



POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 09 February 2021
Held remotely via MS Teams

- Present:** **Tim Farr (TF) chair**
Peter Bateson (PB), Robert Caudwell (RC), Pete Dowling (PD), Nigel Everard (NE), Jane Froggatt (JF), Rachel Hill (RH), Andrew McGill (AM), Lorna McShane (LM), Ian Moodie (IM) (Secretary), Innes Thomson (IT), Carol Tidmarsh (CT).
- In attendance:** Sue Crowther (SC) (ADA), Bethany Garry (BG) (Defra), James Yarham (JY) (Environment Agency), Sofi Lloyd (SL), Trevor Purllant (TP).
- Apologies:** Matthew Harrison (MH), Beverley Agass (BA), Carrie-Anne Porter (CP), Brian Stewart (BS), Angela Cowen (AC),

Ref	Minute	Action
1537	<p>Welcome & Apologies</p> <p>TF welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Pete Dowling (PD) attending his first meeting.</p> <p>TF noted the postponement of the meeting owing to the recent storm event and thanked the Committee for their forbearance.</p> <p>TF thanked Bill Symons who had stepped down from the Committee to become the Northern Branch Director on ADA's board. Vacancy has now been filled and look forward to welcoming Carrie-Anne Porter (CP) from the Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium. Beverley Agass (BA) is leaving the Bedford Group of IDB and thanks were expressed for her time and contributions to the committee.</p>	
1538	<p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>None noted.</p>	
1539	<p>Approval of Minutes</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2020 were agreed as a true and fair record by the committee present.</p>	
1540	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Committee reviewed the list of actions.</p>	

<p>1541</p>	<p>ADA Finance & Governance</p> <p>a. ADA Financial Position</p> <p>IT presented figures as per the updated papers (as at 31 December 2020), available due to P&F being postponed. Advised ADA had an annual surplus of £36,000 for 2020, and whilst income was down by £40,000, this had been offset by less expenditure due to the Covid restrictions. Income from membership & advertising had held up well thanks to the efforts of Ryan Dixon. A debtors report was presented, showing only a small amount of long outstanding debts including some advertising from long standing members.</p> <p>NE asked about timing of payments from ASA. IT was satisfied that payments from ASA were being paid in line with the fix billing arrangements agreed for ADA carrying out ASA administrative services.</p> <p>AM raised concerns from Water Management Consortium IDBs regarding WRE payments, noting that whilst WRE’s work remains supported by those IDBs, it was evident that those IDBs contributing the most financially to WRE may not be benefitting the most, and noted that IDBs were working to tight margins. Those IDBs would welcome a review by ADA of the payments scale for 2021 and beyond.</p> <p>RC respected their position and recognised the principle of IDBs who benefit the most should maybe pay more.</p> <p>Action: IT/IM to review payment scale for IDB contributions to WRE.</p> <p>b. ADA Memorandum & Articles of Association</p> <p>IT presented a proposal to update ADA’s Memorandum & Articles of Association, prior to presentation to ADA’s Board of Directors as per the supporting papers. The changes covered four main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alterations to membership categories (article 10) - Simplification of voting rights (article 33) - Alterations to Company Objects in line with the agree current Business Plan (article 5) - Alterations to the Officers section (articles 77 to 79) <p>NE asked if the branch constitution would also be included in this process and if the number of branches would be reduced. IT advised he would be open to views. TP suggested a sub-committee to look into the branch structure. TF agreed good suggestion.</p> <p>Action: ADA to form sub-committee on finalisation of Memorandum and Articles of Association to review and revise the existing ADA Branch structure. To include RC, TP, TF, PB.</p> <p>NE noted that points 47 and 49 regarding the appointment of Branch Directors also needed to be resolved.</p>	<p>IT/IM</p> <p>IT</p>
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	<p>Discussion followed regarding voting rights for member bodies, and a desire to simplify the situation. Suggested who pays most gets most votes using the annual value may be outdated. A suggestion of one board, one vote was made however it was noted that this could provide a minor disincentive to amalgamation. Another suggestion was to give three membership categories for IDBs, i.e. small, medium & large.</p> <p>IT advised that although a lot of work had been done in the past to come up with a new plan, no solution had been found. Would welcome conversation with AM and concluded the voting system does require further time, this was noted and he would make it a point of business in the future.</p> <p>AM offered to raise the question at branch meetings. TF agreed and would welcome feedback from branches.</p> <p>c. Association of SuDS Authorities (ASA) update</p> <p>IT advised that ADA's current contract to provide administrative services to ASA expires in Summer 2022. ASA were happy with the existing arrangements, which had provided good collaboration between the associations with few cross overs. The associations would look for further opportunities in the future and a meeting is to be arranged shortly to discuss future plans with ASA shortly.</p> <p>Action: IT to arrange meeting with ASA to discuss future plans beyond Summer 2022.</p>	<p>IT</p>
<p>1542</p>	<p>IDB Standing Orders</p> <p>IM presented a paper explaining plans to extend the ability for IDBs to meet remotely beyond the existing sunset clause of 7 May 2021 within the standing orders drafted at the start of the pandemic. Discussion had taken place with Defra, who had been supportive of the request and IM had asked IDBs for their feedback on the proposals to gauge support.</p> <p>CT advised that this matter had been discussed with Defra's legal team and would welcome feedback from IDBs via IM. TF was supportive. NE asked whether the provisions in the future could also enable hybrid meetings to take place with some individuals joining an in person meeting remotely. It was noted that this may assist IDBs when disabled access could present a problem. JF would welcome the ability for IDBs to choose the best way to meet in the future, and thought that this could help increase participation rates at IDB board meetings.</p>	

