



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, 25TH APRIL 2024

VENUE: THE BEONNA AT ALL SAINTS, BENINGTON, BOSTON, PE20 0BT

Present:

Robert Caudwell	ADA
Innes Thomson	ADA
Peter Bedford	Black Sluice IDB
Keith Casswell	Black Sluice IDB
Georgina Nichols	Black Sluice IDB
Paul Nicholson	Black Sluice IDB
Daniel Withnall	Black Sluice IDB
Ben Thornely	Environment Agency
Morgan Wray	Environment Agency
Richard Fenwick	Lincolnshire County Council
Matthew Harrison	Lincolnshire County Council
Giles Crust	Lindsey Marsh IDB
Carol Davies	Lindsey Marsh IDB
Stephen Eyre	Lindsey Marsh IDB
Andrew McGill	Lindsey Marsh IDB
Ralph Needham	Lindsey Marsh IDB
Emily Wood	National Farmers Union
William Gee	North Level IDB
Paul Sharman	North Level IDB
Michael Sly	North Level IDB
Jon Stublely	North Level IDB
Simon Bartlett	South Holland IDB
Karl Vines	South Holland IDB
David Branton	Welland & Deepings IDB
Karen Daft	Welland & Deepings IDB
Jennie Head	Welland & Deepings IDB
Nick Morris	Welland & Deepings IDB
Jane Picking	Welland & Deepings IDB
Trevor Purllant	Welland & Deepings IDB
Tom Ashton	Witham 4 th IDB
Peter Bateson	Witham 4 th IDB
Bryan Bowles	Witham 4 th IDB

Derek Braddy	Witham 4 th IDB
Ed Johnson	Witham 4 th IDB
Neil Jones	Witham 4 th IDB
Peter Richardson	Witham 4 th IDB
Jason Gibson	Jacksons Civil Engineers
Martin Shilling	Witham & Humber IDB

1. **Chairman’s Announcements**

Chairman, Trevor Purlant, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Apologies**

Due to the change in the way invitations to the meeting were sent, apologies were only received from Mrs J Froggatt, Mr P Holmes and Mr D Worth.

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

The minutes of the last Joint Branch Meeting held on the 19th October 2023 were confirmed as a true record (copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting).

4. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

5. **Report from ADA National**

Innes Thomson gave members the following update:

Key Points

- Ratings Statutory Instrument consultation now closed. ADA will push for the enabling of the SI in this parliament which requires to pass through the “affirmative” process.
- ADA is playing an active part of Local Government Association Special Interest Group (LGA SIG) for IDB funding. It is very much focussed on Special Levy payments. Another round of government support grant (£3m) has also been made available to local authorities.
- ADA has been talking to Ofgem about electricity standing charges. Ofgem recognise an anomaly for IDBs.
- ADA is setting up a small technical governance group for the DRS replacement. Most likely moving towards Microsoft 365 platform to be managed by Water Management Alliance.
- ADA documentary film about IDBs now available and Boards urged to promote activities locally.
- ADA had a recent meeting with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DHLUC) to discuss audit thresholds. A further meeting is to be held to discuss technical detail. Working with SAAA.
- ADA plans to run another All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) meeting in mid-May covering the subject of the importance of joined-up flood and drought management.
- The new ADA Committees are now in force: the first meeting of the Policy Committee is to be held on 22nd May and the first meeting of the Advisory Committee is to be held on the 11th June.
- ADA collaboration with the Association of SuDS Authorities (ASA) – taking next steps to move towards an amalgamation of the two associations, subject to business case and approvals from members of both associations.
- ADA Good Governance Guide for IDBs – now due to publish in May/June.

- ADA continues to actively support WRE and the drive towards helping achieve legislative recognition for the wider water management work carried out by IDBs. ADA encourages all IDBs affected by WRE's work to continue their support.

6. **Reports from ADA Committees:**

Reports had been previously circulated with meeting papers.

(a) **Pay & Conditions Committee**

Daniel Withnall reported:

- The Pay & Conditions Committee has met twice in the year with a number of positive outcomes.
- The 2024/25 Pay Award was negotiated, accepted by the branch and unanimously accepted by the UNISON membership.
- The White Book underwent a full legal review to bring in line with current legislation.
- An agreement was reached on how Essential User Rates could be updated to maintain parity with inflation.
- The Committee Terms of Reference were amended and the employees chaired their first meeting.
- The Secretary changed from Daniel Withnall to Jessica Baxter from Black Sluice IDB.

(b) **Environment Committee**

Speaking as Chair of the Environment Committee, Karen Daft reported that meetings were well attended, although there was a distinct lack of Board members' presence. Mrs Daft asked CEOs and officers to encourage Board members to attend future meetings.

