

ASSOCIATION OF DRAINAGE AUTHORITIES TRENT BRANCH



MINUTES OF THE BRANCH MEETING HELD ON 22nd FEBRUARY 2018 AT DONCASTER KNIGHTS RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB, CASTLE PARK, DONCASTER.

Representatives of the following Boards and Authorities were present:-

Association of Drainage Authorities
Bassetlaw District Council
Doncaster East Internal Drainage Board
Environment Agency
Isle of Axholme and North Nottinghamshire Water Level Management Board
Scunthorpe and Gainsborough Water Management Board
Sow and Penk Internal Drainage Board
Trent Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board

1. Welcome and Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman gave a general welcome and expressed his pleasure to see so many delegates from member organisations present at the meeting.

He introduced Robert Caudwell, Chairman of ADA, Vij Randeniya, Chairman of Trent RFCC, Mike Dugher, Humber Manager EA, Andy McLachlan, CEO of Ouse and Humber IDB, Eddy Allen, Chief Engineer of Ouse and Humber IDB and Secretary of ADA Northern Branch and David Hoskins, first individual commercial member of ADA within Trent Branch Area.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Kyle Hedon, Sam Cross, Rod Chapman, Ian Davies, Paul Goldsmith, Becky Stewart, Andrew Harp, Tim Farr and Morgan Wray.

3. Minutes of the AGM held on the 14th June 2017

The minutes of the AGM and Conference held on the 14th June 2017 had been approved at the EA/IDB Liaison meeting held on 23rd November 2017 and had been circulated for information only.

4. Report from the EA/IDB Liaison Meeting held on 23rd November 2017

Emily Mayle gave the following resume of matters that had been discussed at the EA/IDB Liaison Meeting held on the 23rd November 2017;

- Doncaster East IDB reported they were having issues with Highways England – Details had been passed on to the EA for information. The issues had subsequently been resolved.
- Potential Use of IDB Precept funds being used to part fund capital schemes.
- National Flood Risk Management Strategy – Morgan Wray had presented an update.

Isle of Axholme Flood Risk Management Strategy.

- Benefit Apportionment – Agreement in principle had been reached with all RMAs, formal sign off was now required.

- Funding Group.
- Advisory Group is to be reinvigorated (this to be linked into the Humber Strategy).
- Keadby PS update.

Other Matters

- Capital works update.
- Update on Snow Sewer De-maining Pilot.
- Update on PSCAs and maintenance works carried out EA/IDBs had been presented by Carl Wharmby.

Michael Brooke – Raised concern about three pumping stations within the Doncaster East IDB area that may be decommissioned under the IOA Strategy – These are Dirtiness and High Levels North and South. Andy Haigh stated that no decisions had been made and that the EA are currently in discussions with consultants who will carry out hydraulic modelling to test the feasibility of rationalisation of pumping stations in the catchment. Michael was concerned and asked that NFU/landowners be fully consulted.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Election of ADA Board Member

The Secretary reported that the term of office of the current ADA Board Member (Malcolm Harris) was due to end on the 31st March 2018. It had therefore been necessary, as per the constitution, to seek nominations for this post. There had been one nominated candidate, William Staunton, Chairman of Trent Valley IDB and Vice-Chairman of the Branch.

It was a unanimous decision that William Staunton be elected as ADA Board Member from the Trent Branch. The term of office will be from 1st April 2018 to the 31st March 2021.

William Staunton thanked everyone for their support and asked that the secretary circulate his email address such that anyone wishing to contact him if they wished him to raise issues with ADA National Organisation on their behalf.

7. Subscriptions 2018/2019.

The Secretary reported that the Branch accounts would be presented to the AGM in June this year but at present, indications are that there will be a small surplus in year. He therefore recommended no change be made to the current level of subscription of £45 for 2018/2019. This was proposed by Ray Sutherland and seconded by Paul Bradwell, with all in favour.

Note - Subscriptions would be issued later on in the year.

8. Incorporation of IOA into the Humber Strategy – Presentation by Mike Dugher (Humber Manager EA) and Andy McLachlan (CEO of Ouse and Humber DB)

Mike Dugher, Humber Manager gave a presentation on the current on-going comprehensive review of the Humber Strategy and the incorporation of the Tidal Rivers Trent, Don and Ouse.

