

MINUTES of Meeting held on Tuesday 17th October 2023 at the Village Club, Escrick, York

PRESENT

Cllr J Cattanach (In the Chair)
Mr J Hopwood
Mr D Dear
Mr I Ellwood
Mr R E Britton
Mr S Christian
Cllr C Richardson
Mr M Grainger
Ms V Oldham
Cllr R W Bramley
Mr S Wragg
Mr A Vevers
Cllr C Vassie

The Clerk – Mr W Symons

Engineering Assistant – Mr N Culpan

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr K W Terry, Mr K Atkinson, Mr R A Bramley, Mr J Daniel, Mr M Headley, Cllr K Arthur, Mrs K McSherry, Cllr J Brooks, Cllr M Baker and Mr H Ferguson.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

The Chairman informed he was a council nominated Member of Selby IDB and Kyle and Ouse IDB and uses Brodericks (the company providing the Board's internal auditor), with his work as Chairman of Selby District Vision.

There were no further 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 LAST MEETING

It was proposed by Mr J Hopwood, seconded by Cllr R W Bramley and RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 27th June 2023, a copy of which had been sent to all Members, be taken as read and approved and that they are forthwith signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

MINUTES OF FINANCE SUB- COMMITTEE MEETING

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

The Chairman asked the Clerk to present the Minutes and recommendations of the Sub-Committee Meeting held on the 26th September 2023, a copy of which had been sent to all Members.

The Clerk presented the Minutes page by page and the recommendations highlighted. He further asked Members to raise a hand if they have any queries or questions on the item being discussed.

Board's Policy for Progressing Court Action

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED to the Sub-Committee's recommendation that the document without any changes is accepted and sustained by the Board as its Policy.

Appointment of Internal Auditors for Financial Year 2023/24

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED the Sub-Committee's recommendation to re-appoint Brodericks (Doncaster) for 2023/24 financial year.

Review of Effectiveness of Internal Control

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED the Sub-Committee's recommendation that the Board should continue to review its effectiveness of internal control by the Internal Auditor with Brodericks (Doncaster) for 2023/24 financial year.

Board's Business Risk Assessment

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED the Sub-Committee's recommendation that the Board should adopt and approve the policy approach to risk assessment and the evaluation carried out in the document for financial year 2023/24.

Derwent House Valuation for Lease

The Chairman requested that this recommendation should be proposed and seconded individually by the Board.

Mr R E Britton proposed that the Sub-Committee recommendation that the Board accepts the valuation in the report and offers the office lease on the basis as per the current terms of the arrangement.

Mr J Hopwood seconding the proposal of Mr R E Britton which was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED by the Board.

Office Building Damp Problems

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED the Sub-Committee's recommendation that the Clerk should be given delegated authority to progress the work as he believed appropriate.

Electricity Costs and Contract Award

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED the Sub-Committee's recommendation that the Clerk should be given delegated authority to award the electricity supply contracts using the best market information he can obtain at the time.

Cllr C Vassie asked about the carbon footprint of the electricity suppliers and offered to provide the details of the York City Council supplier.

The Clerk thanking Cllr C Vassie for his offer.

Accounts for Confirmation

Members UNANIMOUSLY AGREED the Sub-Committee's recommendation that the accounts are resolved and the payment of the accounts confirmed.

Mr R E Britton proposed acceptance and approval of the recommendations contained within the Sub-Committee Minutes.

Mr J Hopwood seconding the proposal of Mr R E Britton which was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED by the Board.

**APPROVAL OF
RECOMMENDATIONS
FROM FINANCE SUB-
COMMITTEE
MEETING**

MATTERS ARISING

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

RECONSTITUTION
AND MEMBERSHIP

Membership Number Reduction

The Clerk confirmed that the Environment Agency solicitor was progressing the legal documentation with Defra for the reduction in the Board's Membership number to a total of 23. The solicitor informs the documentation remains in the Environment Agency and is seeking agreement by the Agency Legal Director and sealing before being sent to Defra Flood Management (Policy Team) for consideration by the Minister and the required advertising with a period for objections to be made. He informed that he believed this was unlikely to be achieved this year. He noted that 2024 was an election year for the Board and it was likely this will have to be progressed based on the current Membership numbers.

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.

RATES

The Clerk reported that the total rates collected up to the 16 October 2023 are as follows:

(a) Special Levy -	£222,765.70	(50%)
(b) Direct Levy -	£ 90,607.98	(99%)
	<u>£313,373.68</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.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

The Engineering Assistant had circulated a report at the meeting of the work carried out for Members consideration. This was updating the report circulated with the Finance Sub-Committee Meeting, it also 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.

Riccall Dam Catchment Discharge Pollution

The Engineering Assistant explained that catchment pollution is believed to come from a washing plant near Thorganby. The Environment Agency are aware and have tried to take action. It appears to be a very organic discharge damaging the watercourse, killing weed and putting banks at risk of erosion. The Board having to also remove extensive dead vegetation which is drawn to the pumping station. The pollution appearing to continue, the actions being taken by the Environment Agency are uncertain.

Inspection of Board Assets and Maintenance Works

The Engineering Assistant agreed to organise this and suggested it would be best to hold it potentially in March-April 2024. He will ask the Board's Administration Team to establish a time and date with Members and which assets/maintenance work they would wish to see.

