

ASSOCIATION OF DRAINAGE AUTHORITIES – TRENT BRANCH
Minutes of the Sixty Eighth AGM held on Thursday 6th June 2019

Representatives of the following Branch member Authorities and Associate Members were present:-

Coal Authority
Doncaster East Internal Drainage Board
Environment Agency
Isle of Axholme and North Nottinghamshire Water Level Management Board
North Lincolnshire Council
Nottinghamshire County Council
Scunthorpe and Gainsborough Water Management Board
Sow and Penk Internal Drainage Board
Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board

Guests:-

Robert Caudwell, Chairman, ADA
Innes Thomson, CEO, ADA
Ian Moodie, Technical Manager, ADA
Robert Fletcher, Chairman, ADA Lincolnshire Branch
Peter Bateson, former Secretary, ADA Lincolnshire Branch
Vij Randeniya, Chairman, Trent Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
Louise Cresswell, Area Director East Midlands, Environment Agency
Paul Lockhart, Area Flood Risk Manager East Midlands, Environment Agency
Nicholas Appleyard, FCRM Advisor Humber Project, Engineering Workstream Lead

1. Welcome/Introductions/Announcements

The Chairman welcomed delegates and guests to the 68th Annual General Meeting and Conference. He further welcomed Chris Crowe and Andy Morritt (both of the Coal Authority) to their first meeting of the Branch.

2. Election of Chairman

As per the constitution, nomination papers for the post of Chairman had been sent to all ten member organisations of the Branch with a date for return of the 15th May 2019. One nomination had been received for William Staunton (Chairman of Trent Valley IDB), proposed by Malcolm Harris and seconded by John Miller. It was AGREED to elect William Staunton as Chairman of the Branch for a term of three years with immediate effect.

3. Election of Vice-Chairman

One nomination had been received for John Coggon (Chairman of Isle of Axholme and North Nottinghamshire Water Level Management Board), proposed by William Staunton and seconded by Malcolm Harris. It was AGREED to elect John Coggon as Vice-Chairman of the Branch for a term of three years with immediate effect.

4. Election of Honorary Secretary

One nomination had been received for Andrew McGill (Chief Executive of Doncaster East Internal Drainage Board), proposed by Malcolm Harris and seconded by David Sisson. It was AGREED to elect Andrew McGill as Honorary Secretary of the Branch for a term of three years with immediate effect.

From this point, William Staunton chaired the meeting.

5. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from John Miller, Emily Mayle, Andrew McGill, Andy Mclachlan, Ian Thornton, Tim Farr, Craig Benson, Ken Durdy and Ron Hetherington.

6. Minutes of the 67th AGM held on the 7th June 2018

The minutes of the 67th AGM held on the 7th June 2018 were included for information only as they had previously been approved and adopted at the EA/IDB Liaison meeting held on 6th December 2018.

7. Minutes of the Branch meeting held on the 14th February 2019

It was proposed by Robert Adam and seconded by John Coggon that the minutes of the Branch meeting held on the 14th February 2019 were a true record and these were subsequently adopted.

8. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

9. Accounts for the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019

David Sisson presented the Branch accounts which had been circulated with the agenda. He gave his personal thanks to Craig Benson for carrying out the annual audit. The accounts showed a healthy period end balance of £2,108.38 (deposit and current accounts). It was noted that there had been a small deficit of £296.47 due to the cost of the tour at last year's AGM and Conference.

This level of balances had been maintained for some years now and the current level of subscriptions remained as in previous years.

It was proposed by Ron Allcock and seconded by Ivor Walker that the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2019 be adopted.

A resolution was made to change bank mandates to William Staunton, John Coggon and Andrew McGill which was proposed by Andrew Arden and seconded by Ron Allcock.

10. Confirmation of Branch Officers

Members noted the confirmed Branch Officers as follows:-

ADA Board Director – William Staunton
Honorary Auditors – Craig Benson and Nicola Hind

At this point, the Chairman reminded members if they have any matters for ADA National to contact him by email at will@stauntonfarms.co.uk

11. Dates of future meetings

Members noted the following dates:-

November 2019 – EA/IDB Annual Liaison Meeting (date and venue to be confirmed)

13th November 2019 – ADA 82nd Annual Conference, London

13th February 2020 – Branch Meeting (venue to be confirmed)

4th June 2020 – 69th AGM and Conference (venue to be confirmed)

12. Any other business

None.

In closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked all members and guests for their attendance. Formal thanks would be given to the retiring Chairman and Honorary Secretary during the luncheon.

Conference Session

National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England presented by Paul Lockhart, Area Flood Risk Manager (East Midlands) Environment Agency

On the 9th May 2019, the Environment Agency had launched a draft consultation on the new National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England which runs until the 4th July 2019.

Paul encouraged other Risk Management Authorities to input into the Strategy. The consultation which is available on the Environment Agency's website can be found via the following link <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/fcrm/national-strategy-public/> - A copy of the presentation will be made available to Branch members.

National Strategic Update and De-maining/Asset Transfer presented by Rachael Hill, National Flood and Coastal Risk Manager

Rachael commented that the National Strategy consultation signals a step change in FRM and WLM delivery and stated that IDBs could play a central role in that delivery. IDBs are encouraged to respond to the consultation.

De-maining of Snow Sewer and Transfer of Drain Head Pumping Station

The de-maining proposal for Snow Sewer had been signed off and advertised publicly. There now is a 6 week stand still period during which objections could be lodged. If all goes well and no pertinent objections are received, transfer will be completed within the next eight weeks.

Rachael reported that three of the five pilots were now over the line involving transfer to IDBs of 64Km of watercourse and twenty one other assets.

Significant learning had come from the pilots which is being captured for publication. Snow Sewer de-maining is being treated as a national exemplar.

All agreed the process had been long and hard work but the successful outcome had made it all worthwhile with the asset now managed by the appropriate Risk Management Authority at a local level.

Rivers Authority and Land Drainage Bill (RALD)

The RALD Bill is making its way through parliament currently. If successful, it will provide the legislative basis for River Authorities (i.e. Somerset Rivers Authority) to be formalised or set-up. A second key part of the Bill will see changes to IDB rating processes which will simplify and facilitate existing IDB boundary extensions and the setting up of new IDBs.

DEFRA Policy Review and S19, Spending Assessment

Rachael advised that DEFRA would be carrying out a policy review during the summer. It was widely expected that links to underpin the new National FCERM Strategy were likely.

On spending, the EA will be pushing hard for a long term settlement for both capital and maintenance.

A full review of the Partnership Funding Formula is being carried out, new wider benefits are being considered, DEFRA are seemingly receptive to this initiative.

During questions to Paul and Rachael, John Coggon observed that the farming community was being encouraged to identify areas for large scale water storage. John was interested to learn how the EA were readying their systems (i.e. conveyance improvements) to prepare them for conveying additional flows.

In response, Rachael acknowledged the challenge faced to fund rural conveyance works, observing that the EA were hoping to be able to fund all the main river works in the future but where funding was difficult or not available, seeking the support of other Risk Management Authorities through PSCAs.

Michael Brooke considered the EA might wish to consult landowners especially IDB Board members directly especially where asset transfers were being considered. Rachael stated that the process of consultation was aimed at whole community engagement.

Martin Spoor enquired that now the pilot de-maining projects had successfully been completed, what the appetite was and timetable for more de-maining. Rachael stated that potential de-maining proposals could be tabled now with de-maining and asset transfers in 2020. She considered that PSCA arrangements were an excellent way of paving the way to asset transfer.

Ron Allcock commented that it was pleasing that all Risk Management Authorities seemed to be on side in the IOA FRS delivery and stressed the importance of the whole catchment approach to this type of working. Andrew Haigh, IOA FRS Implementation Manager agreed and gave as an example, the

Asset Delivery and Management Group which had representation from all Risk Management Authorities from Doncaster to the Trent as did all the other governance groups.

In closing, Rachael stated that the DEFRA IDB Policy Advisory Group would be visiting the IOA area for their summer meeting.

Update on Trent RFCC matters by Vij Randeniya

Vij gave his personal thanks to Malcolm Harris and David Sisson for their work in bringing Trent Region Risk Management Authorities together and wished William Staunton and John Coggon good luck in their new roles.

Vij went on to say that if Snow Sewer had taught us one thing it was “no matter how hard it gets, just keep on going, the benefits are worth the effort”.

Vij encouraged all Risk Management Authorities to engage with the National Strategy Consultation and make sure you pitch for what you want to see in it. Vij also noted that a Humber Strategy Review Consultation was due in early 2020.

