

**Association of Drainage Authorities
Eastern Branch**

Minutes of the AGM of the Association of Drainage Authorities Eastern Branch held at The Pumphouse, 44 Park Road, Aldeburgh on 28 November 2017 at 10 am

Present

Mr B Collen – WLY & L IDB
Mr P George- WMA
Mr P Camamile - WMA
Ms K Thomas - WMA
Mr R Buxton – B IDB
Mr G Bloomfield - WMA
Mr R Pike – ES IDB
Mr D Kemp - EA
Mr K Worsley – WLY & L IDB
Mr C Mutten – WLY & L IDB
Ms J Burch - SCC
Ms E Dixon - WMA
Mr M Hullis - SCC
Mr S Hooton – Broads Authority
Mr P Roberts - WMA
Mr M Bekin – Eco Choice
Mr A St Joseph
Mr R Caudwell - ADA
Mr R Wise - NFU
Mr I Thomson – ADA
Mr B Blower – WLY & L IDB

Apologies

Mr H Cator
Sir Edward Greenwell
Mr J Borthwick
Mr D Papworth
Mr M Paul
Mr J Carrick
Mr G Bambridge
Mr C Loyd
Mr P Hayden
Mr S Daniels

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1.1 In the absence of Mr Henry Cator, the Branch Chairman, Mr Bryan Collen agreed to Chair the meeting.
- 1.2 Mr Thomson opened the meeting by underlining the importance of the Branch network within ADA and the role of Branches in achieving input on land drainage issues from all interested parties. He also stressed the importance of being aware of and being involved in what is going on in neighbouring branches so that Branches worked together as a group.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

It was reported that Mr Henry Cator had indicated that he thought it was now time for him to resign as Chairman having Chaired the Branch for ten years. The meeting expressed its thanks to Mr Cator for the work that he had done for the Branch over the years. A decision on the appointment of a new Chair was deferred pending discussion with all the relevant IDBs

3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

The appointment of Jane Burch from Suffolk County Council as Vice Chair was proposed by Mr Bloomfield and seconded by Mr Collen and all were in favour.

4. ELECTION OF REGIONAL DIRECTOR TO THE ADA EXECUTIVE BOARD

Mr Collen's continued appointment as regional director on the ADA Executive Board was proposed by Mr Camamile and seconded by Mr Mutten and all were in favour. Mr Collen indicated that he considered a three year appointment was too long and that this should be reviewed during that term. Mr Thomson indicated that the Branch was at liberty at any point to change its nominated Director using the appropriate processes and the three year term was simply a limit to regulate the length of appointment of any sitting appointee.

5. APPOINTMENT OF BRANCH SECRETARY AND TREASURER

Mr Blower indicated his wish to resign as honorary secretary and treasurer. Ms Thomas was proposed by Mr Bloomfield and seconded by Ms Burch as both honorary secretary and honorary treasurer and all were in favour. Branch members and ADA expressed their sincere thanks to Mr Blower for his support as Branch Secretary.

6. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING OF THE BRANCH

The Minutes of the meeting of the Branch held on 11 November 2016 were tabled. The approval of the Minutes was proposed by Mr Bloomfield and seconded by Mr Mutten and all were in favour.

7. MATTERS ARISING

- 7.1 The problems facing IDBs and local authorities with sustainable drainage systems and particularly attenuation lagoons was briefly discussed. It was noted that the principal problem was that DCLG is not engaging with this issue. There was to be a meeting with DEFRA on 29 November 2017 at which it was hoped progress on this might be made.

7.2 The problems with abstraction reform were raised and Mr Thomson confirmed that discussion is underway with the EA and Defra to try to ensure that the new licencing system does reflect the service actually being provided. Evidence was needed to assist with current discussions on this with DEFRA.

8. APPROVAL OF BRANCH ACCOUNTS

There were no accounts presented as there had been no financial transactions. Mr Blower reported that the current balance in the branch bank account was £1,922.35.

9. BUDGET AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

It was reported that the only anticipated expenses were the costs of arranging today's meeting. It was agreed that for the time being no subscription to the Branch should be raised.

10. BRANCH MEETING

The Branch welcomed Robert Caudwell as the new Chairman of ADA following Henry Cator's retirement from the role. The Branch Members thanked Henry as a hard act to follow and for his ongoing high level of interest and knowledge which he shared in his tenure as Chair. Expression of thanks from the Group.

10.1 ADA UPDATE

ADA will only raise the membership fees by 1 % to keep in line with inflation.

Aimee Scanlon, the ADA Press & Comms Officer is moving on so please bear with them whilst they fill the post (post meeting note : A new recruit, Mr Ryan Dixon will be joining ADA in mid-February to replace Aimée Scanlon)

Work is ongoing to bring the 1991 ratings to a present-day position. This is linked to the demaining work with EA on low/medium consequence systems. There are opportunities for IDB's to look at how this will be managed going forward. DEFRA need evidence of how to replicate a mechanism that is as close to fail safe as possible in legislative terms.

