

UPPER MEDWAY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD



MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Finance Committee
held on **Tuesday 21 November 2017** at 17 Albion Place

Members of the Committee Present

D Aikman - Chairman

J I B Cannon
M Dobson
T J Reader

In attendance

M D Watson - Chief Executive
P Bush - Technical Engineer
L Collins - Office Administrator

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from R Young.

2. MINUTES

AGREED that the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meetings held on 18 July 2017 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

(As attached to these minutes)

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes of meeting 18 March 2017

Item 9 – Financial Risk Assessment

Members were informed at the last meeting that all documents will be fully reviewed once both Boards have made the relevant comments/amendments required and the Internal Audit Sub Committee has reviewed at their meeting in November.

REPORTED that the Internal Audit Sub Committee meeting has been rescheduled to 5 December 2017. All documents will be reviewed at this meeting and then represented back to the Board for approval.

4. **BILLS COMMITTEE**

RECEIVED the Minutes of the Bills Committee Meetings held on 28 July, 22 August, 27 September and 26 October 2017.

(As attached to these minutes)

5. **BANK BALANCES**

The Bank statements were produced for the Chairman to sign and showed the following balances as at 31 October 2017:

NatWest Streamline Account	£2,345.63
NatWest Treasurers Account	£385,853.93
NatWest Imprest Account	£22,258.49
NatWest Special Interest Account	£479,630.13
Lloyds TSB Current Account	£184,778.41
Santander	£189,876.39
TOTAL	£1,264,742.98

6. **RATE AND SPECIAL LEVY COLLECTION**

REPORTED that the Rates and Special Levies collected as at 31 October 2017 amounted to £379,401.78 which represents 78.91% of the total due for the year.

REPORTED that the second instalment of the Special Levy payments were due on 1 November 2017.

Sevenoaks District Council, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council and Wealden District Council made their payments prior to 1 November 2017. Their payments are included in the Bank statement balances – Item 5 above.

Ashford Borough Council, Mid Sussex Council, Tandridge District Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council made their payments during the first week of November 2017.

To date the Board is still awaiting a payment totalling £54,432.53 from Maidstone Borough Council.

The Office Administrator has chased Maidstone Borough Council and has been informed that they will try and make payment on Friday 24 November 2017.

The Office Administrator will check the Boards account and will continue to chase Maidstone Borough Council if payment is not received.

7. **REVIEW OF EXPENDITURE**

Members **RECEIVED** and reviewed details of the Boards expenditure to date.

(As attached to these minutes)

The Office Administrator explained that there were currently 4 areas of overspend.

REPORTED Depot Yard and Maintenance is £2,400 over budget. This is due to the remedial works requiring attention following the IECR 5 year fixed electrical testing. The actual testing itself cost £704 and the remedial repairs required including the installation of 110v cost £1655.

The Technical Engineer informed members that during the inspection it had been picked up that the depot does not have an emergency lighting system. Legislation changed recently which states that any building with an upstairs area must have an emergency lighting system.

REPORTED that one quote has been obtained to install emergency lighting at a cost of £4,000. The Technical Engineer will obtain further quotes for cost comparison.

Members were informed that emergency lighting at the depot will need to be considered by Members at some point.

REPORTED Equipment Supplies & Maintenance had already been notified of an overspend of £1,249, due to the purchase of a fridge, table & chairs for the depot mess room at a cost of £261 and the purchase of a drying cabinet at a cost of £670. Since the last meeting a lifting gantry has been purchased and installed at a cost of £4,589.10. Therefore, the total overspend to date is £5,519.

REPORTED J/A Office Costs Insurance currently £82 over budget. This is due to increasing the level of cover in place for the office computers and laptop, along with business interruption cover. Subsidence cover has also been added to the Boards policy, in light of the new buildings that are being built close by. This overspend was reported at the last meeting.

REPORTED J/A Administration Costs Publications currently £23 over budget. This is due to the fee incurred for the IAS19 report (pension liability report). Last years report cost £418. This years report cost £473. Such an increase was not expected at the time of setting the budgets.

REPORTED that the precept payment has been marked **. This is to highlight to Members that a cheque has been raised and signed via the Bills Committee, however, it has not been posted to the Environment Agency due to the Board objecting to paying the EA Precept until an adequate report had been received on how and where the money is going to be spent.

The Chief Executive explained that representatives from the Environment Agency (EA) will be attending the Board Meeting in order to explain to Members what and where the Precept money has been spent. The Board is still waiting for an adequate written report from the EA before releasing payment.

8. RECHARGEABLE WORKS

No rechargeable works have been invoiced since the last meeting.

No amounts for rechargeable works have been received since the last meeting.

9. ANNUAL RETURN – YEAR ENDING MARCH 2017

REPORTED that the Boards completed Annual Return for the year ending 31 March 2017 was sent off to the Boards External Auditor, PKF LittleJohn LLP and no items of concern have been identified.

The Annual Return is included on the main Board Agenda.

The completed Annual Return has been displayed on the Boards Notice Board and on the Website.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

NatWest Banking

The Office Administrator explained that there had been a recent meeting to review the Boards current banking requirements.

REPORTED that Autopay (the Boards current method of paying employees) is being phased out, so consideration needs to be given to an alternative method of paying employees.

REPORTED that NatWest don't understand why or how the Board has been able to enjoy the benefits of free banking for so long, as none of their other Business Customers/Charities (none profit organisations) enjoy such benefit. It was explained that usually free banking is a temporary introduction offer to new customers for a limited period of time.

REPORTED that assurances have been given that NatWest will continue (for now) with the current arrangements. However, consideration will have to be given to moving towards electronic methods of payment in the future.

Details of the Boards options are going to be sent through to the Office Administrator. These will be forwarded on to Members in due course.

Drainage Rates

The Office Administrator explained that there were 2 accounts which she would like Members to give consideration to writing off the costs.

REPORTED that account UM-7154-9 currently has 1 years arrears of £15.65 outstanding. The land on this account was sold in 2013 and the new owners are paying the rates applicable. However, the previous landowner did not notify the Board that they were leaving this land and seems to have disappeared without trace. There have been a number of leads to Businesses linked with this person over the past couple of years, but none have come to fruition. Unfortunately, it seems unlikely that this person is going to be traced any time soon.

REPORTED that account UM-7173-9 currently has Court Costs of £23.00 outstanding. The previous landowner did not notify the Board of a change of ownership and was taken to Court for non payment of rates in 2010 for a sum of

£62.45 (plus Court fees). There is currently a CCJ issued against the person and the property. However, to date the individual has failed to pay the bill and just swears over the phone before hanging up. Also, numerous attempts at communication have been made by post, but all post is returned as "not wanted". It has since been identified that the land on this account was sold in 2006 and the rate arrears have been transferred to the new owner, leaving just the Court Costs outstanding. It is unlikely that this person is going to pay the outstanding amount. However, the CCJ will remain in place.

All Members in attendance **AGREED** that the Office Administrator should write off both amounts above totalling £38.65.

11. **CLOSURE**

There being no further business the Chairman thanked Members for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.