

Association of Drainage Authorities

BOARD MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 7th October 2015 at
YHA, Euston Road, London.

Directors Present: Henry Cator (HC) – (Chairman)
Eddy Allen (EA), Tony Bradford (TB), Bryan Collen (BC), Tim Farr (TF), Alison Baptiste(AB), Malcolm Harris (MH), John Heading (JHg), David Hickman (DH) (Lincolnshire CC), John Hoyles (JH), John Markwick (JM), Peter Pridgeon (PP), Ian Thornton (IT), Michael Watson (MW)

Vice Presidents: David Riddington (DR),

Company Secretary: Peter Bateson (PB)

In Attendance: Innes Thomson (ITh), Kathryn Holdsworth (KH) DEFRA, Sue Crowther (SC), Ian Moodie (IM),

Apologies: Lord De Ramsey (LDR), Anne McIntosh (AM), Neil Parish (NP) Trevor Purllant (TP), David Sisson (DS)

Ref	Minute	Action
56	There were no declarations of interest.	
57	The Minutes of the Board meeting held on 30 June 2015 and as presented at this meeting were agreed as a true record.	
58	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>47E ITh updated the Board that JBA Consulting currently provide packages of bitesize training/coaching for IDB Members. ITh will follow up by correspondence.</p> <p>47F Completed.</p> <p>47H Completed.</p> <p>47J Membership update correction it was North East Lindsey District Council who had not renewed ADA membership. PP to follow up.</p>	<p>ITh</p> <p>PP</p>
59	<p>ADA Administration and Operation</p> <p>a. Payments June 2015 to 31st August 2015 The Boards accepted the payments list to 31st August as presented.</p> <p>b. Finance Report to date ITh commented that at the previous Board meeting an end of year deficit had been anticipated, however a £9,000 end of year profit was now expected.</p> <p>c. Key Activities The activities during the last period of HC, IT and IM were noted by the Board.</p> <p>The Board discussed the changes within parliament, Government and CEO at the Environment Agency, noting the need to emphasise to all the value for money provided by effective investment in maintenance and water level management.</p> <p>d. Business plan checklist ITh presented a checklist prepared to monitor progress against ADA's 2014 – 2017 Business Plan. Across the three key business drivers performance was stable. There had been improvement in developing membership, eel regulations, water transfer licenses, promoting ADA liaisons with government, but slower progress with asset data, funding of events and review of IDBs. Some of these differences related to wider policy emphasis.</p> <p>AB asked what opportunities there were to work with EUWMA colleagues to assess the value of water level management (Business Plan Activity 2b.) in a consistent manner.</p> <p>ITh drew attention of the need to refresh ADA's Business Plan for 2017 – 2020.</p> <p>BC felt this needed to clearly set out what ADA wants to deliver in the future.</p>	