<p>1543</p>	<p>Land Drainage Consent fees and costs IM advised that the fees IDBs and local authorities charge for consents under section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 have remained unchanged since at least the early 1990s.</p> <p>CT advised that Defra are committed to increasing the fee of £50 which has been in place for long time. The views of IDBs would assist Defra with the evidence needed to make appropriate changes to legislation.</p> <p>Action: IM to distribute a consultation questionnaire to IDBs seeking their views on the appropriate charging for consents, and the range of costs IDBs accrue with different cases.</p>	<p>IM</p>
<p>1544</p>	<p>Defra Update CT highlighted:</p> <p>Environment Bill. The Environment Bill, which contains amendments to the Land Drainage Act 1991 that provide a new mechanism for valuing land for IDB ratings, had paused its progression through parliamentary proceedings and will be carried over to the next parliamentary session. It was expected that this would resume with the second day of the Bill's report stage in the House of Commons in May. Once through the House of Commons it would move to House of Lords and Royal Assent was still anticipated by end of the year.</p> <p>Public Accounts Committee. The Public Accounts Committee held a hearing on 14 January with Tamara Finkelstein (Permanent Secretary), Sally Randall (Director of Floods and Water) from Defra, and Sir James Bevan (Chief Executive) and Catherine Wright (Executive Director, FCRM) from the Environment Agency. This was part of the Committee's inquiry into managing flood risks. Sally Randall was moving to environmental quality within Defra and her successor would be Georgina Collins as an interim director.</p> <p>Consultations. Defra were holding a consultation on proposed changes to the Flood Re re-insurance scheme, looking at increasing the uptake of property flood resilience measures. Simultaneously Defra also released a call for evidence until 29 March on the local factors to be considered within the FCERM capital investment programme.</p> <p>Reservoirs. Defra expecting second part of the independent review examining the effectiveness of current legislation based on the safety and regulation of reservoirs to be published in March or April.</p> <p>FCERM Policy Statement. Defra have 12 commitments within its policy statement, one of which being a review of statutory powers and responsibilities across FCERM. Defra was currently looking at how best to take all of these commitments forward.</p> <p>IDB1 analysis. Defra undertaking some further analysis of the IDB1 forms submitted in 2020. Hope to share this analysis with the Defra IDB PAG at their</p>	

