



Lincolnshire

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Welland & Nene

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Chairman: Trevor Purllant
Vice-Chairman: Brian Long

MINUTES OF JOINT LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH AND WELLAND & NENE BRANCH MEETING

THURSDAY, 17TH OCTOBER 2024

VENUE: THE SESSIONS HOUSE, SHEEP MARKET, SPALDING, PE11 1BB

Present:

Robert Caudwell	ADA
Peter Bedford	Black Sluice IDB
Keith Casswell	Black Sluice IDB
Paul Holmes	Black Sluice IDB
Mark Leggott	Black Sluice IDB
Daniel Withnall	Black Sluice IDB
Henry Hammond	Environment Agency
Morgan Wray	Environment Agency
Paul Sharman	North Level IDB
Jonathan Stublely	North Level IDB
Simon Bartlett	South Holland IDB
Karen Daft	Welland & Deepings IDB
Jennie Head	Welland & Deepings IDB
Jane Picking	Welland & Deepings IDB
Trevor Purllant	Welland & Deepings IDB
Jane Froggatt	Witham & Humber Drainage Boards
Peter Bateson	Witham Fourth IDB
Peter Richardson	Witham Fourth IDB

Apologies:

Ian Moodie	ADA
Innes Thomson	ADA
Matthew Harrison	Lincolnshire County Council
Carol Davies	Lindsey Marsh DB
Andrew McGill	Lindsey Marsh DB
Gabriella Gregory	NFU
Lionel Grooby	North East Lindsey IDB
Phil Hoyes	North East Lindsey IDB
William Gee	North Level IDB
Michael Sly	North Level IDB
Duncan Worth	South Holland IDB
Fred Myers	Upper Witham IDB
David Branton	Welland & Deepings IDB
Nick Morris	Welland & Deepings IDB

Martin Shilling
Terry Williams
Paul Carrott
Ian Parker
Ed Johnson

Witham & Humber Drainage Boards
Witham & Humber Drainage Boards
Witham First IDB
Witham Third IDB
Witham Fourth IDB

1. **Chairman's Announcements**

Acting Chairman, Peter Richardson, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Apologies**

As above.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Joint Meeting**

Peter Richardson requested that the following text be inserted into the minutes of the last Joint Branch Meeting held on the 24th April 2024 (copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting).

Keith Casswell has stood down from the ADA National Board after eight years and Peter Richardson will be standing in Keith's place.

4. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

5. **Report from ADA National**

Robert Caudwell gave members the following update:

Key Points

- Of the £75m funding support for IDBs, only £25m has been delivered; the remaining £50m has been withheld until post-Budget.
- In September Robert Caudwell and Innes Thomson met with Flood Minister, Emma Hardy, to focus primarily on ADA members' desire for a better balance of funding for the routine maintenance and management of existing flood risk assets, systems and watercourses.
- Robert Caudwell and Innes Thomson attended the first meeting of the Flood Resilience Taskforce in September which was chaired by the Secretary of State.
- Talks have been taking place with Ofgem about electricity standing charges. Ofgem recognise an anomaly for IDBs and are working on a possible solution.
- An All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Water & Environmental Management (CIWEM) meeting took place on the 9th October.
- New starter at ADA: Laura Lamb, Membership Officer.
- ADA Conference will take place on 13th November.
- Robert Caudwell expressed his thanks to Keith Casswell for sitting on the ADA National Board for eight years.

6. **Reports from ADA Committees:**

(a) Show Committee

Peter Richardson reported that Anglian Water have asked if they can be on the ADA Lincs' stand and, hopefully, the EA will be back on board.

Members of the committee have been given delegated tasks, rather than 'all mucking-in' as in previous years.

(b) Environment Committee

Karen Daft, Chairman of the Environment Committee, reported that a meeting had taken place on the 9th October at Deeping House, Spalding, and had been well-attended.

(c) Pay & Conditions Committee

Daniel Withnall read out the report prepared by Jessica Laird, the Pay & Conditions Committee's Secretary.

- 2025/26 Pay Award

The position of the Pay Award agreed at the committee meeting held on the 3rd October 2024:

- Application of a pay award of 5.1% to the 2024/25 salary rates.
- UNISON to ballot its members on this, with a recommendation to accept.
- Additionally, the Essential User Rates will also increase by 5.1% (as per the agreement from the meeting held on 21st March 2024 to increase the Essential User Rates in line with the pay award from 2025/26).

- White Book Review

One amendment to the White Book was agreed to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

7. **Lead Local Flood Authority Update**

Matthew Harrison's report submitted on the date of the meeting is below:

- Section 19 Investigations following Storm Babet (October 2023) and Storm Henk (January 2024)

Whilst the main focus of investigations has been concentrating on properties that have been internally flooded to the living space, data and evidence has also been gathered in relation to flood related road closures and flooded agricultural land. In addition, over 600 near miss reports have been received. A near miss being defined as flooding that has occurred within the boundary of a property but has not entered the living space.