	<p>e. Succession Planning The Board discussed the paper tabled by ITh proposing the appoint of a Vice Chairman to run alongside HC for 6 months, with HC expecting to stand down as ADA’s Chairman at ADA’s Conference and AGM in November 2017.</p> <p>KH asked whether any consideration had been given to an independent person on the committee proposed to oversee the appointment. IT advised that Ian Smith (CEO, Middle Level Commissioners) and/or Francis Bowler (CEO, Bedford Group of IDBs) will be part of the committee.</p> <p>HC suggested that further persons may be able to be added to the Committee but this was dependent on ensuring independence from any candidates. HC stated that the first meeting of the appointment committee Starting 23rd Nov at the Middle Level Commissioners’ offices in March, Cambridgeshire.</p> <p>AB suggested ADA should think creatively in terms of appointments and seek a representative from the beneficiaries of ADA and its members’ work.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to proceed as set out in the paper with the addition of ADA’s President to the Panel. This was proposed by MC and seconded by MW.</p> <p>HC encouraged members to spread the word that ADA was looking for a dedicated person with passion & commitment.</p> <p>f. Membership Update ITh explained that membership was stable, and that the ADA Office was following up on outstanding subscriptions for 2015. Four new corporate Associate Members had joined, but recognised the challenge of keeping local authorities engaged given pressures on local government finance.</p> <p>DH highlighted that local authority budgets are tight, and that the number of staff involved had reduced, putting pressure on availability to attend meetings etc.</p> <p>ITh hoped that ADA will have a presence at the Flood & Coast 2016 Conference at Telford on 23-25 February to provide an opportunity to engage with a fresh local authority audience. AB agreed and was happy to support ADA taking an exhibition space and hosting a seminar at the event. AB also noted that a large Dutch contingent was being invited to attend.</p> <p>IT noted that FloodEx 2016 in May allowed opportunities to cross promote both events. It was likely a contingent from Germany may come to FloodEx. TP was planning to attend a demonstration event in Germany, which may lead to leads for new associate members.</p> <p>g. Company Secretary Update PB noted that there had not been any changes to the Directors of ADA and that ADA’s Annual Return had been filed with Companies House.</p> <p>ITh to circulate to Directors and Branch Secretaries details of when respective Board Members’ terms of service on the Board conclude and when new appointments will be required from Branches.</p>	<p>ITh</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>ITh</p>
<p>60</p>	<p>Update from DEFRA KH provided an update from Defra.</p> <p>KH explained that the Government’s Spending Review will be published by the Chancellor on 25 November 2015 setting out Government spending through to 2020. Defra officials are supporting the Secretary of State to negotiate the best possible settlement for flood risk management over the next five years. Defra had been engaging with The Treasury on the benefits of investment in flood risk management.</p> <p>Workshops had been held in Somerset over the summer regarding the future funding of the Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA). The SRA had resolved at their meeting on 23 September</p>	

	<p>2015 to formally seek the power to raise a precept and a letter to the Minster is expected shortly.</p> <p>Defra has been investigating alternative sources for accessing the 1990 valuation lists used to value non-agricultural land within Internal Drainage Districts. Defra had approached various organisations including DCLG, Valuation Office Agency, Estate/Land Agents, National Archives, Estate Gazette, and water companies. Defra were aware that some of the water companies do hold the 1990 data and the Estates Gazette hold 1990 data as well. Defra were chasing up responses from some water companies and once received they would decide on what next steps would be taken.</p> <p>Defra had been working on a Ministerial Letter to introduce flexibility in the way IDBs advertise their elections and hoped to share further details shortly.</p> <p>In Kent and Sussex one of the eight Environment Agency operated Internal Drainage Districts (West of Gravesend IDD) has now been abolished and the other seven will be abolished in due course. Four of the schemes for Adur IDD, South West Sussex IDD, Arun IDD and River Ouse IDD have been advertised locally in September 2015 and the draft Orders will be taken forward shortly. Schemes for abolishing East of Gravesend IDD, Pevensey IDD and Cuckmere IDD will be advertised in the next few months and two new IDBs will be created to cover these former drainage districts (North Kent Marshes IDB and Pevensey & Cuckmere IDB).</p> <p>A project to survey property level flood resilience has now finished and Defra hope to publish a report by the end of 2015. The Flood Resilience Community Pathfinder Projects which looked towards a package of measures to improve local community resilience so that they are better prepared against the risk of flooding CIWEM and the National Flood Forum are planning a one day conference on the for the 2nd December. A one day conference in path finders in September. Action plan April 2016, consultation – pre Draft flood debate in House of Lords.</p> <p>Defra is in the process of reviewing the arrangements for managing local flood risk (Flood and Water Management Act 2010) and will be developing an action plan for local flood risk management by April 2016. This is likely to be a light touch plan that draws on the findings of the evaluation.</p> <p>Draft regulations to establish Flood Re had been laid in parliament and were debated in the House of Commons on 15 September. The regulations are due to be debated in the House of Lords once Parliament returns. Flood Re has begun its operational testing phase - Flood Re needs to build and test its systems and insurers and brokers will need to link up their systems to Flood Re's. Flood Re needs to be authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority before it can operate and this complex process will take time. Once approved, Flood Re itself will decide when it is ready to accept policies, likely to be in April 2016.</p> <p>DH noted that a number of devolution offers were being made for local authorities and asked how Defra is engaging on this given that Lincolnshire County Council's offer included water management and flood risk. KH mentioned that Defra officials were due to be visiting Lincolnshire soon and would be happy to discuss further.</p> <p>TB discussed ongoing funding for the SRA and that the IDBs were currently working on prioritising the watercourse maintenance needs put forward. It was important that these rather than highways works remained a priority for the SRA and that a mechanism to seek funding from land managers outside existing IDB areas be explored further in time.</p> <p>KH was awaiting a formal view from Secretary of State regarding future funding options.</p>	
61	<p>Environment Agency Update</p> <p>AB reported that the Environment Agency's maintenance plans for the coming year were going through their regular signoff procedures throughout the Autumn, with the plans going to RFCCs in January 2016 and finally the EA Board.</p> <p>JHo stated that in order to integrate EA maintenance plans with investment decisions made by IDBs who are working in partnership with the Agency through PSCAs decisions affecting the Board needed to be made three months earlier than currently occur. He reminded the</p>	