General discussion took place with regard to some mammals (e.g. badgers) that IDBs and landowners are struggling with in flood defences and waterways and the frustration felt by the lack of support from the government agencies. It was queried whether the NFU could do anything to help.

(c) **Show Committee**

Peter Richardson asked CEOs for details of Board members who wish to attend this year's Lincolnshire Show.

Daniel Withnall queried the level of contributions. Peter Bateson mentioned he would review the figures over the last three years and report back.

7. **Lead Local Flood Authority Update**

Matthew Harrison's report had been sent with meeting papers.

Key points:

(a) **Lincolnshire County Council Floods and Water Team Expansion**

Following Storms Babet and Henk, members of the Executive at LCC recognised the strain on resources (both financial and physical). As a result, it has been agreed that an additional £4m

capital funding is made available to support flood recovery work, Section 19 investigations in their statutory role and supporting future flood mitigation measures and schemes.

Further funding has been made available to the Floods and Water team to support additional staff. This will allow the team to better resource workstreams that have not been able to be taken forward due to the impacts of recent flooding events. Working closely with IDBs will remain integral to this moving forward.

(b) Section 19 Investigations

Following Storms Babet and Henk, LCC are dealing with c270 individual Section19 investigations covering almost 880 properties which have been internally affected by flooding in the living space. Due to the volume of work and the need to deal with recommendations as soon as possible, LCC have commissioned the majority of this work to three separate consultants with the aim of having all investigations completed by the end of August 2024. During this process the consultants and LCC staff will be liaising with other RMA colleagues to gather information prior to recommendations being made.

In addition to the properties internally flooded, LCC have been gathering information on over 600 near-miss reports (flooding to gardens, outbuildings, etc), over 60 road closures that were required for 2+ days as a result of flood water and the thousands of acres of agricultural land that has been affected. This information is being gathered to support the Section 19 process.

(c) LCC/IDB Memorandum of Understanding for Consenting and Enforcing

It is recognised that the current joint MoU has expired and requires renewal across all IDB areas. The value of the MoU cannot be understated and it remains an excellent example of partnership working in Lincolnshire and an exemplar to the area.

LCC are committed to maintaining this excellent working relationship that has been built up with IDB colleagues and will shortly be issuing an updated version of the document. However, on this occasion it is proposed the document will be reviewed/renewed every five years. It is hoped Lincolnshire IDBs are able to continue to support this work.

(d) Devolution

All three Greater Lincolnshire councils have now signed off the consultation response and Devolution Proposal for a Greater Lincolnshire Mayoral County Combined Authority (MCCA). The proposal is with the Secretary of State for final sign off.

Conversations are currently ongoing with DLUHC and government officials to refine the details of statutory instruments (SIs) for all workstreams to enable Monitoring Officers (MOs) to fully develop the constitution by July.

Formal agreement is expected in the autumn prior to mayoral elections in May 2025.

8. **Presentation from Mr Richard Fenwick, Head of Highways Asset and Local Management Services, LCC: Highways & Drainage**

Key points from the presentation:

- LCC was looking at rebuilding relationships with IDBs.
- It was proposed to share drainage asset information with partners.

- Local area team now has four members: Kyra Nettle, Rowan Smith, Daniel Adams and Leyla Hardy.
- Working closely with LCC Flood & Water Management team.

9. **Report from Environment Agency**

Key points reported by Morgan Wray:

- The winter of 2023-24 has seen the wettest three-month, six-month and 12-month periods on record.
- The months of July and September 2023 through to April 2024 all received well above the long-term average rainfall.
- There are over 2,000km of main rivers in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire where raised embankments better protect thousands of properties from tidal and river flooding; ensuring these embankments remain resilient is important.
- Funding is limited, however, and the EA need to prioritise this work, including repairs to damaged structures, to where it helps reduce risk of flooding for the greatest number of people and homes first.
- The EA has not received additional funding for recovery repairs from government and has been looking at ways to fund recovery works across the country.
- Nationally, the EA has identified approximately £40m from existing funding to address damage as a result of Storm Babet and Storm Henk.
- It is estimated that the damage to flood risk management assets in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire is in the region of £45m. This is on top of existing (pre-storm) programme of work. By readjusting their programme, the EA has managed to allocate a percentage of their 2024/25 budget to repair some flood risk management assets that present the highest risk but this will not cover all repairs.
- EA will work with partners to monitor the situation in relation to risk and funding; should this change, the EA may be able to repair more of the damaged assets.

After Morgan Wray's update, certain members of the meeting voiced their disappointment over what they believed to be the EA's lack of response/action regarding flooding and asset management.

10. **Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday, 17th October 2024, venue TBC.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 15:45 p.m.

Chairman