The number of investigations, and affected properties, following both named storms is significant and not on a scale seen since Lincolnshire County Council became Lead Local Flood Authority in 2012. In fact, the number of affected properties following Storms Babet and Henk is more than previously recorded during the period 2012 to 2022 combined.

Due to the scale of the impacts, and to ensure investigations have been completed in a timely manner, three consultants were commissioned to undertake the investigations, closely supported and monitored by the Floods and Water team. All 264 separate investigations allocated to the consultants have now been completed and received by the Floods and Water Team. Currently over 90 reports have been reviewed and approved by the team as part of the internal quality assurance process.

In parallel to the formal Section 19 Investigation process, the Floods and Water team have been proactively engaging with communities affected by the flooding. Currently active engagement is taking place at over 40 locations across the county involving other Risk Management Authorities such as the Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Boards and Anglian Water, internal departments to Lincolnshire County Council such as Highways as well as Parish Councils, land owners and tenants, private companies and local residents. This approach is to accelerate further investigations and potential works where the causation of the flooding issue has been clearly determined and which will ultimately be supported by the recommendations that appear in the completed Section 19 Investigations report

In addition a separate Section 19 Investigation report is being prepared to document the impacts to agricultural land which will help in providing a robust evidence base of the impacts experienced. Having said this there are gaps in knowledge, and whilst it has so been recorded that over 16,000 acres of agricultural land has been affected we are aware of areas where accurate information has not been obtained such as in the Welland catchment. Any information that people have to support the preparation of this document and make it as robust as possible would be welcomed.

- Devolution

Following a pause due to the general election, the process of working towards a Greater Lincolnshire Mayoral County Combined Authority, as part of a devolution ask is moving forward again at pace. It is predicted that the administrative arrangements for the Mayoral office will be in place by February 2025 with Mayoral elections taking place in May 2025. The function of existing district and county authorities will remain largely unchanged with a focus on devolved powers for funding and enhancing this across the Greater Lincolnshire Geography.

As part of the ask it is the ambition to set up an enhanced flood and water partnership across Greater Lincolnshire, building on the existing well established Joint Lincolnshire Flood and Water Management Partnership and expanding this to include key sectors and stakeholders that have an interest in the water agenda. The aim will be to pilot the development of a forum for flood resilience, adaptation and management of the water system across all sectors and in a whole systems approach. The enhanced partnership will help Greater Lincolnshire become a testbed to explore and develop options for how flood risk management from all sources, including relevant adaptation activities linked to water sustainability, can best be addressed and accelerated at the local level. This could include:

- Sharing of best practice approaches and learning on integrated water management to inform government reforms to local flood risk management planning.
- Ensuring commitments within the Enhanced Partnership Plan are agreed and signed up to by all partners, to drive the development of Enhanced Partnership Schemes, within which obligations and delivery timescales on all partners will be agreed by the group, maximising the likelihood of successful delivery.
- Creating the enabling environment needed to develop a place-based flood risk and water sustainability strategy, provide the influence required to develop investment plans to fulfil that strategy, and ensure implementation of those plans, at the required timescales. This will not change the role and responsibilities of existing Risk Management Authorities or existing statutory duties to produce Local Flood Risk Management Strategies.

- Providing a single contact point for engagement with other groups such as agri-food, energy, manufacturing and transport, to facilitate a whole systems approach to utilities and infrastructure coordination and planning

8. **Report from Environment Agency**

Key points covered and discussed:

- **Rainfall**

After a dry August, September brought an average of 123mm of rainfall across the area. Rainfall ranged from 173% to 346% of the long-term average, classifying it as notably high to exceptionally high for the time of year. There was a north-south divide, with southern areas receiving more rainfall than those in the north, and the highest rainfall occurring towards the end of the month. This made it the second-wettest September on record (1860) for the region overall, and the wettest ever for the Upper Welland and Nene area.

- **River Breaches – Bourne Eau and the River Welland (Crowland & Cowbit Washes)**

Lengthy discussion took place regarding the breaches at Bourne Eau and Crowland & Cowbit Washes, specifically in relation to the EA's siphons.

- **Fens 2100+**

Catchment basement reports are due 2025, which will:

- provide an overview of each catchment and the existing FCRM operational situation, current and future flood risk.
- set out what assets the EA have now and their benefits and costs.
- explains future asset investment funding challenges.

- **Flood Action Week**

To take place from the 14th to 20th October 2024.

9. **Any Other Business**

The subject of Highland Water payments made to IDBs was discussed in full.

Mark Leggott, Board member of Black Sluice IDB, queried the timeframe of the ADA meetings, in that April and October was a busy time for working farmers. He believed there would be additional Board member attendance if the meetings were held in January/February and late November/December.

10. **Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday, 24th April 2025, venue TBC.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 15:43 p.m.

Chairman