

## Association of Drainage Authorities

### Lincolnshire Branch Annual General Meeting

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held via MS Teams on Wednesday, 21st October 2020, at 2.00 p.m.

In attendance:

Black Sluice IDB	Mr I. Warsap	Chief Executive
	Mr D. Withnall	Finance Officer
Lindsey Marsh DB	Mr G. Crust	Chairman
	Mr S.W. Eyre	Vice-Chairman
	Mr R. Crust	Member
	Mr A. McGill	Chief Executive
	Mr N. Kemble	Engineer
North East Lindsey DB	Mr L. Grooby	Vice-Chairman
North Level IDB	Mr P. Sharman	Chief Executive
	Mr J. Stubley	Operations Engineer
Welland and Deepings IDB	Mr T. Purlant	Chairman
	Mrs K. Daft	Chief Executive
Witham and Humber IDBs	Mr B. Fletcher (W1)	Member
	Mr P. Gilbert (W1)	Chairman
	Mrs J. Froggatt	Chief Executive
Witham Fourth IDB	Mr P. Richardson	Chairman
	Mr C. Crunkhorn	Vice-Chairman
	Mr P. Bedford	Member
	Mr J. Grant	Member
	Mr P. Bateson	Chief Executive
	Mr E. Johnson	Engineer
Association of Drainage Authorities	Mr I. Thomson	Chief Executive
Lincolnshire County Council	Mr I. Moodie	Technical Manager
	Mr D. Hickman	Head of Environment
	Mr M. Harrison	Senior Commissioning Officer Flood Risk
Environment Agency	Mrs K. Halka	Operations Manager

#### 1. Election of Chairman

Members reaffirmed the appointment of Mr P. Richardson as Chairman of the Lincolnshire Branch.

Mr Richardson took the chair.

#### 2. Apologies

The following apologies for absence were received from Branch Members:

Black Sluice IDB	Mr K. Casswell	Chairman
North Level IDB	Mr W. Gee	Vice-Chairman
	Mr M. Sly	Chairman
South Holland IDB	Mr D. Worth	Chairman
	Mr S. Markillie	Vice-Chairman
	Mr P. Camamile	Chief Executive
	Mr K. Vines	

### 3. Election of Honorary Secretary

Members reaffirmed the appointment of Mr A. McGill as Branch Secretary.

### 4. Election of Branch Representatives to the ADA Executive Board

Although Mr K. Casswell's term of office had ended he had indicated that he would be willing to continue. It was agreed that Mr Casswell would continue representing the Branch on the ADA Executive Board for a further term of three years.

### 5. Chairman's Announcements

None

### 6. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting - 25th April 2019

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 25th April 2019 were confirmed as a correct record.

### 7. Matters Arising

None

### 8. Reports from ADA National

Mr I. Thomson congratulated the Branch on a good turnout and was pleased to see it embracing the ADA wider partnership with representatives from LCC and the EA also in attendance. Work at ADA National continued with all staff equipped to work from home and the office Covid compliant. Mr Thomson reported on the following primary areas of focus:

#### *General Update*

- Preparation of full GIS map data of English IDBs - free to access and now published.
- Environmental Good Governance Guide - grant received from DEFRA, document being prepared for publication 2020/21.
- Biodiversity Action Plan template - to be used to highlight environmental credentials of IDBs and promote their good work.
- Suite of IDB-related infographics - based on IDB1 data, designed to capture facts, figures and trends.
- Suite of educational material for key stage 2 - hoping to roll this out after Covid settled, presentation to be made at the ADA Conference.
- Health, Safety and Welfare - preparing the ground, will prepare modules for training with Board members.

#### *Coming Up*

- Workstream on Siltation and Water Conveyance.
- March Summit cancelled, to be rescheduled after Covid as this needed to be interactive.
- Climate change resilience and adaptation - flood and coastal erosion flood risk strategy. Policy Statement from DEFRA references ADA and value of IDBs, and value of other partners and strategy depends on this partnership. Includes recognition on importance of maintenance works. Heard this morning that Treasury only approved further 12-month programme.

## *Events*

- ADA Conference in the morning of 11th November followed by the AGM in the afternoon.
- Next year - floodex (last one) 7th and 8th April if Covid under control (put back from February).
- Demo 2022. Humber estuary area.

Mr G. Crust stated that LMDB had been very involved in the Steeping flooding, both during and after the event and the Board was disappointed by the lack of courtesy shown by partners when various press releases had been issued which did not mention the Board's involvement. Following this, LMDB had agreed that additional resources should be allocated to raise the profile of the Board. Mr I. Thomson was delighted to hear this, stating that ADA was encouraging boards to do this and would be able to provide help if required. He stated that ADA had no intention other than to promote the work of IDBs.

