Representing Drainage Water Level & Flood Risk Management Authorities

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes

Tuesday 16 June 2026

Venue: Rural Innovation Centre, Kenilworth CV8 2LG

10.30 – 13.30

Invited					
Name	**Role and organisation**	**Present**	**Name**	**Role and organisation**	**Present**
Tim Farr (TF)	Advisory Committee Chairperson, Deputy Chair, ADA	Y	Mhari Baldwin (MB)	Environment Agency (National Agency)	Y
Charles Mills (CM)	Policy Committee Chairperson, Deputy Chair, ADA	Y	Catherine Harris (CH)	Wilkin Chapman LLP (Independent Advisor)	Apologies
Robert Caudwell (RC)	Chairperson, ADA	Y	Innes Thomson (IT)	Chief Executive, ADA	Y
Peter Bateson (PB)	Company Secretary, ADA	Y			
Jim Hutchinson (JH)	Balfour Beatty (Associate Member)	Y	**In attendance**		
Jane Froggatt (JF)	Chief Executive, Witham & Humber Drainage Boards (IDB)	Apologies	Laura Lamb (LL)	Membership Officer ADA	Y
Glen Westmore (GW)	Flood Risk Planning and Consenting Team Leader, Surrey County Council (Local Authority/ASA)	Y	Ian Moodie (IM)	Technical Manager, ADA	Y

Ref	Minutes
70	**Welcome and apologies** JF sent apologies. Catherine Harris joining one hour late.
71	**Declarations of interest** None.
72	**Minutes of previous meeting** Minutes of 10.02.26 were approved. MB initial needs changing.
73	**Board of Directors Update** RC provided an update following the previous ADA Board of Directors meeting on 03.03.26 focus was on the finances and approval was given for balanced budget going forward. There was discussion about attracting water companies into membership. The discussion with ASA is a focus going forward. Policy and strategy were reported on, storm recovery and asset improvement fund there was praise for the conclusion of that, some concerns on slowness of processing of it. Statutory instrument update has gone to Defra lawyers so 6-8 weeks will be finalised, which means the SI will go to joint committee to lay before parliament so spring 2027.
74	**Matters Arising** ADA/ASA will be discussed on item 7. Everything else is where it should be.
75	**Finances** **a. Bank Balance** Healthy bank balance at the end of April. This is good news. Thanks to SC for getting membership fees in. The LAPSIP lowland peat contract meant a payment for the 2025 scheme hit the account before April and the change in Gazette schedule and the billing to advertisers is another reason why the bank balance looks different. **b. Income & Expenditure** Membership income is more positive than predicted which is very good news. The events income relates to sponsorship and ticket sales for the conference. The spending on staff costs is more than budget on a pro rata basis but no concerns. **c. Audited accounts 2025** Streets having an IT issue so the documented information is not over to us today as anticipated. As soon as the documentation is here IT will be sending it to Advisory board. It was a standard set of accounts and ADA more on top of debtors than in previous years. **d. Balance sheet** **e. Debtors** Comfortable with the current debt position.

68	**Business Development** **a. ADA-ASA Collaboration** IM presented the Scoping document on ADA-ASA Collaboration which goes into detail of how internal structures and functions will look like. There was a useful meeting in March with good discussions of both associations coming together. They looked at each of the scenarios the IM had put forward on membership categories. The discussion was concluded that a scope document should be produced, which has now been shared. Another aspect is looking at resources for ADA/ASA collaboration and the option to fund a consultant is something to be looked at the take the formation of the new association forward. GW has not heard back from VK on the consultant options, so they are happy to go with the ADA suggested person. The structure of governance side needs to be looked at and they need to look more into what that will look like in the future. The legal advisors will not be brought in until the words are sorted out between us. It was recognised that the time frame is now next year for a launch and not the November AGM. The national geography of UK was highlighted as being inclusive for expansion. The sniffer conference was mentioned as a place that ASA/ADA could have presence. The group discussed what timeline for what we are working to and how the communications schedule needs to be addressed. It was discussed how 2027 will be the key year for this change and the consultant who they will be recruiting will be the person to address the communications schedule. The entity coming out in 2027 will be timely with all that is going on with changes in government and authorities. *Action*: IT to approach the consultant about the formation of the new association workstream. **b. Business Plan 2026-29** How would you like IT to report against the business plan? IT did not feel like he was able to provide feedback and measures as he was not receiving them. The new business plan that has been approved by the Advisory board is ready to be reflected on. The strategic measures are linked to the meeting agendas so it can be kept live. How many objectives are there in the business plan so we need to ensure that all objectives recognised and not just the main ones that get discussed often at committees and boards. We do not pick up each one of the 8 objectives regularly at meetings so we will address them at the board. There was a discussion about how the Advisory Committee and Board may want to use the objectives to challenge and discuss the progress of the business plan and whether that it should be an agenda item. If someone is struggling to report back on the objective than the measure is not SMART enough. To summarise the Advisory board needs to ask questions and so a debate and discussion can be had. **c. Mileage allowance change** The chancellor's announcement that mileage has gone up from 45p to 55p. It can go up to 55p per mile is it ok to adopt this? The Advisory committee approved this. **d. Advertising and sponsorship**

