



# Representing Drainage Water Level & Flood Risk Management Authorities

## TECHNICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING

# Minutes

Remote Meeting via MS Teams  
Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022  
09.30pm – 12.30pm

Attendees:					
Name	Representing	Present	Name	Representing	Present
Andrew Newton	Engineer - Ely Group of Drainage Boards	Apols.	Ed Johnson	Chief Engineer - Witham Fourth IDB	Y
Chris Manning	Environmental Officer, WMC & Doncaster East IDB	Y	Innes Thomson	Chief Exec - ADA	Y
David Thomas	CE - Middle Level Commissioners	Apols.	Martin Shilling	Head of Technical & Engineering Services- Lincoln & District IDB's	Apols.
Diana Ward	Ecologist for Ely and Bedfordshire groups of IDB's	Y	Mat Jackson	West Sussex CC	Y
Mark Phillips	Natural England	Apols.	Neil Longdon	EA – FCRM Directorate	Y
Peter Bateson	CE - Witham Fourth IDB	N	<b>Trevor Purlant</b>	<b>Committee Chairman</b>	Y
Robert Caudwell	ADA Chairman	Y	Sofi Lloyd	Committee Secretary & Tech. Officer - ADA	Y
Phil Camamile	Chief Executive, Water Management Alliance	Apols.	Tim Farr	ADA P&F Committee Chair	Y
Ian Moodie	Tech Manager - ADA	Y	Andy Morritt	Principle Contracts Manager - Coal Authority	Y
Andy McLachlan	Chief Executive - Yorkshire and Humber Drainage Boards	Apols.	James Yarham	EA - FCRM Senior Advisor	Y

Ref	Minutes
	<b>Formalities, Regular Topics &amp; Updates</b>
1618	<b>Apologies received and welcome to new members</b> TP welcomed everyone to the meeting & put forward apologies for non-attendance.
1619	<b>Declarations of Interest - TP</b> None noted.

1620	<p><b>Approval of Minutes – TP</b> Minutes of the Committee’s previous meeting held on 14 September 2021 were approved.</p>
1621	<p><b>Action Log – SL</b> Actions progress were detailed in the log circulated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1511/1522 will be taken forward through H&amp;S subcommittee, which was to reconvene shortly.</li> <li>• 1512 regarding changes to the IDB1 reports will pick up now biodiversity metrics settled have been published.</li> <li>• 1532 Educational resources IM reported that Lower Severn IDB were to help test the field visit resources shortly, and a training course for Education Ambassadors would then be taking place in April 2022.</li> <li>• 1569 Sought paper copies of class licences, topic to be worked through with DW and CM.</li> <li>• 1582 The carbon accounting guide was close to publication. AM reported that Coal Authority carbon calculator was being reviewed and was not currently available to circulate.</li> <li>• 1584 Stewardship provisions, SL continuing to pursue this matter both on existing and future measures, but it was challenging to find engagement with Natural England. SL meeting with MP next week on this matter. DW suggested ADA engage at a higher level to make progress. RC had spoken to Tony Juniper (Natural England Chair) on this matter as well as raising this with the relevant Defra Minister. NL suggested contacting Oliver Harmar at Natural England, formerly Environment Agency Area Director for the North East.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> RC to write with IT to Tony Juniper to encourage further engagement with ADA on the integration of flood risk management in lowlands with ELMS. <b>ACTION:</b> IT to contact Oliver Harmar on the integration of flood risk management in lowlands with ELMS.</p>
1622	<p><b>Brief Workstream Updates</b></p> <p><b>a) Biodiversity</b> <i>Biodiversity Metrics</i> SL reported that ADA had received completed metrics from 55 IDBs out of 112 in this first trial year, a positive start and sought feedback. EJ found metrics spreadsheet straightforward to use, although there was a character limit for comments within certain fields. Noted that there were some positive actions and projects HIS Board had undertaken that were not easily included, but from here in the Board will be able to collect data in a consistent format to that required in the metrics making future reporting easier. CM noted the need to baseline certain questions to understand the proportion of watercourses/pumps etc. that had been enhanced. For instance what was the total number of pumps compared with the number that were now fish friendly. SL had not developed the data further in this first trial year, and sought views on the future use of the data given that it would be recorded as consolidated sector figures for IDBs as a whole. There was a discussion about its relevance to new provisions within the Environment Bill, as a tool for individual IDBs to benchmark their own performance and collectively to provide support and reassurance of IDBs collective work enhancing the environment. SL stated that in ADA’s view each IDB’s biodiversity action plan alongside gathering the type of data voluntarily within the IDB Biodiversity Metric should be sufficient for them to meet the new quantitative requirements contained within the Environment Act 2021. DW was concerned that the uses of the metrics were not decided up front and that IDBs’ Biodiversity Action Plans should continue to be driven by local environmental needs and priorities and not the data collected within the metrics. IM reported that the purpose of the biodiversity metrics was to enable consistent reporting of quantitative data to demonstrate what IDBs do positively for the environment given regular queries from Defra and others on this topic.</p>

