**ADA Cymru Meeting**

**23 March 2016**

**Ladywell House, Newtown**

**Attendees:**

Hubert Jones (Chair of ADA Cymru and Powysland Advisory Group)

John Markwick (ADA Board Member and Powysland Advisory Group)

Innes Thomson (ADA Chief Executive)

Ian Moodie (ADA Technical Manager)

Rowland Davies (Chair of Borth Advisory Group)

Glyndwr Davies (Chair of De Meirionnydd Advisory Group)

Rhian Jardine (NRW Head of Sustainable Communities)

Jacqui Murray (NRW Programme Manager, Delivering Customer Focus)

Nigel Humphreys (NRW Powysland Engineer)

Leigh O’Connor (NRW Powysland Clerk)

Pete Woodhouse (NRW Technical Specialist)

James West (NRW IDD Technical Advisor)

**By Phone:**

Robert Hepworth (Caldicot and Wentlooge Advisory Group)

Matt Bajowski (NRW Engineer for Caldicot and Wentlooge)

**Apologies:**

Richard Willett (Deputy Chair Caldicot and Wentlooge Advisory Group)

Glyn Griffiths (Chair of Dwyfor and Meirionnydd Advisory Group)

1. **Agenda:**
2. Review of the 1st Year
   * Finance review
   * Review of Advisory Groups
3. ADA Cymru Subscription
4. Boundary Review Update
5. Land Valuation
6. **Review of the 1st Year**
   1. **Finance Review**

The Annex contains the NRW Special Levies and Drainage Rates for 2016/17

**C&W IDD:** C&W Accounts are being reviewed at every meeting. NRW is working on developing systems to provide further detail for inclusion in the reports.

**Lower Wye IDD:** Benefitting from the English portion of the district. Additional work has been done on the Welsh section this year in agreement with a refreshed IDD.

**Powysland IDD:** Concern raised about the accounting system in NRW and the issues around providing relevant financial information for the IDD. This means that it is unclear whether the raise on rates will cover the cost for the year as budgeting is not currently possible.

**North West Wales IDDs:** The recent change in the procurement and tendering for maintenance work to local contractors has provided clarity and value for money for the Dwyfor & Merionnydd IDD cluster. The rates were advised to NRW with increases of 30-50%. These came into effect in Feb 2016 for 2016/17.

**ACTION**: Share the specification and breakdown of the detail of the tenders (for the weedcutting) with ADA Cymru members - **James West**

Quality concerns on some ditches did mean that contractors returned at the request of the landowners in some areas to rectify the work done.

**ACTION:** Put James West / Nigel / Pete in contact with another IDB engineer who use local contractors Swale, Ur and Id IDB in order to share experienced and best practice - **Innes Thomson.**

The remaining rates and levies were increased across all the districts (see Annex for 2015/16 and 2016/17 rates and levies).

Discussion followed around the need for NRW to recover all debts for the districts. There was a very strong feeling that without us taking a tough stance with debtors, the competence of NRW to administer the districts appropriately would remain in question and high levels of debts would remain and cost recovery be impossible.

**ACTION:** Agree and subsequently share NRW’s position in respect of debt recovery. **Rhian Jardine / Jacqui Murray**

* 1. **Advisory Groups:**

**Powysland IDD –** Election has been run and 6 new members have been elected. There have been complaints raised by two ratepayers. Resolution of this is pending.

Powysland is considering reviewing its membership of the Advisory Group to include additional community representatives. ADA stated their support for inclusion of Community Councils representation.

**Caldicot and Wentlooge IDD** – The November elections and the invitation of future members to the January meeting meant the Group co-opted members before the new members officially took their posts. This error will be rectified at the May meeting along with the election of a new chair by the new members.

**Lower Wye**: This Advisory Group is picking up from an IDB that had no regular ratepayer representatives from Wales attending. Membership has not yet been formalised as all rate payers invited. Once attendance reaches a point where representation is required, then elections will follow. A new chair will be elected in July from the attendees.

**North and Mid IDDs:** Feedback from Glyndwr Davies was that his Advisory Group was just starting out, however the initial response and resolution of issues was positive and the new approach appeared to be constructive.

