

Association of Drainage Authorities

BOARD MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 05th July 2016 at
North Level District IDB, Thorney, Peterborough.

Directors Present: **Henry Cator (HC) – (Chairman)**
Alison Baptiste (AB), Bryan Collen (BC), David Jenkins (DJ), Malcolm Harris (MH),
John Heading (JHg), David Hickman (DH) (Lincolnshire CC), John Markwick (JM),
Peter Pridgeon (PP), Trevor Purllant (TP), David Sisson (DS), Ian Thornton (IT),
Michael Watson (MW), Duncan Worth (DW)

Vice Presidents:

Company Secretary: Peter Bateson (PB)

In Attendance: Innes Thomson (ITh), Sue Crowther (SC), Ian Moodie (IM)

Apologies: Anne McIntosh (AM), David Riddington (DR), Jean Venables (JV), Eddy Allen (EA),
Tony Bradford (TB), Alastair Driver (AD), Kathryn Holdsworth (KH) (Defra), Neil
Parish (NP), Lord De Ramsey (LDR)

Ref	Minute	Action
81	<p>Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest</p> <p>See above for apologies.</p> <p>HC thanked North Level District IDB for kindly hosting the meeting.</p> <p>HC congratulated AB on being recognised as one of the Top 50 Influential Women in Engineering.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
82	<p>Minutes for Approval</p> <p>The Minutes of the Board meeting held on 22 March 2016 and as presented at this meeting were agreed and approved as a true record.</p> <p>Under item 70, PP corrected that the council named should be East Lindsey District Council and not North East Lindsey District Council.</p> <p><i>Action: IM to make correction</i></p>	IM
83	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>71b Action: ITh to investigate University Engineering/Land Management Departments to receive copies of the ADA Gazette.</p> <p>JHg expressed confidence that IDBs in Great Ouse Branch area who had not renewed membership in 2016 members would re-join as a result of the work being done by ADA.</p> <p>HC recommended that some thought is given to the smaller boards and their membership of ADA. ITh to work with P & F Committee on a review of membership categories and subscriptions in 2017.</p> <p>ITh reported on Board meeting representation. In view of previous comments from the Board, the proposal was put forward that for two out of the three annual Board meetings, those meetings would be attended by just Directors and supporting officers and others as the agenda specifically required. The July meeting would allow for attendance by Vice-Presidents.</p>	ITh

