement. The current one is ageing and condition deteriorating.

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 £13,543 will be achieved which could contribute towards plant reserves which appear to require about £30,000 annually to sustain the Boards productivity.

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.

Excavator Replacement

The Clerk reported a quote had been provided for the replacement of the Boards 8t excavator to upgrade for the same machine but new. This would cost £58,950 with a part exchange of £30,000 so a cost to change of £28,950. It is believed that potentially a higher part exchange may be achieved and the Board is seeking quotes from other dealers. A copy of the quote on Email being provided with the agenda of the meeting. The Board will be seeking at least three quotes including this one for the purchase.

The Clerk therefore proposes that the Board accepts the lowest quote for purchase and highest offer for the existing machine to minimise the marginal cost of the new machine.

The Sub Committee recommending the Board accepts the proposal of the Clerk as no further meetings are expected to be held before the end of the financial year.

OFFICE REPAIRS UPDATING

The Clerk had circulated with the Agenda of the potential work required at Derwent House as the landlord's responsibility such as office repairs and updating.

The Finance Officer running through the report which highlighted the quotes which had been obtained to address rising damp which is occurring in the walls of the building.

Members were supportive of addressing the damp problems.

The Finance Officer ran through the other items on the list such as the option of improving the access to the A19 which is partially gravel, improving lighting to the depot shed. This along with replacing the Nissen hut for a more practical building for storage. It potentially could be an extension to the existing building (eg a lean to). The implications for planning however need considering. The Boards electrics, broadband improvements and security measure improvements were all noted. This along with repairing the floor of the file store all of which have provision made in the Board's budget estimates.

Members were supportive and recommended addressing the items listed if possible. In particular the damp problems and agreed to making provision in the budget to address these items in the sums proposed. They however also noted the difficulties in quantifying the cost and implementing a solution for the damp problems within the office building. In this recognising the potential variability in the cost of the work which may see the estimate rise.

Ainsty (2008) IDB Break In

The Clerk reported that the Ainsty (2008) IDB depot had been broken into with cutting equipment and the Ainsty (2008) IDB pick-up truck was filled up with hand tools from the depot and stolen. In view of this the Board was proposing in the items above installing CCTV and enhanced security measures. Three estimates have been obtained and a copy of a summary of the quotes provided with the Agenda of the meeting which had been produced by the Engineering Assistant.

The Engineering Assistant from the quotes proposed the Board accepts the quote of Ryther Alarms in the sum of £2,590 with ongoing costs of £5 per month for a self-monitoring app to the scope specified in the report.

The Sub Committee Members considered the proposal of the Engineering Assistant which was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to RECOMMEND approval to the Board.

BUDGET 2019/2020

The Clerk referred Members to the budget paper, which had been circulated with the Agenda. The paper being based on the Board sustaining its existing rate.

The Finance Officer ran through the budget estimate. This showed the budgets for financial year 2017/18 along with the anticipated out turns and estimates for financial year 2018/19. The budget included for the office repair and improvement works.

The Clerk noted that RPI at the current time is 2.0% (November 2018) and with the uncertainty of Brexit could go up to 3%. This 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)

PROPOSALS FOR LAYING OF THE RATE 2019/20

The Sub Committee Members considered the Boards balances held.

Cllr J Cattnach proposed supporting a no increase in the drainage rate and sensible planning for future investment and plant renewal.

Mr J Hopwood seconded the proposal of Cllr J Cattnach.

The Sub Committee Members considered the Budget proposals and the rate of a sum of 4.38p for 2019/20 with no increase over the rates of 2018/19. The Proposal was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to RECOMMEND approval to the Board.

PROPOSAL FOR REVIEWING MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS

The Clerk had been approached by Cllr J Cattnach regarding reducing the numbers of Board Members to a lower number. The current membership is 22 elected and 23 Council Nominated. At the current time following the recent election the Board only has 12 elected Members and less Nominated. In summary in relation to the Board size if the Board was reconstituted with 12 elected Members and 13 Nominated this would make little difference to the current membership arrangements and more closely reflect the current position.

POTENTIAL
CHANNEL
IMPROVEMENTS

This potentially being a benefit when the Board has to demonstrate membership numbers and Members vacancies say perhaps as a percentage. Selby IDB having recently reduced its membership numbers in a similar way. It however was likely to remove the separate districts of the Board.

The Sub Committee Members considered it worthwhile progressing and recommended this change on the above basis to the constitution of the Board.

The Engineering Assistant joining the meeting at this stage.