Rowland Davis stated that although early days, they were seeing the benefits of the Advisory Group over just two initial meetings.

James West reported about plans to create a Conwy District Advisory Group within the next couple of months. All IDDs will then have an Advisory Group. This will allow the maintenance programme to be discussed with rate payers, as well as the results from the boundary review project.

**Conflict of Interest:** Discussion over the need to ensure that interests are declared at the Advisory Groups. There were different views on the need to ask people to declare their interests in the different meetings as the different Advisory Groups were at different points of development.

Agreement was that each AG would keep it under consideration and introduce an agenda item if appropriate. All Advisory Group arrangements documents identify the required appropriate behaviour for members, including conflict of interest.

1. **ADA Subscriptions:**

**The Benefits of ADA Subscription as highlighted by Ian Moodie are as follows:**

* Keep on a right track.
* Website upgrade.
* Networking opportunities
* Knowledge management
* Attendance at ADA Cymru
* Other AG attendance as required
* Annual ADA Conference
* Identity of ADA – broader direction (drainage, water level and flood risk) positioning with LAs, Water Level Management, Incidents and Flood Management.
* Governed by members for its members

**Powysland** – Hubert Jones and John Markwick stated they believed that Powysland IDB saw significant return on their investment from ADA over the years.

**ACTION:** Supply Ian Moodie addresses of the AG Chairs.

**ACTION:** Accept the 80% subscription proposal for the 3 ex. IDB as appropriate and as lower cost to customers than paid prior to transfer to NRW.

**ACTION:** Consider staged funding for the remaining Advisory Groups for ADA subscriptions for 2016/17 for future agreement with these AGs regarding the service ADA provide them. **Rhian Jardine to confer with NRW finance around options**

1. **Boundary Review Project Update:**

All AGs have been consulted on the proposed boundary changes. The input of local knowledge into the project has proved to be very useful and will allow the proposals to be further refined. This will ensure the review is robust. When the Conwy District AG has been established it will also be consulted.

The review of Borth IDD boundary is currently on hold in this project, as there is other significant on-going work to address the issues affecting Cors Fochno (Borth Bog), flood defences and the surrounding farmland. Borth IDD boundary will be considered as part of this work.

1. **Land Valuation:**

Work is ongoing to identify alternative sources on which to base land valuations to replace the 1992 lists. NRW has commissioned investigative work to look at appropriate options and is meeting with Welsh Government to discuss on the 6 April. Further updates will be provided at the next meeting.

1. **AOB:**

**NRW Flood Warnings**

Specific issue with flood alerts for Powysland. There have been some erroneous flood alerts early in the morning and across the area. Questions raised included:

* Could the area be split as an hour later one end of the area to the other?
* Can the system be tailored further/what flexibility is there?

**ACTION:** Speak to Jeremy Parr re. issues in Powysland and possible flexibility **Rhian Jardine**.

ACTION: Invite Stephen Rhind to Powysland Advisory Group instead of ADA Cymru **Steve Cresswell**

**Clockwise shift for flood risk in mid Wales:**

Statement from Rhian Jardine. We are in the middle of reviewing the business (Business Area Reviews). These will redesign the services across Wales. We are also completing a management team review. NRW is moving to a place based approach – therefore the ‘clockwise shift’ i.e. service to the Mid Wales from North Wales will be decided shortly.

**Attendance at the Flood and Coast Conference and Exhibition**

**ACTION:** Identify who attended the Flood and Coast Conference and Exhibition. **Rhian –** I have ascertained that Jeremy Parr, Stephen Cook and Nick Pritchard attended.

In addition, Rhian ensured that Hubert Jones, Innes Thompson and Ian Moodie received invites to the NRW Coastal Practitioners Conference - 27th & 28th April 2016.

**ADA Cymru agenda**

**ACTION**: Add update from the ADA Board Member at next ADA Cymru Agenda. Jacqui

**Next meeting: 5 October 2016 at 10:30am. Location to be decided.**

**Annex - Special Levies and Drainage Rate 2016/17**