Mike explained that, as a result of the 2013 tidal surge, significant additional evidence suggested that the tidally dominant area impacted by the Humber Strategy extends further upstream than previously thought. It has therefore been agreed to extend the boundaries to ensure that the agreed approach comprehensively manages tidal flood risk across the full tidally-dominant area of the Humber.

Consequently, there was a greater overlap with the IOA Strategy area and although the projects within each are independent there will need to be alignment.

He went on to advise that data captured after the 2013 tidal surge had significantly changed the approach to modelling and that the EA are engaging with consultants inside and outside of the UK (Holland) seeking best practice advice on the modelling for the Humber.

The second half the presentation given by Andy McLachlan, CEO of the Ouse and Humber Drainage Board was focused on the potential leadership role for IDBs within the Humber Strategy Area. He showed that 81% of the Humber and IOA study areas fall within internal drainage districts, and a total of 19 IDBs had an interest. It was, he felt crucial that the involvement and agreement of IDBs within the strategy be sought at political, executive and officer level.

The Secretary thanked Mike and Andy for their presentations and for raising awareness and enquired what opportunities there would be for getting involved.

Andy stated that there were various groups involved and encouraged members from IDBs to join.

9. ADA National Update

Robert Caudwell, Chairman

Robert presented his first address to the Branch as Chairman of the Association, he emphasised that there was a busy agenda and that ADA Team were seeking to influence at the National Level.

Some of these included:-

Robert had recently attended a Farmers Union Conference at which it had been suggested that Agricultural support payments would move emphasis by 2022 focussed on realisation of public goods –flood risk reduction measures was one of the public goods outcomes he mentioned.

Robert encouraged us all to work together to make the case for the continuation of sustainable water management and especially funding – ADA to make this case on a National basis. He advised he fully supported a whole Catchment approach as the best way to manage flood risk and water resources. IDBs have a key role in the catchment management way of working. He was becoming more interested in the potential use of flood storage areas in terms of water resources (i.e. multi-objectives).

In relation to the Humber Strategy and all other strategies he re-emphasised the importance of bringing in partnership funding from multiple sources to allow these large projects to be realised within the current delivery models.

10. Update from the Trent RFCC

Vij Randeniya, Chairman

Vij presented an update on Trent RFCC matters: -

- Vij had attended ADA Conference in November, he felt it was a great success and had provided an opportunity to lobby which was a key part.
- At the last RFCC meeting, there was a vote on the local levy for 2018/19 which had seen unanimous support for a 1.99% increase.
- EA has six year programme which has reached the end of its third year. There was some slippage on the targets, the main target of which was to protect 300,000 properties from flooding. Work has commenced on planning the next six-year programme and encouraged all organisations to engage.
- Transfer of Assets – Vij sensed the frustration but felt It may be possible via the Snow Sewer Pilot to influence change to the current rules – He felt a common-sense approach is needed.
- Water is powerful – Vij agreed with Robert that holistic approach to water management was required, No one group can fix it but we can/could if we work together. Partnership working is the way forward.
- To raise the profile of ADA and IDBs – RFCC are to invite the CEO of ADA to future meetings.

Will Staunton enquired – Regarding the difficulty in achieving the targets that Vij mentioned, was there any specific actions that could be implemented to bring things back on track .

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Vij responded stating it is National strategy to protect 300,000 properties within the current six year programme, some progress had been made but there have been issues especially around alignment of necessary partnership funding and the approval processes. He reminded all that there is a specialist team to assist IDBs, more direct support, faster tracking, making processes smoother and addressing skill shortages to do the work.

In response Chris McGuinness felt that the involvement of too many individuals can get in the way of a process – Vij agreed but felt a balance was needed between governance, expenditure and fairness.

Ron Allcock agreed stating that some schemes cannot and had not progressed because of issues with partnership funding.

Robert Caudwell – Was concerned about complexity and costs of projects. He felt we must be innovative on how we deliver projects, we should all look at simpler schemes and how they can be delivered in a more cost effective way, possibly using locally procured contractors and services. Start unlocking the log jam of the schemes that can be delivered.

Martin Spoor felt that the key is to securing additional external funding of projects was through evidence as to who / what directly benefits, this will then drive the funding.