Cllr C Vassie informed that he was in support of a site inspection of some of the Board's assets and maintenance works. He further noted the IDB's GIS mapping and if it was possible to share GIS mapping systems used by the Board and if they might be appropriate for wider usage as an example for road verge mapping.

The Engineering Assistant informed he was happy to show the system and how the Board uses it to interested parties in the City of York Council.

(SEE APPENDIX TO MINUTES)

WORKFORCE

Field Works Supervisor

The Clerk informed the Foss (2008) IDB had recruited Mr G Parker, as a shared Consortium employee, coordinating the work of the three workforces in the York area. He comes with experience of IDB working practices having been the previous Works Foreman for Ainsty (2008) IDB.

New Member of the Workforce

The Clerk informed the Board had recruited a new Member for its workforce who was settling in and learning about the Board's work and maintenance activities.

HIGHLAND WATER CONTRIBUTION

The Clerk advised that claims had been made to the Environment Agency for the 2022/23 Upland Water ditch maintenance works. This was made on the basis of the sum of £73,258.44 of total works of which £6,062.25 is eligible to claim. The July meeting of the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee has agreed to pay 62.7% of this claim relating to the budget made available. This results in the payment of £2,453.37 to the Board. The Environment Agency may be able to pay a larger sum if efficiencies and savings made are achieved/identified in the revenue programme later in the year. The Clerk however believes this is unlikely.

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) at keeping the percentage contribution at a high level.

ADA NATIONAL

AGM

The Clerk informed this was held virtually on 22nd September, which he had attended. He informed ADA Northern Branch would prefer this meeting would be held in person.

London Conference

The Clerk informed that an ADA National Conference is planned for 21st November 2023. This will be held at the Institute of Civil Engineers in London. The Clerk noted he will be attending. Members accepted if any Board Member wished to attend the Board agreed to pay both the travelling expenses and the fee for attending the conference.

Environment Day

The Clerk informed that ADA National were progressing holding an Environment Day in Lincolnshire which is likely to be in February 2024.

ADA NORTHERN BRANCH

BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLANS

ADA Northern Branch AGM

The Clerk informed this will be held on 24th November 2023 at Yorkshire and Humber IDB offices. He asked Members if they wished to attend to inform him so they can be included in the meeting. It is hoped the Environment Agency Regional Director will be in attendance.

ADA Northern Summer Meeting

The Clerk informed this is likely to be on 7th June 2024 at a venue to be decided with potentially a site inspection of an item or site of interest.

The Clerk informed that the document production had not advanced much recently. The wider Boards in the Consortium were trialling varying approaches in watercourse management and maintenance to both achieve potential improved habitat and potential efficiencies. The experience being achieved will clearly give experience as to the measures which could be put in place in the plans and give an idea on appropriate targets to work towards.

Mr S Christian recognised the Board needed extra resources to progress this work and asked about gaining appropriate help which was discussed at the previous Biodiversity Action Plan Meeting. He was concerned that the Board took action to move things forward.

The Engineering Assistant had approached World Ecology, suggested at the meeting, who informed they could not provide a solution to the Board. He suggested the Board might be able to get advice from some of the Lincolnshire Boards who employ their own advisor.

Cllr C Vassie believes the Board needs to prepare a scope of work and a cost for Members to consider.

The Clerk informing, he is struggling with the required scope and how these would be costed.

Cllr C Vassie suggested that perhaps help from the Lower Derwent Partnership who were experts and might be a possible organisation to help.

Mr S Christian informed that his colleagues in this partnership would not have the capacity or resource to help produce the plan.

The Engineering Assistant informed that he would give the matter further consideration as to how the Biodiversity Action Plan can be progressed.

Mr A Vevers informed he had spoken to the Organisers of ADA's Environment Day about Biodiversity Action Plan development and potential measures. He was advised in forming a plan not to make it too complicated and develop it over time. It then can be improved year on year. He asked if it was possible to see what has been produced already.

The Clerk was in agreement, believing it was good advice.

Mr S Christian informed it would be useful to have a five-year plan for maintenance works on watercourses within designated sites. This work currently being assented individually on a yearly basis. This however would be much better if an all-encompassing document was produced for a longer period for all the Consortium Member Boards. Natural England then having an input into the longer-term plan and potentially recording benefits and conservation gains.

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.

(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 £593,165.63 with Barclays Bank as at the 29th September 2023.

The Board also having £200,000 in a Barclays Treasury Fixed Term Deposit Account which is achieving 2.3% gross per annum.

The Virgin Bank account has an additional credit balance of £357,105.60. The Board placing funds into a twelve-month deposit account which is achieving 4.30% gross per annum.

The Nationwide Building Society account has an additional credit balance of £92,720.93. The Board placing funds in a 95-day business saver account which is achieving 3.75% gross per annum.

The total balance of the Board's funds held in these accounts is £1,242,992.16

The Clerk noted that these funds include the Coal Authority balances and deposits for the ongoing and rechargeable works, which are £50,500. He further confirmed that Barclays Bank are charging Foss (2008) IDB for electronic bank transfers to whom the Board contributes towards this service.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was directed that the Annual General Meeting of the Board is due to be held at the Escrick & Deighton Club, Escrick, York on **Tuesday 23rd January 2024** commencing at **10am**.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesday 25th June 2024
Tuesday 15th October 2024

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman closed the meeting at 11.21pm as there was no other business.

(APPENDICES TO FOLLOW)