	<p>next meeting.</p> <p>Statutory instrument for IDB ratings. Revaluation statutory instrument is being drafted for use following the passing of the Environment Bill. Defra were awaiting some further information from the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) after a successful meeting was held with them that a number of IDB clerks attended.</p> <p>Reconstitutions. Defra were working on two IDB reconstitutions, which were progressing.</p> <p>RC asked about RFCC chairs coming towards the end of their terms this year. CT would be commencing the recruitment process for the Anglian (Eastern) RFCC, the other six coming to the end of their terms had had their terms renewed by the Secretary of State.</p>	
1545	<p>Environment Agency Update RH highlighted:</p> <p>Flood and coast innovation resilience programme. 82 expressions of interest were received by the Environment Agency from a good range of partnerships led by LLFAs and coastal protection authorities. Assessment process was ongoing during February, with the aim of announcing the successful projects later in the Spring.</p> <p>Staff changes. Toby Willison Executive Director for Operations had moved to Anglian Water. This role has now been split into two executive director posts, one focused on national operations (Lucy Hunt), and one focused on area operations teams taken by John Curtin. This led to a vacancy for the Flood and Coast executive director, which had been filled on a temporary basis by Catherine Wright and Mark Garrett was filling Catherine’s former role and consequently representing the Environment Agency on ADA’s Board.</p> <p>National FCERM Strategy for England Action Plan. Environment Agency had shrunk back the actions to be published in the spring to focus on the coming year, partly as a result of the one year funding commitment. Environment Agency were seeking actions to come forward from the IDB community through ADA. Environment Agency have undertaken a project looking at embedding resilient approaches, and were keen to receive input from a range of RMAs including IDBs.</p> <p>National Apprenticeship Week. Highlighted the work to develop the Water Environment Workers Apprenticeship developed by the EA with support from the Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium. Keen for IDBs to continue to putting people forward for the Brunel University foundation and postgraduate flood risk management courses.</p> <p>IDB Precepts Environment Agency had developed draft guidance for calculating precept and reporting on its spend. This had been shared with ADA for comment and would next be shared with RFCCs. It was reported that the guidance would be an</p>	

	<p>internal operational document for the Environment Agency, but RH and colleagues would work with IM to produce a communication to IDBs to clarify the approach that the EA will take and commitment to engagement and reporting mechanisms around the precept.</p> <p>BS said that as an RFCC chair it was clear that engagement was something that needed to be focused to avoid any changes in precept funding coming as a shock and ensure that the rationale was understood.</p> <p>NE reported that some Yorkshire IDBs had not yet received Highland Water contributions this year. RH would look into that issue as she was aware of internal financial administration issue over past couple of years around these contributions, but thought that these had been resolved.</p>	
	<p>Appointment of representative to Defra’s IDB Policy Advisory Group IM reported that with BA stepping down from the Committee, Defra were now in need of another representative from an IDB for the DEFRA IDB Policy Advisory Group, which meets three times a year. The custom is for there to be two IDB representatives one appointed by each of ADA’s standing committees.</p> <p>PB volunteered to be the representative from the Committee, with JF as the nominated second.</p>	
<p>1546</p>	<p>Committee Workstreams IM provided the Committee with a progress update regarding the three existing workstreams overseen by the Committee and the new one on climate change being commenced:</p> <p>a. Educational Resources. Drafts by LEAF Education consultants had been reviewed by ADA and comments returned. Have chosen to focus on geography syllabus and intend to create regional case studies similar to case study about Somerset Levels and Moors already prepared. Still seeking volunteers to be ambassadors to promote schools engagement within ADA member authorities. A school is being lined up to test the resources created in 2021 and the ambassador training will take place after this. IM updated as per papers, grateful to Witham 4th for sharing information. Prof Bancroft, University of Hull, key stage 2, research of IDB & watercourse. CT advised they had been asked to support his work (Prof Bancroft), she will send letter of support. IT advised David Sisson had also been involved.</p> <p>b. Development Contributions. IM reported that further work on this guide were to be paused until the completion of the Environmental Good Governance Guide.</p> <p>Action: IM to provide a copy of the draft text to PD.</p> <p>c. Byelaws. The Committee reviewed a draft of amended model IDB byelaws. These were supported and no objections or revisions were raised and these would now be put to Defra for ministerial approval.</p>	<p>IM</p>