Mr I. Warsap queried what progress had been made regarding development contributions; at the 2018 ADA Conference it was reported that this would be published. Mr I. Moodie replied that a DRAFT had been prepared by Messrs D.J. Sisson and W. Simmonds; this was being reviewed and should be ready for distribution in the new year.

In response to Mr P. Bateson, Mr I. Moodie reported that good progress was being made with DEFRA regarding queries on the Byelaws and a meeting would be held shortly to confirm the wording regarding IDB managed assets not associated with ordinary watercourses.

## *Technical and Environmental Committee*

Mr I. Moodie updated on the following:

- Good Governance Guide.
- Biometrics.
- BAP signed off by Natural England and Ecologist.
- Health and Safety Working Group.
- Silt Management.
- Climate change, adaptation and mitigation workstreams.

## *Policy and Finance Committee*

Peter Bateson reported that DEFRA had asked the Environment Agency to review the precept and highland water contribution although he was not sure of the timing of the review.

A mid-year review of finances indicated lower costs due to the reduced number of meetings during Covid. Annual accounts had been filed at Companies House.

## 9. Reports from Branch Committees

### *Show Committee*

No meetings held this year as Show cancelled. Meeting via MS Teams planned soon.

## *Pay and Conditions Committee*

Mr D. Withnall reported that the three-year formula agreed in 2020/21 (100% of the Public Sector average weekly earnings three-month index July, published in September - KAC9 of EARN01, National Statistics Office) would result in a pay increase of 4.1% for 2021/22. The formula had been agreed to determine pay settlements for the next three years, and thereafter continuing unless 12 months' notice was given by either party, subject to no national legislation being introduced. The Pay and Conditions Committee had met to discuss this and, although the general feeling of the meeting was that this figure was high and the Committee was concerned about how this would be perceived by the boards and outside parties, it agreed that the agreement should be honoured. This had been explained to the Union representatives who understood the position and said they would be asking their members for any ideas they might have for cost savings or efficiencies that IDBs could make.

The Committee had also agreed changes to the White Book clarifying payment for time off for Covid-19 as follows:

*In addition to the provisions in para 10 above there may be a requirement to self-isolate due to a risk of having contracted COVID-19 in the following circumstances;*

- 1. You have developed symptoms of COVID-19 (Temp > 37.8C, New consistent cough, loss of smell and/or taste)*
- 2. A member of your household has symptoms of COVID-19*
- 3. You have been told to self-isolate by NHS Track and Trace*

*In these circumstances the employer is supportive of the self-isolation requirement to protect all employees and their families whilst preventing the spread of the virus. This absence shall be regarded as special leave with pay in accordance with paragraph 10, Medical Suspension, of this section as COVID-19 is now listed as a "Notifiable Disease".*

*Normal notification and certification of sickness procedures shall apply as per paragraph 6 of this section with the required fit note being replaced with the NHS Isolation note available here: <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/>*

*Self-isolation should only be completed as directed by government guidance in the following circumstances;*

- 1. following a negative test by the person with symptoms,*
- 2. you receiving a negative test (only if you are offered one as a key worker or following you developing symptoms) or*
- 3. the full period assuming you do not develop symptoms during the self-isolation period.*

*This paragraph does not apply if you're self-isolating after entering or returning to the UK and do not need to self-isolate for any other reason.*

*This paragraph is subject to any changes in government advice and policy and will be amended as required to comply.*

Mrs J. Froggatt said this was a tough ask as the 4.1% was a lot higher than they thought it would be, possibly due to the amount of overtime worked during the pandemic. She reinforced that those at the meeting all felt that the increase was high and were concerned about how this would be perceived, however, the general feeling was that the agreement should be honoured. It was noted that the Unions had also requested that hours for manual workers be reduced from 38 to 37 hours and this had been refused.

Mr P. Richardson emphasised that the Unions understood the gravity of the high pay award.

It was agreed that the three-year formula should be honoured, and the White Book adjusted accordingly, but it would be up to individual boards whether they wished to adopt the pay increase.

#### *Environment Committee*

Mr P. Skinner updated on the work of the Committee and confirmed that the project on voles and mink was due to be discussed soon.

#### 10. Accounts for the Period Up To 31st January 2020

Mr P. Bateson presented the attached accounts for the year ending 31st January 2020 which showed a surplus of £3,224 and a total in the bank of £14,159. Money had been put aside to contribute towards the ADA education packs but there had been no Lincolnshire Show costs this year.

