

MINUTES of Meeting of Yorkshire Clerks Group held on Tuesday 26th March 2013 at the Ouse and Derwent Offices, Derwent House, Crockey Hill, York at 10.30am.

PRESENT

Ian Thornton (In the Chair)
Nigel Everard
Tony Hardwick
Eddie Allen
Ralph Ward
Richard Bate
Stephen Edwards
Bill Symons (Secretary)
Ian Cooke – Environment Agency
Oliver Harmar – Environment Agency

ADDITIONAL NORTHERN BRANCH MEMBERS

John Dennis – Selby IDB
C W Bayston – Danvm DB
Jeff Atkinson – Ouse and Humber IDB
David Crossley – Foss (2008) IDB

NORTHERN
BRANCH

The Chairman noted that the meeting was also being held as a Northern Branch Meeting and hence additional Members were in attendance.

APOLOGIES FOR
ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Andrew Morritt, Andrew McGill, Simon Thackray, Graham Bate, Ian Benn and Inness Thompson.

DECLARATION OF
INTEREST

No declarations of interest were raised on the matters arising on the Agenda.

MINUTES OF LAST
MEETING

It was proposed by Nigel Everard, seconded by Eddie Allen and RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 December 2012, a copy of which had been sent to all Clerks, be taken as read and APPROVED and that they be forthwith signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

Tony Hardwick asked about the RPA report. It was believed by the Clerks present that a report was being written and it was likely to be released in the near future.

There were no further matters arising from the Minutes, which are not covered by agenda items.

ADA TECHNICAL & ENVIRONMENTAL MEETING

The Secretary reported on the Meeting held on 16th January 2013 although he had not attended the meeting. The agenda items included:

- Model bylaws revisions (note the update)
- Section 23 consent changes inc IDB consents
- SUDs
- ADA Demonstration 2013
- Chemical Control of aquatic vegetation
- Adaption reporting powers (Climate Change Act 2009)
- Health and Safety Issues
- Date of next meeting – 18th September 2013

ADA POLICY & FINANCE MEETING

The Chairman asked Nigel Everard to report on the Meeting held on 16th January 2013. Nigel Everard reported that the meeting included:

- RPA performance indicators for IDB which are still being progressed.
- Questionnaire response on Board Membership and meeting attendance following the Ministers letter. (The information is still being collated).
- Audit Issues - eight Boards having qualified opinions have been investigated by ADA.
- Audit Practitioners guide being updated.
- Audit Bill Transparency Code likely to have implications to IDBs
- Flood Defence funding
- Changes to Local Authority funding streams with business rates etc.
- Governance Matters following the Caldicot and Wentlodge IDB Audit
- Members code of Conduct and Requirement for a Register of Members Interests
- Chairmans allowances
- IDB Procurement Policy update
- Triennial Review of Agency and Natural England
- Staffing of ADA was discussed
- Date of next meeting – 18th September 2013

ADA EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

The Chairman reported that the topics of the Technical and Environmental and Policy and Finance Meetings already reported were discussed. This along with ADA publicity along with the Demonstration on 17th July 2013 and Conference in London on 13th November 2013.

LINCOLNSHIRE
CLERKS MEETINGS

The Chairman reported on the meeting notes of the meeting held on 19th March which he had attended:

- Lincolnshire flood risk drainage partnership meeting
- LLFA section 19 investigations and enforcement
- Internal / external audit
- Pensions
- Working party regarding 'white book' pay and conditions
- Open forum
- ADA Demonstration

ADA NORTHERN
BRANCH

ADA Northern Branch Meetings

Eddie Allen (ADA Northern Branch Secretary) proposed that every other Clerks meeting should be extended to include ADA Northern Branch Members.

GREAT YORKSHIRE
SHOW

Eddie Allen reported he will be invoicing for the individual IDB contributions towards ADA Northern Branch attendance at the Great Yorkshire show. This being agreed at the ADA Northern Branch Conference and meeting last year. A map was circulated showing the position of the stand location which ADA Northern Branch will be sharing. A banner and publicity brochures for the stand are being prepared. A rota for stand attendance will also be prepared.

ADA NORTHERN
BRANCH
CONFERENCE

Eddie Allen reported that the 2013 ADA Northern Branch Conference will be held on 16th May at the Cave Castle Hotel, South Cave, Brough. The conference will include a visit to a completed Environment Agency Flood defence scheme on the Western Drain along with visiting a completed East Riding of Yorkshire Council scheme at Ray Well Valley. Clerks were encouraged to book places on the Conference as soon as possible. A request was made for photographs relevant to IDBs from Yorkshire to be emailed for possible usage on the stands and documentation. A small carrier bag of freebies will also be provided. ADA also providing some publicity documentation.

ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY MATTERS

FDGIA Funding Claims and Applications for funding in 2014/15

Mr I Cooke asked for grant claims to be submitted as soon as possible so that the position on expenditure can be established. He also asked Boards to start to consider bids for next year's MTP funding. The documentation submission will be required towards the beginning of June.

The Secretary reported he had circulated the Environment Agency staff charts which highlights the relevant staff to contact regarding supporting the submission of the bids for consideration of funding.

Revenue Funding

Mr I Cooke reported that the revenue maintenance budget nationally was being reduced. The maintenance works are being progressed on the basis of a benefit cost ratio so maintenance work is likely to be focused on protecting higher risk which in turn relates to benefits such as people and property. This could result in some Agency assets are not being maintained this also could see reduction of work in rural areas. However the maintenance work to be carried out for the revenue funding allocation is still being considered. A more comprehensive report was proposed for a future meeting of the Clerks. The Clerks also discussed the taking over of maintenance works no longer being carried out from the Agency with this new approach.

Nigel Everard asked about the precept report and it was reported that a report was being progressed for RFCC consideration.

Nigel Everard asked about the progress on an update of the implementation of the Eels regulations.

Tony Hardwick proposed that the Agency were likely to organise a presentation on the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and what the requirements are of IDBs. He reported that the Boards he represented were working with Claire Russell to progress a presentation / workshop possibly for early May. Claire Russell and Duncan Fife are the Agency WFD representatives.

DRS COMPUTER USER GROUP

The Chairman reported that this group had been disbanded. A national meeting entailing a large resource and travelling to attend a meeting. The Chairman raised the possibility of an amendment to the system costing £500 but individual invoicing for all Boards using the system for minor modifications is impractical. It was agreed that this matter was beyond the scope of the group to decide.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was directed that the next Meeting of the Clerks will be held at the York Consortium of Drainage Boards Office at Crockey Hill, York. The meeting will be on Tuesday 25th June 2013 - coffee at 10am with the meeting commencing at 10.30am.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business and the meeting was closed.