1623	<p><b>Environmental Good Governance Guide</b></p> <p>IM reported that SL had pulled together all of the information need to provide a comprehensive guide to environmental regulation and governance for IDBs. IM was editing the material produced to turn this into a reference guide that IDB officers and board members could quickly find and pull out a succinct overview of the key information around each topic. Seeking to edit the document down to less than 50,000 words and send it to Defra for review before the end of the current financial year. IM said that format will be very similar to the existing IDB Good Governance Guide. Also wanted to incorporate a series of icons to act as a ready reference to key types of information. After the guide is published ADA will hold a workshop and plan to record either a video or podcast format.</p>
1624	<p><b>b) Data and Evidence Workstream Progress Update</b>  <i>IDB1 Revision Recommendations</i></p> <p>Covered within the action log discussion.</p>
1625	<p><b>c) HS&amp;W</b>  <i>HS&amp;W knowledge modules</i></p> <p>Committee discussed feedback on the existing modules. Comments were raised about the duration of each module (20 minutes was quite long for some board members), and value of incorporating into board meetings verses sending these out for members to watch in their own time. It was important that Board Members can take in this detail given that they are public servants, but the material needed to be engaging. Ultimately about ensuring that Board Members have an appropriate level of knowledge to make an informed decision about the risks that they, the Board and its employees face. For reference the three videos had been viewed 166, 106, and 76 respectively according to YouTube.</p> <p>SL would take the matter forward through the HS&amp;W Sub-Committee, looking to build more interactive training material.</p> <p>HS&amp;W subcommittee, have given a view on the topics for the next round of modules to be delivered. SL was looking to find the right consultants to take these forward.</p> <p>MJ noted that WSP have a local government skills academy. These are a series of 45 minute slide presentations available to those local authorities using them as framework consultants.</p>
1626	<p><b>d) Climate Change (IDB adaptation and carbon reduction)</b>  <i>Carbon Accounting Guide for IDBs &amp; reporting template</i></p> <p>SL had drafted the guide and shared this with a small group of IDB officers to trial the calculator that had been produced by the LGA for local authorities. SL presented the guidance to the Committee. After publication ADA would next be working on developing a template for an IDB carbon reduction policy and associated strategy.</p> <p>CM noted that having data and evidence around IDB carbon emissions could assist with making the case for assistance with accessing biodiesel or future funding.</p> <p>EJ noted that having a carbon policy will be a key requirement for RMAs seeking flood defence grant in aid in the future, noting that a recent project had been heavily scrutinised in this regard.</p> <p>MJ noted that the methodology could be adapting to recording data on nitrogen and phosphorous in relation to nutrient neutrality in the future.</p>
1627	<p><b>e) Managing Channel Sedimentation</b></p> <p>SL reported that work was ongoing.</p> <p>EJ had completing modelling work around sediment removal from channels</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> EJ to share sediment removal modelling evidence with SL to potentially act as a case study.</p>
1628	<p><b>Summary of recent work progressed</b></p> <p><b>a) Pollen &amp; Nectar Project</b></p> <p>SL highlighted that the Beespoke project is progressing with South Holland IDB and riparian farmers, with opportunities to extend this to other IDBs.</p>