The accounts had been audited by Mr D. Withnall.

The attached accounts were approved.

#### 11. Subscriptions

It was agreed to continue with subscriptions as normal.

#### 12. Lincolnshire Flood Risk and Water Management Partnership

Mr D. Hickman reported that the partnership had been very busy, working on how to improve understanding of the interaction between public assets and riparian drains. As a result of this, it was refining policy within LCC around consenting and enforcement and the way LCC worked with IDBs to deliver a consistent approach across the area. This would be shared this all boards as operators before it was formalised.

Mr Hickman stated that the Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme had a Reserve Fund of £200m nationally which could be bid for. Using the partnership mechanism, LCC would be hosting a joint meeting in early November to consider a Lincolnshire bid. Expressions of interest were to be submitted by December so this would put some pace into this process.

The rainfall events in 2019/2020 had put a huge strain on the collective response to these events. LCC Officers reported on the debrief held by the Partnership to look at lessons learnt and any challenges to assist with support for the future. The debrief was delayed due to covid but met on 9th September online and was very well attended with representatives from 32 risk management authorities and partners including the Wildlife Trust and National Farmers' Union. Topics included maintenance of assets and funding, how we responded to events outside the formal procedures, e.g. bunker (the LRF was only in action for a short period of time so there was a lot of pressure on other authorities), clarity of roles and responsibilities, how resources were deployed, information sharing, how resources were shared, funding around assets, reimbursement of cost of recovery, and overall value of agricultural land. The meeting had been very useful in identifying areas that the Partnership needed to address or improve upon and these would be followed up by working groups.

#### 13. Environment Agency Update

Mrs K. Halka gave an update on behalf of the EA:

The Catchment Flood Risk Management Strategy (which passed through parliament this year) was now in action phase and members were encouraged to have a look; mini guides were available and showed areas of focus. Forming part of the strategy, the EA

was working with farmers, IDBs and partners to develop a long-term plan for managing future flood risk in the fenlands. Mr N. Robinson was leading on this part of the strategy and meetings were planned in the coming months.

Treasury and DEFRA had signed off for Saltfleet to Gibraltar Point Strategy.

The EA was still dealing with the effect of flood events last year but hoped to have most assets repaired by the end October 2020. The important role of the IDBs was noted, particularly in response to major events, and the EA would share their winter routines plans with them. Mr B. Thornley was leading on these while Mrs Halka was focussing on delivery. The EA was on track to complete the maintenance and intermediate programme for this year on time. Good progress had been made on the Steeping and the EA was looking at continuing this next year.

Possibly as a result of Covid restrictions, there appeared to be more people out walking this year and the number of reports of issues with assets had increased. There had also been an increase in the number of comments that too much was work being done, e.g. the 'no mow May' twitter campaign had gained momentum on the internet, and the EA had been inundated with complaints. The EA was explaining to people why maintenance was necessary, and a campaign was underway to ensure people were aware of the importance of this. A maintenance review was also being undertaken and the EA would be contacting IDBs for input and looking at efficiencies. A pilot would be undertaken at Billingham.

Mr J. Grant queried how IDBs could help raise awareness of the importance of maintenance to give a broader voice. Mrs Halka replied that any help would be invaluable, it was always good to hear the message from the different services and there was a need to drive home the importance of maintenance.

Mr A. McGill pointed out that the Board did not start summer maintenance until mid-July unless it was essential so this would be a good message to get across.

Mrs J. Froggatt echoed this and suggested a concerted approach with ADA. She reported that the Witham and Humber boards had also received a lot more queries this year, probably because people were at home more.

Mr E. Johnson reported that he had also had calls from people wanting to know why mowing was being undertaken, particularly with regard to the critical drains which were cut earlier in the year, and dealing with these queries took up a lot of time. The issue had been raised through the Technical and Environmental Group. Mr I. Thomson stated that it was important that the public knew that the work was undertaken in sympathy with the environment and suggested something be put in place before next year's work with a positive conservation message.

A query was raised with regard to the precept payment - the EA should look at closing the accountability loop and producing an annual report to ensure openness and transparency.

Mr I. Thomson said it should be remembered that the other side of this was highland water contributions from the EA. ADA was trying to encourage consistency through a national approach to achieve one single transaction.

Mrs K. Halka would feedback comments from the meeting today.

#### 14. Meeting Dates for 2021

18th February, 20th May (A.G.M.) and 21st October.

15. Any Other Business

None

Mr P. Richardson left the meeting.

On behalf of the Chairman, Mr A. McGill thanked all those attending and those presenting, stay safe and well.

CHAIRMAN

