

## ASSOCIATION OF DRAINAGE AUTHORITIES

### JOINT LINCOLNSHIRE BRANCH & WELLAND AND NENE BRANCH MEETING

Minutes of a Joint Meeting of the above Branches held at the offices of South Holland IDB, Marsh Reeves, Foxes Lowe Road, Holbeach, Spalding, Lincolnshire on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019:

#### 1. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1.1 The Chairman began the meeting by welcoming Abigail Jackson from the EA to the meeting who would be presenting later on the de-maining pilot; Mr Guy Szomi would give the EA update.
- 1.2 The Chairman advised members that he had been re-elected as Chairman of the ADA Welland & Nene Branch for the next 3-year term and that the Vice-Chairman was Cllr Brian Long.

#### 2. APOLOGIES

The Secretary reported apologies for absence from the following branch members:

Mr I Warsap (Black Sluice)	Mr P Richardson (Witham Fourth)
Mr S Ayers (Hundred of Wisbech)	Mr M Shilling (Witham and Humber)
Mr P Pridgeon (Lindsey Marsh)	Mr G Hird (Witham and Humber)
Mr S Eyre (Lindsey Marsh)	Mr J Scarborough (Upper Witham)
Mr J Hargreaves (NE Lindsey)	Mr F Myers (Upper Witham)
Mr L Grooby (North East Lindsey)	Mr J Scarborough (Upper Witham)
Mr J Hargreaves (North East Lindsey)	Mr I Thomson (ADA)
Mr W Gee (North Level)	Mr I Moodie (ADA)
Mr S A R Markillie (South Holland)	Mr E Poll (Anglia Northern FRCC)
Mr G Lankfer (Waldersay)	Mr B Thornely (EA)
Karen Daft (Welland & Deepings)	Mr N Robinson (EA Area Director)
Mr N Morris (Welland & Deepings)	Mr P Reilly (EA Operations)
Mr P Gilbert (Witham 1 <sup>st</sup> )	Mr D Hickman (Lincolnshire CC)
Mr P Hayes (Witham 3 <sup>rd</sup> )	Ms N McGarry (Lincs ADA Grant Applications Manager)

#### 3. MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting of the Lincolnshire Branch held on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2018 were confirmed as accurate and they were signed by the Chairman at the meeting.

#### 4. MATTERS ARISING

##### 4.1 Lincolnshire Flood Risk & Drainage Management Partnership (5)

Mr D Hickman was unable to attend but Mr P Bateson would give an update.

##### 4.2 Report from the Environment Agency (6)

Mr S Markillie had been working with the EA on the former lines of reclamation and the Environmental Permitting Regulations. The EA had written letters to the affected landowners in the South Holland area.

## **5. LINCOLNSHIRE FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP**

Mr P Bateson updated the members and reported that a lot of feedback on the revised strategy had been received on Sections 2, 3, 6 and 7. A revised copy of the strategy had been sent to all Chief Executives and further comments were required by 7 March 2019.

Lines of Reclamation – Mr Bateson reported that ahead of the AGM on 25 April 2019, they would be looking for feedback at the next Clerks Meeting on 29 April 2019.

## **6. REPORT FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY**

Mr G Szomi gave a general update on behalf of the Environment Agency (EA). The EA recently obtained entry level accreditation from the Institute of Assisted Management and would be working towards higher levels.

### EU Exit

On the run up to a possible EU exit there had been a considerable amount of planning and some work with RFF Partnership. Consideration had been given to how waste will be managed, flood risk, looking at plant, fuel, pumping stations and keeping them running. Thought had been given to schemes and how we obtained delivery of items from abroad. The possibility of a 'no deal Brexit' had also been considered.

### Grant Aid

Mr G Szomi reported that the EA were investigating why £3m of Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) still remained unclaimed; this figure included local authorities and all other risk management authorities. All were encouraged to submit Business Cases. Members requested confirmation that if Business Cases were submitted it would not be re-scrutinised once approved.

### Maintenance Programme

The EAs capital programme was on target to take 300k properties out of flood risk by 2021. 36% of the maintenance budget had funded grass cutting and 17% had funded weed cutting. It included IDB precepts of £3.1m. £12.9m of the works programme was being spent in Lincolnshire with £1.5m being spent in the Welland and Nene area. Mr P Bateson would provide a definitive breakdown.

