

ASSOCIATION OF DRAINAGE AUTHORITIES

LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH & WELLAND AND NENE BRANCH MEETING

Minutes of a Joint Meeting of the above Branches held at South Holland IDB offices, Foxes Low Road, Holbeach on Thursday 15th February 2017:

There were 29 attendees present:-

D Worth (Chair)	W&N Branch Chairman & Member – South Holland IDB	
P Camamile (Secretary)	W&N Branch Secretary & Chief Executive, South Holland IDB	
R Fletcher	Lincs Branch Chairman & Member – Witham First IDB	
P Bateson	Lincs Branch Secretary & Chief Executive, Witham 4th IDB	
Black Sluice	K Casswell	Vice Chairman
	I Warsap	Chief Executive
	D Withnall	Finance Officer
Lindsey Marsh	P Pridgeon	Chairman
	A McGill	Chief Executive
	Joanne Watson	Operations Director
North Level	J Hoyles	Chairman
	P Sharman	Chief Executive
Welland & Deeping	D Branton	Vice Chairman
	Karen Daft	Chief Executive
Witham First, Witham Third And Upper Witham	P Gilbert	Chairman (Witham First)
	F Myers	Chairman (Upper Witham)
	Jane Froggatt	Chief Executive
	M Shilling	Operations Manager
	Sam Ireland	Environment Officer
Witham Fourth	J Grant	Chairman
	M Redding	Environment Officer
Middle Level Commissioners	Sam Ablett	Assistant Treasurer
	Lorna McShane	Assistant Clerk
Lincolnshire CC	D Hickman	Environment Commissioner
	M Harrison	Senior Commissioning Officer
Environment Agency	N Robinson	Area Manager
	Kate Halka	Operations Manager
	G Smith	PACM Manager
<i>Guests:</i>		
ADA	H Cator	Chairman

1. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed attendees and thanked them for travelling to the meeting in the South of Lincolnshire, in the Welland & Nene catchment.

2. APOLOGIES

The Secretary reported apologies for absence from Mr I Thomson (ADA) and the following branch members:

Mr S Markillie (South Holland)	Mr J Hargreaves (North East Lindsey and Lincs Branch Vice Chairman)
Mr K Vines (South Holland)	Mr T Vessey (North East Lindsey)
Mr D Thomas (Middle Level)	Mr G Szomi (EA)
Mr R Hill (Hundred of Wisbech & Waldersey)	Mr P Reilly (EA)
Mr S Ayers (Hundred of Wisbech & Waldersey)	Mr B Thornely (EA)
Mr G Lankfer (Waldersey)	Mr P Richardson (Witham Fourth)
Mr T Purllant (Welland & Deepings)	Mr A Carrott (Witham Fourth)
Mr N Morris (Welland & Deepings)	Mr G Crust (Lindsey Marsh)
Mr M Sly (North Level)	Mr D Sisson (Lindsey Marsh)
Mr P Hoyes (Witham Third)	

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Branch Meeting held on 20th October 2016 were confirmed as accurate and they were signed by the Chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising that were not already covered by the Agenda.

5. LINCOLNSHIRE FLOOD RISK and DRAINAGE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP

David Hickman gave a brief presentation on Partnership Developments covering:

- Devolution – Despite the fact that the agreement was dead, water level management objectives would be taken forward by the partnership. Recent discussions had focused on the possibility of Lincolnshire becoming a Unitary Authority and a referendum was taking place in May 2017 alongside the County Elections.
- The Partnership are committed to the objectives set out in the plan e.g. extension of IDB boundaries
- £1.2M had been allocated from local levy to pursue the designation of the former lines of defence within the South Holland catchment.
- WE have been success in getting £1.5m of EU funding for two local schemes, Wrangle Sea Banks and The Haven Banks in Boston. This is the first time that the UK has received EU funding for flooding projects but there is a risk of claw back so this risk is being carefully managed.