	<p>Board that North Level District IDB was undertaking £0.5 million of work with the Environment Agency through a PSCA.</p> <p>JHe noted that the local choices process for spending precept money from IDBs was a positive step for the Great Ouse catchment. Whilst the long term investment plan for capital investment was welcome, revenue investment was “hand to mouth” and better working between partners could occur with greater long term funding certainty.</p> <p>TF noted that timing of announcements was key and there are a number of benefits in bringing IDBs into the conversation earlier.</p> <p>EA recognised need for long certainty in maintenance investment to achieve better rates from contractors and thus value for money.</p> <p>AB felt that this is a message being heard by Defra but must await the outcome of the Spending Review.</p> <p>AB reported that Ian Russell had returned to work on PSCAs and current 29 agreements were in place with a further 29 agreed in principle. A revised PSCA agreement and guidance is to be published shortly and made available on the ADA website. A workshop for EA staff would take place on 16 November.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the potential for transferring more maintenance operations to local management and to IDBs, including revising precepts.</p> <p>AB felt that it was important for IDBs to raise these thoughts with EA Area Flood Risk Managers and to look at what works the EA can do best and which the IDBs can in future.</p> <p>IT felt that the current PSCA was a usable document and encouraged all risk management authorities to start using it remembering that it was a live document and further revisions could be possible in the future.</p> <p>AB reported that under the River Maintenance Pilots Programme 10km of desilting work had been undertaken by landowners, local authorities and IDBs and that the EA and Defra were currently looking at revising flood defence consenting and a new charging regime under the Environmental Permitting regulations which would start in April 2016.</p> <p>AB reported that a useful meeting had taken place to discuss eels and that the EA was keen to find an appropriate and affordable way to meet these legislative requirements. A position statement from Defra/EA was expected in the Autumn.</p>	
<p>62</p>	<p>2016 Membership Fees and proposed budget</p> <p>Opening the discussion ITh suggested a 2% increase to ADA subscriptions for 2017 to consolidate growth in ADA’s role whilst seeking wider funding opportunities. ITh noted that ADA was looking to move from our current 268 sq. ft office to a slightly larger (406 sq. ft) office within the extension of the existing Rural Innovation Centre once it is built. This will mean ADA would pay rent of £9,100 next year. ADA would also be looking to increase the functionality of the ADA website.</p> <p>HC suggested ADA’s links through EUWMA could help attract some European Union funding for an ADA led project.</p> <p>PB noted that ADA has a projected net profit of £30,000 for 2016. Important that the purpose for this and further increases is properly set out.</p> <p>AB suggested setting out a narrative to show where ADA is going within its business plan over next five years and what funds were available and needed to achieve this. ITh to circulate existing ADA Business Plan to Board Members.</p> <p>The Board proceeded to discuss options for increasing subscriptions for 2016.</p> <p>IT proposed an increase of 5% for ADA subscriptions, seconded by EA. This was voted on with 6 members in favour and 4 against.</p>	<p>ITh</p>