New Boards can be set up in areas with no IDB's. Existing boards can also be extended. There is good local accountability through IDB's which is important locally. Mr Camamile stated that this issue does need legislative change; it is not a costly re-evaluation but more of a governance issue that needs addressing. Mr Thomson informed the group that much discussion had been had with the NFU and CLA to ensure there is a 'no surprises' approach and that landowners are generally accepting of a move towards demaining and rating evaluation. Ultimately if IDBs and LAs can demonstrate good local support, the demaining approach can move forwards. In NW region there is a different approach to demaining to that occurring in this area, as there are issues of large pump assets serving many landowners and ongoing management by one organisation is challenging. This needs more time to develop. Demaining pilots are all underway, and this is a learning opportunity for all involved.

Following on from the National Audit Office report earlier in 2017 DEFRA are taking a keen interest in the governance and management of IDB Boards. ADA see this interest as constructive and will use the opportunity to highlight what the role of IDBs is. The IDB1 form will be used more effectively by DEFRA to identify areas where our Boards may need to improve. Key issues are the large size of the membership of some Boards and the importance of LA representation on Boards. There is also an interest in collective services such as consortia like WMA, and grouping similar Boards through Commissions - these approaches allow knowledge to be transferred and create efficiencies for Boards.

ADA are developing a digital map of IDB districts across England and Wales and are keen to build up information layers with local Boards input.

The group discussed the benefit to planners in informing them about developments in drainage districts. This has real value given the lack of statutory role IDB's have in planning.

Action: Frances Bligh (WMA) to share district layer with Matt Hullis and LLFRA.

Formal process is being developed which will consider the roles IDBs can play in supporting EA in Emergency Response and Recovery. The document is being drafted by Mr Thomson with EA and will be considered in collaboration with PSCA and recoverable costs and look to replicate the WEM framework approach so the EA can call on IDB's in emergencies.

Upcoming ADA & other major Events

Flood and Coast 2018 – 20th to 22nd March, Telford, Shropshire

ADA AGM - 14th Nov 2018

Floodex – 27th & 28th Feb 2019, Peterborough

10.2 EA UPDATE

David Kemp gave the following update:

- The EA's focus is on protecting 300,000 homes from flooding of which about 10% are in Essex Suffolk and Norfolk.
- Great Yarmouth £30M scheme: phase 1 of 5 is now complete to improve 4.5km of quays/
- Ipswich Flood Barrier £60M: wing walls are in place and flood gates have been delivered. Control structure is also in place.
- EA work in close partnership with FRM's and recognise that partnership working can get more for the public purse. EA is committed to cooperative approaches to push work forward as efficiently as possible. Highlighted working with IDB's at Benacre and Aldeburgh as good examples.
- The Project Delivery Unit is a good framework for delivering the programme for all FRMA's.
- EA's revenue/GIA spend for Norfolk Suffolk and Essex is £9.5M.
- Broadland- 20 year BESSL contract is coming to an end in 2021. Capital works are complete £2M revenue/maintenance spend up to 2021 to leave walls in good condition. Forward Look. EA have put together a business case for the Broads Strategy review which will consider the next 100 years in Broadland. WMA have supported this business case by developing a full Engagement and communication Plan.
- EA are undertaking works in East Suffolk as fair weather has meant Ops Teams are available to do work outside of emergency response duty. EA is not the most expensive option and there are a lot of good examples of working with IDB and LA's to reduce costs.
- Early indications are that PSCA's are saving about 20%.
- The number of failing assets is at a low with 98% reported as being at or above target level.
- EA also working with the Essex Landowner Group as Essex does not have a formal IDB.
- EA also working on Invasive species programmes, close circuit tv surveys and navigation markers.
- Natural Flood Management: after the 2013-2014 floods there has been a shift in focus on natural flood management benefits. DEFRA has made £15M available nationally to

deliver more natural ways of managing flood risk. 100 people recently attended a NFM event locally.

- Main River Demaining Pilot: 2 pilots taking place in our area where the EA are aiming to demain 137km. 88km are in IDB districts with 8km and 41 km within SCC and NCC boundaries respectively.
- Incident management- In times of flood all available resource should be utilised. EA welcome IDB and LA support.

Mr St Joseph raised the concern that General Drainage Charge (GDC) is largely raised in rural areas and Mr Wise asked how the NFU can justify GDC to its members? The NFU find this hard as there is a strong view GDC should be spent where it is raised and this is often not the case. Mr Caudwell stated that there are 3 Anglian RFD Committees and that they are the only ones nationally that apply GDC. There is a net hold an annual discussion on how best to spend GDC. Effectively the RFCCs can spend GDC how they choose to. As such its important that those representing rural groups on RFCC are briefed of local needs and inform the RFCC. There is a very good letter from Sir John Harman which states how GDC can be allocated by RFCC. Mr Wise said the EA are not spending GDC in this way. ADA offered to brief the RFCC Chairs to ensure this point was raised.

Action: Mr Caudwell to share the letter from Sir John Harman

Action: Mr Caudwell to RC to write to RFCC chairs regarding GDC

10.3 DONM

Date of next meeting to be set outside the meeting and to take place in Kessingland.