11. EA Regional Updates

Asset Transfer and De-maining – Snow Sewer

Paul Lockhart

Paul gave an update on the Snow Sewer pilot stating that the EA are now looking to de-main by November 2018.

Chris McGuinness enquired what was the figure the Treasury believed was the market value of the lands at Snow Sewer? Paul Lockhart was unsure but agreed to send these figure to CM.

The Secretary stated that the EA/IDB are challenging the process for transferring assets and some progress was being made. He paid tribute to all colleagues for their willingness to take on this challenge. He further stated that for the future success of the IoA Strategy policies and procedures need to be sorted out or the challenges of asset transfer would reoccur throughout the Strategy Area.

Andrew McGill CEO TVIDB & IOANNWLMB felt that the ten years of discussion it had taken to achieve the probable transfer of Snow Sewer was ludicrous. He referred to a pumping station that was transferred historically (circa 1995) in Lincolnshire for a nominal fee of £1.

Robert Caudwell – Was concerned about the obstructions to moving things forward. He felt that the issue needs raising with Ministers and offered ADA support.

Maintenance Review

Fran Brownhill

Fran presented an update on the EA's winter maintenance and a forward look into the summer maintenance programme.

Michael Brooke Doncaster East IDB was concerned that DEIDB had missed out on PSCA working in 2017/18 – In his opinion, Suction Drain is in a bad state and as a result had caused some flooding. He reminded delegates that the EA are responsible for its maintenance and it needs to be cleaned out. Michael also raised similar concerns about the River Torne in the Rossington Area. Delegates were advised Robert Brown DEIDB Operations Manager has already contacted the EA regarding these matters and discussions were on-going.

Robert Adam Vice-Chairman IOANNWLMB – Enquired about plans for weed cutting on the River Idle – Fran advised that in 2017 the weed boat had cut the centre of the channel only and the EA are now looking to commission the IDB's excavator to remove the build-up of reeds in the left and right fringes of the channel downstream of Bawtry Bridge.

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EA Capital Projects Update

Andrew Haigh

Andy gave an update on the EA's capital projects within the Isle of Axholme Strategy Area which included;

- Keadby Terminal Outfall,
- Repairs to West Stockwith Pumping Station,
- Resilience works at Bull Hassocks, Candy Farm and Goodcop Pumping Stations,
- Dirtiness Pumping Station and Catchment Rationalisation
- Flood Modelling on the Rivers Torne and Idle

Emily Mayle

Emily gave an update on other EA's capital projects within the Trent Branch area which included;

- Works are being considered to either improve or replace a section (between 250m and 350m) of flood bank at Torksey that has been found to be below the required condition due to vermin damage and vegetation.
- A project is underway at Morton Corner to improve the future resilience of a flood bank which has been damaged again by vermin and also suffers seepage problems along sections of the bank during high tides.
- Outline business cases for Gunthorpe Trent Defences and Lowdham Flood Alleviation Scheme are being prepared.

Andrew McGill enquired if the EA projects been "value engineered" before estimating the costs of the schemes, quoting former issues where over cautious estimates (ie high optimisation bias had put projects in jeopardy due to low Partnership funding scores). Paul Lockhart agreed this had been an issue and felt improvements could be sought to get better at estimations of the true costs of schemes.

Martin Spoor felt that existing commitments to funding flood risk management and land drainage should be retained. Citing the Doncaster Drainage Act as an example. Others were concerned that water companies were not contributing towards the significant benefits their systems and areas received from the activity of other RMAs' systems.

In concluding this section of the meeting Paul Lockhart advised that a full review of the Multi-Agency Flood Plan was being undertaken by Defra and the EA and that TrentEx had been undertaken during the 6th to 8th February. The event had been very successful.

NOTE - All of the presentations given at the meeting would be made available electronically and circulated to members in due course.

12. Annual General Meeting – 7th June 2018

The Annual General Meeting and luncheon will be held on Thursday 7th June 2018 at the Doncaster Knights Rugby Football Club, Castle Park, Doncaster.

The Secretary reminded members that the AGM was free to attend but the cost of the conference and luncheon that followed would be around £40 per person.

If anyone has any items for discussion in the conference session they are to contact the Secretary by the end of March.

Invites to members and guests will be issued shortly.

In closing, the Chairman thanked all members and speakers for their attendance and contributions.