Vij informed delegates that Flood and Coast Conference 2019 would take place in Telford between 18th and 20th June 2019.

Climate Change

On climate change, Vij advised that new data would be available late summer / early autumn. Trent RFCC had engaged assistance from a scientist from a local university to assist their understanding of the new data.

Vij commented that the cross organisational group and ground-breaking work being undertaken had been time consuming but was paying dividends using the approval process leading to the £35M Keadby Pumping Station project as an example.

In conclusion, Vij advised that the end of the current spending period was coming ever closer, the programme still contains many projects still to be delivered of which, 50% are via other Risk Management Authorities including IDBs. It is important to get these projects delivered.

Update on ADA National, Innes Thomson, CEO

Innes expressed his pleasure to attend the meeting and meet with all partner Risk Management Authorities in the region, the “Flood Family”.

Referring to the IDB Good Governance Workshops held earlier this year, Innes thanked all members who attended stating there had been a great turn out which had been noted by DEFRA. He further offered his personal thanks to Ian Moodie and Iain Smith who had prepared the guide.

The lessons learnt from the de-maining pilots were numerous however the overriding lesson was that the asset transfer procedures between RMAs need to be simplified.

Rivers Authority and Land Drainage Bill

Innes recorded thanks to Baroness Redfern for providing her support stating that the Bill is long overdue. ADA is hopeful this will proceed however there is a danger presented by requests from the RSPB for amendments.

Water Transfer Licence and Water Abstractions

ADA and IDB representatives have engaged in protracted discussions with the EA. The process is not without its challenges as with all legal matters but the EA as the regulators, seemingly do not treat IDBs as part of the regulation and transfer regime, purely as another business that uses water.

EFRA enquiry on Coastal Defences

ADA has been asked to provide evidence to the EFRA committee around coastal defences and the need for these to be resilient. This can be viewed on ADA's website.

National FCERM Strategy Consultation

Innes referred to the consultation stating that ADA would submit a national response and he encouraged all other RMAs and IDBs to do so as well.

Events

Innes reminded delegates of the following events:-

- Flood and Coast Conference in Telford – Innes will be speaking on climate adaptation.
- Floodex February 2020 at the Peterborough Showground

Consideration will be given to a working demonstration (outside) in 2021/2022. ADA will be looking for suitable sites.

New Members

Innes was pleased to announce a number of new members to ADA including The Coal Authority and from the railways, GWR and LNER.

Crown Estates have expressed an interest in becoming members.

ADA are to provide administration services to ASA (Association of SUDs Approval Bodies).

ADA are actively looking to recruit a new member of staff (Technical Officer) to assist Ian Moodie.

Humber Strategy Comprehensive Review – Nick Appleyard, Engineering Workstream Lead

Nick presented an update on the current review stating that the Humber Flood Risk Management Strategy was approved by DEFRA in 2007. The strategy sets out the EA's approach to manage tidal flood risk over the next 100 years.

Risk management schemes to date have reduced the risk of flooding to 40,000 homes with other schemes currently ongoing.

He went on to advise that the Strategy has evolved since 2007, taking into account legislative changes and the 2013 tidal surge culminating in a Comprehensive Review which is now in progress.

A copy of the presentation made by Nick Appleyard will be made available to members.

Open Forum

Will Staunton asked Rachael Hill if existing IDBs would be able to increase their boundaries under the Rivers Authority and Land Drainage Bill. Rachael replied that is an ambition.

Peter Bateson commented that there is a desire in Lincolnshire for all IDBs to extend their boundaries stating that the IDBs would be better placed to manage highland water from outside their areas. Already engaged with LLFA in extended areas for consenting and enforcement on ordinary watercourses.

Robert Caudwell stated that it would be easier in Lincolnshire for IDBs to expand their boundaries because landowners who are outside IDB areas already pay a general drainage charge (Anglian RFCCs). However, there is the option for all RFCCs to apply this general drainage charge (new taxation).

Malcolm Harris commented on the water abstraction licencing debate stating that he felt that closer dialogue and co-operation between the EA and IDBs was required regarding letting water back into systems to support both abstractions and the environment.

Peter Cornish agreed adding that water shortage is an issue nationally and needs a higher priority similar to dealing with too much water. He encouraged us all to conserve water if we can.