Matt Harrison then updated attendees about the Common Works Programme and gave a brief summary of the history of the group. He explained that the CWP is the “action plan” of the Partnership Strategy produced 4 years ago. The current situation is that projects which have attracted FDGiA and local levy have been captured but this is not the whole picture. By 31 March 2017, the group wants to capture all of the schemes that have been delivered e.g. IDB/District small schemes, so that we are reporting the full picture of co-operation across the County. He encouraged all Risk Management Authorities to capture this data and send it in to him by 31 March 2017. Following a question on PSCA work, he confirmed that work done under a PSCA should also be captured.

6. APPOINTMENT OF LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH ADA BOARD DIRECTOR

Peter Pridgeon had attended his last ADA Board meeting the previous day. As his term of office was ending a request for nominations for this post had been made at the last Branch meeting and subsequently by email. Keith Casswell, Chairman Black Sluice IDB was the sole nominee for the post and he was duly elected as the Lincolnshire Branch ADA Board Director for a period of 3 years.

7. REPORT FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Norman Robinson introduced himself as the new Area Manager for the Anglian Northern region in which both ADA branches are situated. He then gave a brief update on EA matters:

- The recent East Coast Tidal Surge had warranted a combined response from RMAs and he thanked Lindsey Marsh DB and Black Sluice IDB for their support in response to this event. He said that in the end the three day advanced predictions were just 90 minutes out and as a Partnership, we were ready. There is a post event snagging list to deal with, but that's all.
- He said that the EA were making changes to their website over the next 2-3 weeks in order to give more open access to their data and information.
- He explained who the local delivery leads were. They are dedicated to delivering the capital and maintenance programs and his desire was to increase the PSCA time horizons to make them longer term.
- Greg Smith was the new PACM Manager and he would shortly outline the reason for this new Partnership Approach to Catchment Management for attendees.
- CAPITAL PROGRAM – We are on target to deliver the 2016/17 program
- MAINTENANCE PROGRAM – We have £12M in the program and this has been used for works on the Timberland Delph and Nocton Delph this year
- The EA want to work with IDBs to look at the condition of EA assets and to improve the maintenance regime for them.

The Chairman asked Branch attendees if they had any questions for EA Colleagues and a number were forthcoming:

- James Grant asked what maintenance had taken place on the EA catch water system in his district and Norman said he would get back to him on this point.
- Ian Warsap questioned the progress on de-maining EA assets as his Board were involved in a front runner project and they had heard very little. Norman began by acknowledging that the de-maining jigsaw was one that he was happy to front but that despite assurance that it is still progressing, there was no news on de-maining nor on IDB boundary extensions. He appreciated that everyone involved was frustrated by the slow pace of progress.
- Henry Cator commented that DEFRA/EA colleagues attending yesterday's ADA Board meeting suggested that the resistance to de-maining may be borne from a concern that local ratepayers may not be represented on IDBs due to low take up of appointed Board posts by local councils, and that this may result in a de-maining decision taking place without the local ratepayer's knowledge or support. Innes Thomson has subsequently contacted DEFRA who said that where full support for projects exists and there is no conflict, these projects will be progressing. ADA will continue to push this.
- Phil Camamile said that he was working with DEFRA on historic rating information and extending IDB boundaries. He said a fundamental change was required to re-base rating values
- James Grant said it would be useful if the EA could update each Branch meeting with the no. of kilometres of main rivers that the EA have desilted/mudded out and Norman Robinson said he would do that.

Greg Smith then gave an update of the work that the PACM Group. He said much had been achieved in the 4 months since he had taken on the role and a briefing note had been produced, setting out the aims of the initiative. PACM is a partnership management approach for each sub-catchment in Lincolnshire that aimed to harness the aspirations of all partners in that catchment. In particular:

- To look at efficiencies and benefits
- To create a long term sustainable solution for each catchment

The PACM group is meeting monthly and has representation from all partners across the Anglian Northern Region. It is hoped that the solutions can be pushed out to other areas once determined. There are 15 sub-catchments that are all hydrometric and Phase 1 is about to complete.