The Engineering Assistant had provided a map of the location near Osgodby with a report which was provided at the meeting

Osgodby Syphon Drain (2 on map)

This matter had previously been considered by the Finance Sub Committee regarding Mr S Wiles concerns about the Syphon Drain and the levels of water retained. The Board having maintained the downstream watercourse and investigated the interaction with Newlands Pumping Station and the gravity discharge of the flap. This was discussed by the Sub-Committee and no further action was agreed in relation to the information supplied at the time.

The Engineering Assistant had further investigated this matter and confirmed that a historical structure exists which was elevated from the bed on the upstream of the syphon which if levels were lower downstream would retain water upstream. However day to day it appeared water levels downstream do not drop below this level. The structure appearing to stop debris entering the structure. It was also noted that the existing land drains upstream of the syphon appear in poor condition but are above the current water level.

The Engineering Assistant does not see any method of improving the situation other than running the pumps at a lower level. This would create further difficulties as Newland Pumping Station also drains other watercourses and works in tandem with a gravity discharge flap. It therefore does not appear appropriate to alter the operating levels of the pumping station. It was concluded that evidence has been provided that Mr Wiles existing land drains appear to have freeboard.

That further problems of changing the operating regime of the pumping station are likely to be encountered such as increased electricity usage and more stopping and starting of the pumps. Then in addition the works of altering the syphon structure and ensuring it does not block. These factors overall appear to be disproportionate to the evidence of the additional benefit of the extra land drainage achieved. In view of this the Sub Committee considered that it could not recommend any action to be taken other than sustaining the existing arrangements.

The Chairman asked if anyone had any other views on the matter and none were raised.

Osgodby Culvert Under Abandoned Light Railway Track (1 on map)

Mr A Dear at the last meeting had then raised an issue on the same watercourse some 200 metres upstream on a culvert under a track which previously was once the Derwent light railway line. This was in relation to the culvert invert under the track sitting slightly higher than the watercourse.

The Engineering Assistant has investigated this matter and reports that this is correct. However the land rise's upstream towards the A163 so the area it impacts on is limited. Upstream field outfalls are low and can be submerged but this tends to be caused by the effects of raised water levels and excessive weed growth within the channel. Silt is deposited quite heavily in this area as two watercourses merge and water flow is slowed which contributes towards the problem. The Board could install a low level by-pass on an open cut basis to reduce the low level water. The cost to install a 300mm bypass would be £1,640 (provided no services are located in the track) and this will have no impact on the existing culvert.

The Engineering Assistant does not believe the extra freeboard achieved would give a significant benefit to a large amount of land. The land which might benefit being shown on the map provided.

The Engineering Assistant wished to try to visit Mr A Dear to discuss the findings but believed that the bypass of the track would only achieve a small improvement. He would therefore not propose that the Board progresses or funds the work. However Mr A Dear could progress the work himself if he wished. The above recommendation by the Engineering Assistant being based on the information established.

Bishops Meadow Drain Low Level Water Flow Issue

The Assistant Engineer had provided a report in relation to four bridges which are in private ownership. This report had considered four options which were described in the report. The Board's favoured option was building a bypass through a field of another party past all four bridges. This field however could be constrained with the presence of a gas main. The Engineering Assistant reported that he had met a gas engineer on site to try to establish the depth of the main which appears to rise up. To establish this the Board will have to arrange to gently dig the gas main out to establish its grade to establish if the gradient for the proposed bypass pipe can be achieved. This hand digging being likely to be a reasonable cost. It however has been reported that the bridges have been excavated out exposing the concrete bracing of the bridges crossing the bed of the river. In view of this if Mr K Terry wishes to negotiate how this work is progressed this is his own concern with the owners of the bridges. The Board having concerns if the concrete braces are removed on the implication to the structure of the bridges. It being noted as not the favoured option of the Board.

The Sub-Committee Members recommendation is that it does not wish to become involved with the structures of the four bridges which are not the responsibility of the Board. If any option is advanced the Sub Committee favours the bypass option in particular to avoid the bridge structures without removing or replacing them. In view of this with the potential cost of establishing the location of the gas pipe the Board is not minded to further advance the investigation and consideration of the bypass. The Board further may be concerned with the work which has been carried out as to if it impacts on the integrity of the bridges and will have to monitor the situation.

Tunnel Drain Investigations

The Assistant Engineer's report also provided details of the Tunnel Drain which had a CCTV survey carried out recently and its findings. The findings were discussed by Members.

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

**ACCOUNTS FOR
CONFIRMATION**

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 28th May 2019 at 1pm. This being prior to the Main Board meeting on 18th June 2019.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesday 1st October 2019 at 1pm. This being prior to the Main Board meeting on 22nd October 2019.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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

(APPENDICES TO FOLLOW)