ADA national had been asked to place the issue of obtaining grants as a top priority in the future. The current CSR period has 2 years to go before a new spending period will commence. Central Government is aware of the issues and is looking at the criteria that is used to assess these schemes which is based on the number of properties in an area rather than value of agricultural land. Members were encouraged to respond to the Defra consultation on 'Improving the management of our environment', which included proposals on future funding.

## **7. BLACK SLUICE PUMPING STATION BY MS ABIGAIL JACKSON**

Ms Jackson commenced with a synopsis of the background to this project stating that it was a national project designed to ensure that the right people were managing the right assets and watercourses in the right places and that these assets were managed in the right way. The

criteria included the asset condition, willing Risk Management Authorities, level of engagement and timescale. It was a long-term programme and a partnership approach which will be a key factor to its success. It is currently at the initial planning phase within Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) to create a prioritised list for each catchment. The current aim is to have an achievable programme. There were a lot of opportunities where risk management authorities could benefit from partnership working.

16.8 km across 5 watercourses have now been de-mained and transferred to Black Sluice IDB. It was the first of 5 national pilot schemes to complete the project. The other pilots were progressing well and should be completed by the end of March 2019. Future de-maining schemes would be for very specific watercourses. Public Sector Cooperation Agreement (PCSA) will play a very important role in this.

Ms Jackson then informed the Members of the Black Sluice Pumping Station Project, the appraisal carried out in 2016, remodelling around the pumps and the conclusion that due to the significant investment required and the negligible benefit of the pumps, it was decided to decommission Black Sluice Pumping Station in October 2018. The public were consulted regarding the future use of the pumping station and the EA was working with Heritage Lincs to investigate re-purposing options for the building. Ms Jackson also spoke about the Boston and Peterborough Fens Waterways Link which would link with the Black Sluice South Forty Foot Drain (SFF). Ms Jackson informed the Members that if there were any queries, to please send these to the Boston Hub where she is in attendance every Thursday.

Concerns were raised regarding climate change and water levels with the pumping station being decommissioned and what would happen in the future.

POST MEETING NOTE: Received from Abigail Jackson, Effectiveness Initiative Lead, Environment Agency in response to climate change query.

***Will the pumps not be needed in the future given climate change predictions?***

*The Black Sluice Pumping Station was built with the aim of increasing fluvial discharge, including during tide lock periods. However, due to a narrowing upstream from Boston, the pumps only reduce levels at the Boston end of the SFF Drain. This then delays the gravity discharge, which is the far more effective way of reducing levels in the wider catchment. Climate change predications are an important factor in how we manage the SFF Catchment into the future, and were factored into the modelling carried out in 2012. This showed only a minor increase in flood extent when climate changes were added into the model (20% rainfall, 1 metre sea level rise). A more detailed response to this question can be found in the BSCW Consultation response document in Section 16. The Boston Barrier will better protect Boston from tidal flooding and has also been designed to account for sea level rise predictions for the next 100 years. The Boston Barrier will continue to protect against rising sea levels for that period, thereby also making the Black Sluice Complex more resilient. However the solution for the long term for the catchment is not to focus on the structures at the outfall, but to understand how flows can be managed better before reaching the SFF Drain. Partners are now looking at, for example, the highland carriers to 'slow the flow', store water during low rainfall periods etc. This will build the catchment's resilience to climate change, with resource and funding focused on where it will be most effective at reducing flood risk for the long term.*