This will produce a tool that will produce a short and precise output for each catchment. We are currently looking at 5-6 pilot catchments across Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire. The key to the project is to look at the unfunded watercourses and to agree a solution for them.

Following concern that the environmental aspects of each watercourse should not get in the way of maintenance, @Greg confirmed that the drivers for this initiative are flood risk and flood maintenance.

8. REPORT FROM NATIONAL ADA

Henry Cator gave an update on National ADA matters, hot off the press from the previous day's ADA Board Meeting. He began by stating that ADA is about people and ADA's purpose was to reflect on the views of the membership. He then updated members:

- The new Board and ADA incorporation is beginning to pay dividends and the Board are now in full swing,
- He said he was proud of how far ADA had come and he believed we had the strongest team,
- FloodEx has enabled ADA to return a healthy profit contributing around 10% more income to ADA. Communication will improve as a result and next week ADA will send round a 1 page flyer for Boards to send out with rate demands demonstrating the value given by IDBs,
- ADA have to play a leadership role in the void left by Defra
- ADA needs to work more closely with the EA as we are both in the same boat and we can both push Defra to act faster,
- The tidal surge threat is good as it keeps flooding in the headlines,
- ADA has a new 3 year Business Plan that was agreed at the Board meeting. It will focus on key objectives e.g. badgers and de-maining in the coming months,
- A new ADA Branch has been created, the Marches Branch with the River Lugg lying to the West,
- He believed that strong Boards with good governance should pressure underperforming Boards to improve their game.
- Henry had been ADA director for 10 years and Robert Caudwell would take over later in 2017 and would do things differently,
- We have Anglian Water and Water Resources East coming to black sluice IDB to look at their front runner project and it would be good to invite Defra to get their boots dirty,
- The NAO have produced a draft report on IDB governance and ADA have given feedback on it as it is not factually correct in places,
- Finally, he paid tribute to Peter Pridgeon who was stepping down from the ADA Board and thanked him for being a valuable critical friend.

Henry urged Boards to contribute to the success of FloodEx on 17/18 May by encouraging members and others to attend. Footfall was a key to exhibitors being there.

ADA TECHNICAL & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE:

Martin Shilling gave a summary of the last meeting in January 2017:

- Kate Halka and Peta Denham had recently joined the Committee from the EA
- H&S and welfare issues were covered by Ian Benn
- Biodiversity 2020 was discussed
- Working groups have been set up to work on specific tasks
- The continued use of Glyphosate was a concern to this committee/ADA
- Movement of the requirements of the Eel regulations was also covered

ADA POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Jane Froggatt updated Branch members on the last meeting, also in January 2017. She said there were 3 strands to the Committee which included:

1. Review of work done in 2016 and progress on key issues
2. Updates from Defra colleagues and on the ADA Business Plan and,
3. Setting agendas and work streams for 2017:
 - a. Ratings and a new baseline
 - b. NAO report response and governance/audit
 - c. PSCA development
 - d. EFRA select committee aspirations

9. REPORTS FROM BRANCH COMMITTEES

i) Show Committee

In the absence of Peter Richardson the Committee Chairman, Matt Harrison updated members on the last meeting where there had been support for renaming the committee as the “Events Committee” to organize three events during 2017:

- The Spring Show, called Countryside Lincs
- The main Lincolnshire Show and
- The Heckington Show as this was more appropriate for Boards in South Lincs.

The Committee would continue to update the Branch at future meetings.

ii) Environment Committee

Sam Ireland and Martin Redding presented. Sam began by reporting on the last meeting on 7 December 2016 which covered:

- An entertaining presentation by Lionel Grooby
- The Greater Lincolnshire NP Questionnaire closes on Friday 17 Feb
- A BirdAnglian water had appointed a new farm liaison officer
- Ian Moodie presented on Fenland Water Bodies
- A water vole training day was organized on 17-19 November in Lincoln
- A guidebook on quick wins for nature is being produced
- The next meeting is on 8 March 2017 where the roles of Chair/Vice Chair and Secretary will be voted in. Nominations for these roles are to be sent to Sam before the meeting.