	<p>d. Climate change. RH Welcomed work being done & offered support, CT advised DEFRA also welcomes the work being done and enquired if ADA would do any voluntary reporting by end 2021. SL Not sure how much information will be available but will review & monitor situation.</p>	
<p>1547</p>	<p>JPAG and Practitioners' Guide survey 2020 findings NE reported on the survey findings circulated to the Committee. Six IDBs had responded, and broadly these respondents were seeking for more practical guidance. Given the breadth of JPAG's members, the proposal coming from JPAG is for each constituent body (e.g. ADA for IDBs) to develop its own guidance and models to sit under the Practitioners' Guide.</p> <p>NE liaising with PB and SL regarding model account documents prepared by PB previously, and the use of IDB1 data to identify inconsistencies in reporting where further guidance would be of assistance to IDBs.</p> <p>Action: NE to bring a paper to a future meeting on areas for future guidance by ADA and/or JPAG.</p>	<p>NE</p>
<p>1548</p>	<p>Future ADA events</p> <p>ADA Demonstration 2022. IT discussed the draft ADA Demonstration budget, as per the outline business plan and budget presented to the Committee. The income and costs presented were very tight and there was a need to have a plan to simplify some cost aspects such as the exhibition tent. In a survey of ADA members and exhibitors there was strong support for the event, ADA was investigating sites in Yorkshire with the help of AM. An advisory group had been established to oversee the proposed event, including Ian Thornton (advisory group chair) and the NFU and CLA. The proposed site will require the host IDB's approval and the plan to approval of ADA's board of directors.</p> <p>PB voiced concerns regarding the survey as this has been carried out prior to the pandemic, and wondered if 2022 was too soon. TF wanted to make sure that ADA and the event organiser had a clear understanding of costs and obligations in case the event has to be deferred due to circumstances.</p> <p>The Committee was supportive of taking to outline business plan to ADA's Board of Directors.</p> <p>ADA Annual General Meeting 2021. IT reported that One Great George Street (ICE) had been booked for 10 November 2021, and the deposit would become non-refundable after 10 May 2021. If needed could make decision to revert the Conference to a virtual meeting before this date. The focus would be on inviting guest speakers to the ADA Conference in respect of Climate change given the UK's hosting of COP26 in Glasgow in November. The Event would also mark the handover of ADA's presidency to Henry Cator. Lord De Ramsey having served over ten years as ADA president.</p>	

	<p>IT proposed holding a separate AGM event in September. PB and TP voiced concerns over a potential clash with harvest for farming members. No decision was taken but the proposal would be put to ADA's Board of Directors.</p> <p>RC expressed concerns regarding social distancing requirements for a physical gathering.</p> <p>IT advised that Floodex 2021 had been cancelled, and ADA's only financial obligation was a 50% deposit to the venue.</p>	
1549	<p>Update from ADA Technical & Environment Committee</p> <p>SL reported the publication of: the IDB BAP template and guidance; the IDB boundary layers on data.gov.uk under an Open Government Licence; and two health, safety and welfare training modules on the ADA website. SL had pulled together the basis of a biodiversity questionnaire and this would be finalised after the completion of the IDB Environmental Good Governance Guide. SL reported that the remaining aspects of the data and evidence workstream would be paused to focus on other priorities.</p> <p>Action: ALL to provide feedback on the initial health safety and welfare modules developed.</p>	ALL
1550	<p>Any other business</p> <p>CT highlighted Defra's Lowland Agricultural Peat Taskforce. Welcomed ADA's support to this work and RC's chairing of the task force. RC highlighted that water management is going to be key to the success of the lowlands peatlands taskforce and therefore IDBs would be key to this.</p>	
	Close of Meeting	