	<p>The Board agreed with the proposal and highlighted that engagement with our Vice Presidents is important. ITh was asked to ensure that communications with them took place on a frequent basis throughout the year and that the July meeting should take place at a venue in London to help VPs attend.</p>							
<p>84</p>	<p>ADA Position on Brexit HC confirmed that for ADA, business carries on as usual and we will be maintaining relationships with European colleagues through EUWMA.</p> <p>RC highlighted that changes to legislation would be most unlikely in the short term and that Defra's intention was to simply transpose all EU legislation currently in vigour into English law.</p> <p>The Board did express a concern that Brexit may put budgetary pressures on the UK which in turn may have a longer term effect on spending allocations to government departments.</p> <p>The Board asked ADA officers to keep a close watch on developments.</p>							
<p>85</p>	<p>ADA Administration and Operation</p> <p>a. Health, safety and welfare This is now a standing item for every ADA Board and Committee meeting. Ian Benn, Clerk to the Shire Group of IDBs, has been appointed as ADA Special Advisor on Health, Safety & Welfare. The Board welcomed Ian's appointment.</p> <p>Health, safety and welfare will now feature more prominently in ADA communications, and Board members supported this initiative, providing ADA was highlighting best practice and not giving direct advice.</p> <p>HC emphasised the value of the right behaviours and attitudes towards HS&W matters at a Board level and amongst ADA's wider membership.</p> <p>b. Additional resources to progress website and PR activities In line with previous discussions with Board members, HC confirmed that ADA was in discussion with a communications company, Kendalls, who had put together a proposal for increasing ADA media communications and updating ADA's website.</p> <p>ADA are looking to engage Kendalls for an initial period of 12 months, following which some of the work could be taken over in house, whilst retaining specialist communications help in other areas. Kendall's offices are adjacent to ADA's at Stoneleigh Park which will facilitate working liaison.</p> <p>Kendall's outline proposal was put to the Board as follows;</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="341 1473 1181 1570"> <tr> <td>- Website update, including management of the update work</td> <td>£10k</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- PR campaign for a 12-month period</td> <td>£18k</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Miscellaneous work on ADA publications and branding</td> <td>£2.5k</td> </tr> </table> <p>The background to the proposal, negotiations and benchmark tests to verify value for money were presented to the Board and their approval was given to proceed with this proposal (proposed by IT and seconded by PP. A start date of 1st August would be agreed and both the website and rebranding work should be complete ahead of the ADA Conference.</p> <p>The above work is task-and finish and ITh highlighted that once established, the website would incur running and technical costs of £1800 per annum. ADA currently pays about £400 per year for web hosting costs for the existing site. The new website would be managed and maintained by ADA staff.</p> <p>The costs for the above work would be funded from the income received from FLOODEX 2016, and the Board expressed their gratitude to David Sisson for having introduced Indigo Media and the concept to ADA</p>	- Website update, including management of the update work	£10k	- PR campaign for a 12-month period	£18k	- Miscellaneous work on ADA publications and branding	£2.5k	
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	<p>On Communications, JHg was keen that ADA get more messages and information directly to Branches and individual Boards and he felt that there is a need to generate more interest at a Branch level. DH echoed that the same message applies across local authorities and their elected councillors.</p> <p>PB mentioned that the new ADA Business Plan will feature objectives about improved communications.</p> <p>c. Payments 1st February 2016 to 31st May 2016 The Boards accepted and approved the payments list to 31st May as presented.</p> <p>Rather than individual listing, it was requested that future reports show categories of payments and if the Board wish to examine particular detail, they can do so.</p> <p>ITh said that with ADA starting to work more thoroughly with SAGE software for their accounts, a revised presentation format would be used at the next Board meeting.</p> <p><i>Action: IT to review payments listings</i></p> <p>d. Filing of Annual Return HC thanked SC for her work in pulling the accounts together and working closely with PB and Auditors Streets.</p> <p>ITh introduced Streets Audit report and highlighted outstanding items on page 5 and summary of significant audit findings from pages 7 to 10 of that report. Whilst there was nothing of major concern, a number of actions were agreed for implementation by the ADA team;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To maintain the robust sign off procedure for costs/expenses currently in place. - To note the staging date for staff pensions of August 2017 and take the necessary action to have arrangements in place. - To instigate a formal procedure to annually record declarations of interest in writing for all ADA Board Members. - To instigate a formal debt recovery procedure - To implement and apply a fixed assets register for the purposes of accounting for asset depreciation. <p>On the basis of the Auditor’s report and that outstanding issues are resolved, the Board approved the accounts and letter of representation for signature and filing.</p> <p>e. Finance Reports The Board noted the Period trial balance and interim FLOODEX income and expenditure reports. A final FLOODEX account will be presented to the Board at the next meeting.</p> <p>ITh reported that budget and finance reporting will be changed at the next Board meeting to use the SAGE accounting software to best advantage and simplify the task of reporting.</p> <p>HC noted the debtors report and SC confirmed she is working through these to recover monies owed. Revised payment terms have been agreed with NRW and Flood Defence Committee Wales debts from 2015 and it is hoped that the 2015 fees can be recuperated at the new 2016 rates agreed.</p> <p>ITh highlighted debts from CW Engineering and CW Group and the concerned that this will be a bad debt, and ITh proposed that legal action is taken to recover this debt. The cost of recovery could be up to £1,000 against a debt of just over £1,900. The Board approved that ADA should take legal action (Proposed by JHg, seconded by MH).</p> <p>f. Discretionary fund for staff awards The revised proposal as tabled was approved by the Board (proposed by TP, seconded by PP)</p>	<p>ITh</p>
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	<p>g. ADA Office: Key Activities ITh will continue to work on advance notice to Board members for assistance with activities of key staff.</p> <p>The activities during the last period of HC, IT and IM were noted by the Board.</p> <p>h. Business Plan Checklist The Board noted slightly better than expected delivery of Business Plan. Some areas not engaged on, as highlighted.</p> <p>i. Membership update ITh reported the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two of Boards have not renewed membership in 2016 but may re-join in 2017. - Cambridgeshire County Council have become members - Nine new commercial Associate members have joined <p>j. Company Secretary updates PB reported the following items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No filing requirements since last meeting. - PB Noted the ongoing work in relation to setting up the ADA Severn Branch and awaits information on the appointment of their representative to the Board. <p><i>Action: ITh to discuss and agree way forward with relevant people</i></p>	ITh
86	<p>Presentation by North Level District IDB HC thanked John Hoyles (Chairman), Paul Sharman (Chief Executive) and Ed Johnson (Operations Engineer) for hosting the ADA Board.</p> <p>PS and EJ each presented a number of administrative and operational aspects of North Level IDB and provided some interesting facts and figures. There is a boundary review ongoing north of Whittlesey, reviewing the shape size of district. Work has been ongoing to improve the efficiency of the Board’s maintenance operations, for example, using running combination mounted mowers and reducing the number of passes needed. Some costs were given as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - flail mowing 10p per metre, - weed basket work 26p per metre, - weedkilling using herbicide 5p per metre <p>PS emphasised that the loss of the ability to use glyphosate as an effective herbicide control would reduce maintenance or force a move to more invasive techniques and added costs.</p> <p>Other significant works included the refurbishment of Foul Anchor Sluice, channel mudding and summer bank reprofiling.</p> <p>NLIDB maintain approx.. 630km of embankment each year.</p> <p>NLIDB is heavily involved with conservation work and their biodiversity plan included for the provisions of 17 owl boxes. They have also adopted a class licence for water voles.</p> <p>Badgers remain an issue and NLIDB operate with a class licence for vegetation control around sets, and set interference licences for more significant bank works.</p> <p>NLIDB are concerned about the safety of raised embankments in relation to badger damage and the issue with the continuous work needed to remove badgers.</p> <p>NLIDB is discussing the future operations of the EA’s locally-based dragline excavator for efficient large channel maintenance in the fens. Board has employed and trained a specialist driver and they are looking to share the resource with other risk management authorities in region in the future.</p> <p>NLIDB are actively using PSCA agreements in relation to projects on Whittlesey Washes and acknowledge the value of partnership working.</p>	