## **8. REPORT FROM NATIONAL ADA – MR R CAUDWELL**

- Water Transfer/Water Licences – Mr R Caudwell had met with Harvey Bradshaw, Mr Paul Hickey and Ms Catherine Wright, which was a positive meeting, with the EA giving assurances around an exemption for IDBs. Unfortunately, the follow up that was promised had not occurred and Mr Caudwell would be taking this up at Floodex next week.
- Rivers Authorities and Land Drainage Bill 2017-19 – The Rivers Bill had passed its second reading in the house and was now at committee stage. ADA were supportive.
- ADA Vice-Chairman – Mr Caudwell advised members that Mr Trevor Purllant was now Vice-Chairman of ADA along with Mr Tim Farr.
- Floodex - it was stressed how important next week's event was. ADA received approximately £25k from this event. Without this income, it would mean that ADA would be unable to employ additional technical staff.
- Good Governance Workshops – ADA would like 95% of all IDBs to be represented. Defra have paid ADA for this and will be looking at the representation and attendance across the sector.
- Budget – ADA was currently budgeting for a slightly smaller loss than indicated at the last meeting, but had sufficient reserves to fund the deficit. Mr David Sisson was now part of the team and having a positive effect on our delivery and output of committees.
- ADA were currently advertising for a new technical support member to work under Mr Ian Moodie.
- Membership – local authorities continue to be challenging. National Rail had now joined ADA. Mr Innes Thomson had just returned from giving evidence to the Scottish Parliament who had recently passed a bill for the formation of IDBs in Scotland.
- Water resources - Ministers were well aware of the water resources issue facing East Anglia. It was up to all risk management authorities to work together and come up with a plan of what we want to do. Mr Neil Parish MP was happy to provide political support for ADA and IDBs to help achieve this.

### ***Technical & Advisory***

Mr T Purllant gave an update of what had been discussed at the Technical & Advisory Committee who met on 9 January 2019 in London. The Committee had discussed Health and Safety, Welfare, the Rivers Authority and Land Drainage Bill, SUDs, educational material and a summary of the last ADA Board meeting. He reported that Mr David Sisson had set up a spreadsheet with a timeline, to aim to deliver more work streams. Mr Purllant apprised members of Cirro Design Steering Group who required a chairman; this role has been filled by retiring member, Mr John Oldfield from Bedford.

### ***Policy & Finance***

Ms Jane Froggatt reported that there were three work streams to highlight:

1. Educational Resources Project which mirrors the Technical & Advisory Committee.
2. Development Contribution Guidance.
3. Byelaws and Supervisory Roles for IDBs and Enforcement.

Legal advice was being sought with regard to points 2 and 3 above.

Mr Duncan Worth (meeting Chair) reported that the Water Management Alliance (WMA) had recently undertaken a lot of work on Surface Water Development Contributions and that ADA should consider what had been done as part of this ADA workstream. He confirmed that he had spoken with Mr Innes Thomson regarding this. Mr Phil Camamile reported that the WMA had recently sought opinion from an eminent QC and that this advice along with the WMAs charging methodology had previously been circulated to ADA. It was important to the WMA Group that the legal advice now being sought by ADA did not conflict with the advice previously given to the WMA Group.

## **9. PAY & CONDITIONS, EVENTS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEES**

### **Pay & Conditions**

Mr Daniel Withnall reported that two meetings had been held since the last branch meeting. The first meeting on 29 October 2018 was to discuss and negotiate 2019 pay awards. The proposal was for a pay award of 2.7% which had received a majority vote when the Union balloted its membership. Therefore, the recommendation was that members accepted the proposal.

The second meeting on 12 February 2019 was to discuss the review of conditions and the 'White Book' was now with solicitors for advice. The Union had requested a copy of the White Book for their meeting in March 2019, which should also be available for the Joint Branch Meeting in April 2019.

### **Events**

There were 3 shows that ADA Lincs would be attending:

- Countryside Lincolnshire.
- Lincolnshire Show.
- Heckington Show.

### **Environment**

There were no Committee members present at today's meeting. However, Jane Hicking had asked that every Board was represented by one officer and one member in future. It had been suggested that Committee meetings were held on the same day as branch meetings. The Committee was also currently seeking a new chairman.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr P Camamile asked when ADA hoped to have their draft response to the Defra consultation ready by, as he did not wish to submit anything to Defra that might be contrary to the party line. Mr Caudwell advised those present that ADAs draft response would be circulated to all Boards before the submission deadline of 12 March 2019.

Mr Michael Sly apprised members that funding had been received for the East Midlands and Fens. Delivering for Britain - Food and Farming in the Fens would like to do a presentation at the next ADA meeting later in the year.

It was suggested that the unconfirmed minutes, once electronically circulated, could be confirmed virtually by members due to the length of time between each meeting (by email).

The AGM was planned for Thursday 25 April 2019 which would include visiting Beeswax Dyson, looking at anaerobic digestion and, on the way back, to call in at Wrangle Sea Banks. Everyone would meet in the carpark and details would be available in the next 2 weeks.

**Next meeting: Lincolnshire Branch AGM – Thursday 25 April 2019**