	<p>TF noted that budget increases for local authorities were currently capped at 2% and proposed a 2% increase seconded by JH. Six members were in favour and 7 against.</p> <p>The Board therefore agreed to increase ADA subscriptions by 5% for 2016.</p> <p>JH proposed ITh prepare a briefing document setting out the increase in subscriptions in real terms and what this would help contribute towards in 2016 and noting the benefits of ADA to its members.</p> <p>The Board agreed with ITh proposal to increase advertising rates for the ADA Gazette by 5% for 2016.</p>	ITh
63	<p>Reports from Committees Reports were received from TP regarding the Technical & Environment Committee and IT regarding the Policy & Finance Committee.</p> <p>ITh noted that ADA was currently recruiting for new committee members to join both Committees in January. ADA needed knowledgeable candidate from across the membership with geographical diversity.</p>	
65	<p>ADA Rebranding The Board discussed a paper prepared by ITh regarding rebranding ADA and potentially changing its name to reflect members' wider roles in water level management.</p> <p>DR noted that this had arisen during his chairmanship of ADA and it had narrowly been decided to retain ADA's current name, although there was broad agreement that including water in title would better resonate with public.</p> <p>IM noted that in 2009 members attending the Annual Conference were asked their views. Approximately 60% of those who responded were in favour of changing ADA's logo (which happened in 2012 to mark ADA's 75th Anniversary) whilst approximately 60% at that time favoured retaining ADA's name. ADA has since used the strapline 'The Membership Association for Water Level Management'.</p> <p>AB suggested ADA seek further advice on branding from a PR firm and suggested greater emphasis of the current strapline whilst retaining the current name could be an alternative or interim measure. KH said that it was important to retain a strong brand and identity with the public. MW felt it was important to keep the term 'Association' in the name. TB was concerned ADA could lose its identity if 'drainage' removed from title. DH advised that it was important that 'Authority' stayed within title.</p> <p>AB to ask within Environment Agency for branding contacts. ITh to follow up.</p> <p>The Committee felt that there were probably three main options AWMA, AWLA or retaining ADA. It was agreed that branding proposals would be consulted on further with ADA's membership at the Annual Conference.</p>	AB ITh/IM
66	<p>Recent ADA activities, key meetings and events</p> <p>ITh stated that HC and ITh had met with Oliver Letwin MP from the Cabinet Office regarding future funding and was seeking a further meeting with partners to set out views from ADA, NFU, CLA and LGA on water level management ahead of Spending Review.</p> <p>ITh noted that ADA Vice-Chairs now had different parliamentary roles. NP was now the Chair of the House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee and AM had become a member of the House of Lords.</p> <p>ITh reported that this year's EUWMA meeting had taken place in Lisbon, Portugal and had focused on irrigation. There was a desire from all of EUWMA's members for further cooperation on the Water Framework Directive with the potential for a member organisation to host an additional meeting to discuss this in greater depth.</p>	

	<p>ITh reported that there were 125 confirmed attendees for the Annual Conference and hoped to reach 190 delegates for the event.</p> <p>ITh reported that FloodEx 2016 had already received committed orders of £50,000 and was on target regarding exhibition bookings.</p> <p>ITh and AB reported that the new Environment Agency supported Flood & Coast Conference was hoping to attract delegates from across the whole industry. ADA was looking to revamp its annual Local Authority Seminar as part of the event on Wednesday 24 February 2016.</p>	
67	<p>Any other business</p> <p>HC asked for feedback on venue. The Board agreed its proximity to railway stations was good, but there was not sufficient space to circulate within the room.</p> <p>ITh to investigate alternative venues in and around Euston Road, London. Options suggested included Friends House opposite Euston Station and the Parcel Yard within King's Cross Station.</p>	ITh

Dates of next meetings

- **ADA Conference 2015 Wednesday 11 November 2015, One Great George Street, London**
- **ADA Board meeting Tuesday 22 March 2016, TBC, London**
- **ADA Board meeting Tuesday 5 July 2016, North Level District IDB Office, near Peterborough**
- **ADA Board meeting Wednesday 12 October 2016, TBC, London**