Martin Redding then gave a presentation on eel and fish passage following the guidance workshop in London the week before. Following the physical evidence that was gained from trial sites in Lincolnshire, revised guidance on fish and eel passage is being produced. He went through a number of slides showing information on the topic and said that the evidence gained by the Hull International Fish Institute (HIFI) was covered in detail. The research is site specific and is enabling zero cost solutions to be found to the issue. Other solutions i.e. disco lights do not work in fen drains owing to the poor visibility in fenland watercourses.

James Grant updated members on the lack of progress with an alternative aquatic herbicide (flumioxazin) owing to the manufacturing license owner’s reluctance to apply for aquatic use in the UK. He also reported that DR Jonathan Newman would shortly be leaving the CEH at Wallingford.

iii) Pay and Conditions Advisory Committee (P&C)

The reformed Committee had met for the first time on 17 January 2017 and all agreed that it had been a positive meeting. Daniel Withnall had been elected Committee Secretary and he reported from the meeting:

- The terms of reference had been altered slightly and they were presented to the Branch at the meeting. The Branch Secretary suggested that these be adopted at the next Branch meeting to give members the time to review them properly.
- Although Peter Richardson had stepped in to Chair the first meeting, a permanent Chair had not been elected. After some deliberation, James Grant offered to act as Committee

Chairman from the next meeting and the Branch Chairman thanked him for stepping forward.

- At the meeting both side has agreed on a 1% consolidated pay rise plus a 0.4% non-consolidated increase, similar to the previous year. This was the recommendation put to the Branch which the employee representatives were to put to a ballot of their members.
- However, following the meeting, concern was expressed by the committee Secretary as the employee representative secretary was unhappy with the discretionary nature of the additional 0.4%.
- The committee secretary said he had a meeting with the employee representative secretary where this matter would be discussed. In the meantime he asked the Branch how they wished to proceed.
- After discussion, including the misleading wording of the previous year's settlement, it was agreed by those present at the last P&C meeting, that the 1.0% plus 0.4% element of the settlement was accepted by both sides at the meeting.
- **It was resolved that the Branch would accept the recommendation from the P&C committee subject to the outstanding meeting with both P&C secretaries.**
- Members felt that the employee representatives should honour what was agreed on the day and ballot their members accordingly. Several Boards had already met and had approved the recommendation ahead of the current Branch meeting.

Branch members again reiterated their concern that all Boards should follow the white book to avoid situations where staff could be poached from one Board to another due to pay differentials. We should agree to treat all employees the same.

10. IDBs AS STATUTORY CONSULTTEES

This matter had been put on the agenda to see what the Branch felt about the topic. The current situation appears to be working well and Boards are notified when planning applications have a flood risk impact and respond accordingly. These comments are then passed to the District Planning Authorities. The Chairman asked for comments:

- If IDBs were statutory consultees they would get more responsibility and would see all applications so the Engineers' Forum were happy to keep the present regime
- Just because a body is a statutory consultee, the planning authority do not HAVE to accept any concerns or recommendations, so it does not add weight to our comments
- Martin Shilling felt that the good relationships we have at drainage liaison groups is helping to make the current system effective. Issues are caused by planning officers, not the technical officers we meet. He did not think being a statutory consultee would be an advantage,
- LCC already filter out non relevant applications so he agreed it would be of no advantage
- Jane Froggatt say that officers are honour bound to take our advice for anything within the red line of the planning application but outside of this, they don't have to accept the advice

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Bob Fletcher presented Peter Pridgeon with a gift to thank him for his time as the ADA Branch Director and the Secretary took a photograph for the next ADA gazette.

Next meeting: Lincolnshire Branch AGM - 27 April 2017 in Lincoln including a tour of an AW asset.

----- Chairman ----- Date