	<p>PS mentioned that the prioritisation of Board maintenance of watercourses is based on historic regime, but does become revised through development and changes in water level management, and discussions with partners.</p> <p>The issue of Badgers was seen by Board members as a major concern and needs to be highlighted and dealt with in a professional manner. The Board asked ADA to discuss this issue in more detail with Defra.</p> <p><i>Action: ITh/IM to raise with Defra in PAG meeting</i></p>	ITh/IM
87	<p>Defra and Environment Agency Update AB presented both EA and Defra updates on their behalf.</p> <p>Discussions are ongoing regarding the Somerset Rivers Authority although the pace has slowed with the government reshuffles.</p> <p>The ratings review working group looking to involve a number IDBs in testing solutions. Defra are working with the Valuations Office to make information available to help with this activity.</p> <p>AB acknowledged concerns about water transfer licencing and confirmed that the aim of this approach is to ensure proper management of water resources across the country. The main driver for this is the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and Water Resources Act 2003 and managing abstractions sustainably. We must fully understand what water is being transferred where.</p> <p>AB said that Defra and the EA were receiving mixed messages and were not clear about the Industry's intentions. HC was clear that IDBs fully support the need to understand and record water transfers and abstractions and, through ADA, IDBs would be happy to fully co-operate with establishing a comprehensive register of water transfers in their districts. HC also stated that more regulation and red-tape would be counter-productive and that a partnership working approach would provide the best long-term results. HC suggested setting up a small working group to achieve this, supported by RC.</p> <p>Cumbria Partnership report has now been published and a similar approach is being considered in West Yorkshire on the Calder and possibly the Ouse.</p> <p>The number of PSC agreements is creeping up and involving IDBs and Local Authorities and the support from IDBs is welcomed.</p> <p>The EA are still very much committed to De-maining although there is a slight pause in progress due to changes at Defra. Once the criteria are agreed with Defra, progress can then be made on the already-identified pilot projects around the country.</p> <p>The National Flood Resilience Review is due for publication later this summer.</p> <p>AB mentioned that legislation within the Jobs and Growth Bill may be enacted in autumn 2016, to enable the setting up of combined authorities. Provision will not be specific to flood risk management, but will assist with the establishment of the Somerset Rivers Authority. Legislation is expected to set a high threshold for the setting up of such authorities in the future. There was a deputation from Weymouth Council to Rory Stewart regarding sea defence maintenance, and a suggestion has been made for a similar combined authority for coastal management. Ministers appear keen to idea of creating means for local funding delivery.</p>	
88	<p>Reports from Committees Reports were received from TP regarding the Technical & Environment Committee and IT regarding the Policy & Finance Committee.</p> <p>TP thanked committee members who gave presentations at FLOODDEX with positive feedback about the event and the seminars.</p> <p>DW Lincolnshire IDBs have put together a shared document on SuDS which is aimed at giving guidance to IDBs about when to take adoption of SuDS.</p>	