<p>1629</p> <p>1630</p> <p>1631</p>	<p><b>b) PSCA Amendments</b> SL reported that proposed revisions to the PSCA guidance were submitted by ADA to the Environment Agency in summer 2021. JY had an internal audit of the PSCA, and would be discussing ADA's proposals in line with this, now that those recommendations have been completed.</p> <p><b>c) Environment Bill review</b> SL noted that now the Environment Act had been published and several consultations were being developed around secondary legislation.</p> <p><b>d) All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG)</b> <i>SL reported now planning inaugural meeting in March. APPG aim to meet three times per year. An opportunity to present challenges and opportunities for the sector directly to parliamentarians and asked the Committee for suggestions for topics to present to the APPG:</i> <i>MJ suggested drainage and wastewater management plans and drought management.</i></p>
<p>1632</p> <p>1633</p> <p>1634</p>	<p><b>Recent ADA work</b></p> <p><b>a) ADA Event Plan</b> IM presented the plan of ADA events in the coming year and that these would shortly be available in a new calendar format on the ADA website, enabling people to download calendar reminders for electronic diaries (Outlook/Gmail etc.). Trying to spread ADA's key events throughout the year a bit better, including a second Keeping Our Rivers Flowing Summit in April 2022 at Stoneleigh Park with a wider collaboration of partners (EA/NFU/CLA) and separate out ADA's Conference from ADA's AGM, which would stay online. The ADA Conference would likely return as a high profile in person event outside of London.</p> <p><b>b) P&amp;F update</b> IM reported that the Committee recently met and their focus of discussion were around ADA's finances, red diesel, the Environment Agency's revenue settlement, and the development of Environment Agency guidance on the charging and spending of IDB precepts.</p> <p><b>c) Red Diesel</b> IM reported that it seemed that before Christmas the situation was relatively settled that red diesel was going for IDBs and their contractors' works and pumping activity. However, ADA received a note from a senior HM Treasury civil servant that red diesel could be used by IDBs on agricultural land, voluntary sports facilities and golf courses. This new position raised questions around an existing Excise Notice (No.75) which stated that red diesel must be used <u>solely</u> for agricultural benefit. ADA put this together as a paper to IDB clerks, and that consequently the majority of IDBs were setting their rates higher on a precautionary basis. ADA had discussed the matter with solicitors, and through that it was decided that the preferred outcome would be for the removal of the word <u>solely</u> from Excise Notice 75 and was shortly due to discuss this with Defra. A Minister had stated that Defra was working closely with ADA on this matter in answer to a question in the House of Commons. It was also suggested that ADA needed to be more positive about the opportunities for carbon reduction that HVO could offer IDBs for pumping and plant machinery, and whether ADA should lend its voice to calls from other groups (Civil Engineering Contractors Association [CECA]) for a duty reduction for biodiesel for plant machinery. EJ highlighted that some IDBs were moving straight to DERV (white diesel), others were splitting their diesel fuel use between agricultural and urban areas. Ambiguity would be a difficulty for IDBs, especially around enforcement. RC noted that ADA was awaiting discussions with Defra before deciding on whether to seek further legal counsel on this matter.</p>
	<p><b>Work being progressed in 2022</b></p>

1635	<p><b>a) Committee Vacancies</b> SL noted that ADA had put out a notice to seek new members. Grateful to reapplication by several existing members.</p>
1636	<p><b>b) Good Governance Guide update</b> IM reported that an update to the existing good governance guide would be taken forwards later in the year once the work on the EGGG had been completed.</p>
1637	<p><b>c) HS&amp;W Survey</b> IM reported that ADA would be seeking to repeat the survey held a couple of years ago to understand how IDBs reporting and governance around health safety and welfare had developed since then.</p>
1638	<p><b>d) Gazette</b> TP praised the content of the Gazette in recent editions. SL sought ideas for topics to include. MJ suggested getting some more guest political comment and discussion journalism to act as a more provocative feature that stimulates the discussion on a particular subject. SL noted that the Viewpoint section at the back of the Gazette aimed to do this and RC noted that ADA had recently sought to include a page from an RFCC Committee in each edition. DW asked whether a short resume of current consultations and initiatives. IM noted ADA would like to receive more articles about positive and innovative work undertaken by ADA members.</p>
1639	<p><b>e) Consultations</b> SL noted that ADA's bi-monthly News Stream was the tool ADA was using to keep members informed about policy changes, papers and consultations and ADA's responses. IM reported that ADA is now publishing all of our consultation responses online as news items via <a href="http://www.ada.org.uk/category/consultations">www.ada.org.uk/category/consultations</a>. Noted that ADA would in particular be shortly responding to an upcoming consultation on River Basin Management Plans, and Biodiversity Net Gain. EJ asked about the consultation on regional flood risk management plans in January. ADA asked clerks and members whether they wished ADA to raise any national points, but encouraged IDBs to respond to their respective consultations. It was noted that the flood plan explorer was confusing and parts of it had been miss-linked within the consultation.</p>
1640	<p><b>f) Environment Forum</b> SL has been regularly holding these informal meetings of environmental professionals within ADA's membership, which had been positively received. Further forum meetings were planned.</p>
1641	<p><b>Focus for future topics</b> Committee raised support for furthering members' discussion and action on carbon reduction and lowland peat. Committee agreed to keep focus on existing ongoing projects in order to keep the focus on delivery and outcomes.</p>
1642	<p><b>AOB</b> DW suggested moving Committee meeting dates to avoid clashes with Board meetings in January/February in future years.</p>
	<p><b>Close of meeting</b></p>