	<p><i>Action: DW to indicate where ADA can obtain a copy</i></p> <p>IT took committee through the minutes of the most recent meeting, again thanking members for presentations given at FLOODDEX. IT highlighted the work on preparing the new business plan and need for strategic direction on smart objectives within that document.</p> <p>JM asked about an update regarding ratings review and wider circulation to clerks.</p> <p><i>Action: IM to circulate an update to Clerks, for information</i></p>	<p>DW</p> <p>IM</p>
89	<p>ADA Subscriptions</p> <p>ITh introduced discussion on setting of ADA's subscription and papers put to the Board. ITh said that ADA has to notify any rate increases 40 days ahead of AGM, and next meeting falls within this time period.</p> <p>After consideration and discussion on the recommendation presented in the paper to the Board, and on the basis of the increased income expected in 2016, it was agreed by the Board that a zero % increase should be presented to the AGM for wider approval.</p> <p>HC recommended that a wider review or membership categories and rates ought to be undertaken and DW asked that this was aligned with the new Business Plan and ensure that Boards in particular understand the value and benefits of being members of ADA.</p> <p>HC asked Board to examine ambition for ADA and the need to provide income to support the staff that in turn can better represent the industry.</p> <p>The smaller IDBs remain a concern with disproportionate membership fees in relation to their incomes and turnover. The membership fee review should examine how ADA addresses this discrepancy.</p> <p>A paper was presented to the Board proposing two new categories covering individual and utility company membership rates. Concerns were expressed that the proposed Utility Company rate of £485 per annum was too low given their income and turnover figures. It was also considered that £35 might be a more suitable fee for individual membership. The Board recommended that the subject be discussed at the next P & F Committee meeting and brought back to the next Board meeting for ratification.</p> <p><i>Action: Membership categories to be discussed at the next P & F Committee Meeting</i></p>	<p>IT</p>
90	<p>ADA activities focus with Government</p> <p>ITh reported that a series of meetings have been held with Neil Parish MP and Baroness McIntosh to keep them updated on ADA's activities and issues. ADA have also contributed to the National Flood Resilience Review and EFRA Committee enquiry on the Winter Flooding 2015. Various letter have been exchanged with Defra regarding rate support grant and the request that Defra work with DCLG to support councils paying significant amounts of special levy and where this may increase, or be created as a new burden (new IDBs) in the future.</p> <p>Action: ITh to increase ADA's engagement with government and stakeholders</p>	<p>ITh</p>
91	<p>Communications and Events</p> <p>FLOODDEX was considered a major success for ADA and the Board supported the holding of a repeat event in 2017. As this year, ADA are planning to organise an event dinner on the evening of the first day of the event.</p> <p>ITh reminded Board Members that we have a 5-year agreement with Indigo Media for holding FLOODDEX, signed in August 2015, which is extendable by mutual agreement beyond that.</p> <p>As part of FLOODDEX this year, members from EUWMA met as part of an interim working meeting to progress thinking on common workstreams, as highlighted in summer 2016 gazette.</p>	

	<p>The ADA Conference will once again be held at the Institution of Civil Engineers and conference fees have been held at 2015 prices. The Acting Chair of the EA, Emma Howard-Boyd is a confirmed speaker, along with John Curtin and Neil Hornby agreeing to take part in the Q & A panel session.</p> <p>ITh asked all Board Members to help attract a good attendance at this year's conference.</p> <p>AB suggested inviting attendees to submit questions for the Q & A panel in advance.</p> <p>The Board discussed a possible future demonstration event. ITh was not sure that another national event was best and perhaps ADA Branches could give some thought to more local events. A demonstration event could expose ADA to considerable business risk and possibly diminish the positive effect of the FLOODEX concept which has shown its success.</p> <p>The Board asked if FLOODEX could accommodate an outside static demonstration area for equipment. ITh said probably not for 2017 but would discuss with Indigo for a possible extension in 2018.</p> <p>AB confirmed that dates had been set for Flood & Coast 2017 taking place on 28th to 30th March at Telford, Shropshire. ITh will be taking a more active role in advising for the event and promoting ADA members' involvement. There will continue to be a contra-deal between Flood & Coast 2017 and FLOODEX for the mutual benefit of both events.</p>	
<p>92</p>	<p>Any other business</p> <p>HC asked for thoughts on the all-day nature of meeting.</p> <p>There were mixed views about the length and energy of the meeting.</p> <p>There was a general consensus that London remains the best venue for ease of access and that we should try to cut down on the length of the meetings.</p>	
<p>93</p>	<p>Board meeting dates 2016</p> <p>Wednesday 12th October, at the Parcel Yard, Kings Cross Station, London Wednesday 15th March 2017 Wednesday 19th July 2017 Wednesday 11th October 2017</p> <p>Other meetings/events, for information;</p> <p>15th September, Clerks Meeting, London 16th November, Clerks think-tank, London 17th November, ADA Conference, ICE London</p>	