	IM discussed the sponsorships for the ADA events in 2027. The advertising revenue is much healthier this year than in other years we are open to questions on the advertising income and plans for it. As Welsh elections have taken place and ADA is talking to Natural Resources Wales and ADA may take on contractor work to advise them on the IDBs and Welsh government. It is interesting that in the manifesto the Clyde Cymru have said that they would like to do a review on IDBs. They want to put local support into the work of the drainage boards to better engage with landowners. The board of NRW are the drainage board so that is a challenge. IT has been approached by coastal special interest group, would ADA like to promote the work of the SIG? Are they administered by the LGA? if so fundamentally we need to assess this. Discussions continued around how the SIG would like to work with ADA to raise their profile. There was little said about the Coast at Flood and Coast conference. It was discussed if SIG had a conference and the format of it was discussed. **e. External contracts** **i. Defra Lowland Peat** We signed a new contract with Defra. The contract can be renewed for 4 further years. This is collaboration is going well. The renewal of the contract 2026/27 is in place and can be renewed every year up to £112k per annum. It includes Rob Bootle from peatlands team engaging with IDBs as well as contract consultants.
69	**Upcoming work** **a. Good Governance Guide: Health, Safety, Welfare** The work of the policy committee and how they may ask for funds soon on a Health and Safety and Welfare guide in draft form. It has been sent out to policy committee members with view to publishing it by the conference. We may need to engage solicitors and an expert in the field. **b. Procurement guidance** AM would like to spend some money on solicitors guidance on the procurement guidance model he has produced. **c. SAAA** 22nd July 2026 is a board meeting where we will get an update on digital guide on board governance for smaller boards and bodies. There are some reforms on how audits are being done so this is timely. **d. REDEEM** Innes attended eel passage conference at Hull University. We have previously financially contributed. Redeem are preparing a Redeem stage 3 business case. Do we want to agree that officers can approve a spend without it going to the Advisory Committee. If it does not interfere with having a balanced budget than ADA staff should be able to take work forward and if going into reserves than it will be taken to the Advisory committee. Where are we going next with energy costs was discussed. ADA have written to Andrew Pakes. He is a PPS and he will be having discussions currently and we await his responses to move things along with ADA. We had got a long way with Ofgem after we had every OB number, then they said send the data to the electricity companies. At the last policy meeting it was decided that it was

	not appropriate for ADA to go forward yet as they need a 4-year period monthly. ADA was not comfortable to do this alongside the day job, we need to pursue the political roads first. It could be a significant budget line if we need to take this forward. The flood risk task force on 10th July will pick up on actions that the EA has said it has started. A wider discussion on main river maintenance is at the forefront of ADAs mind.
70	**Events** **a. ADA Flood & Water Conference, 17 November 26, Westminster** It was busy across 3 days. The local authority zone worked well for ADA. ADA produced stand graphics from Rural Flood Resilience Partnership and IDBs like Witham IDB. We would like to keep it consistent next year. ADA would like to do a talk. CIWEM will want to extend the local authority zone next year. **b. Flood and Water Conference** Robbie Moore confirmed, Gavin Lane, Angela Jones and Will Harrington. A theme is likely to emerge. Robert Caudwell will be saying a few words as he leaves the chairman post. 2027 we are likely to take the conference out to a different venue which would have technology advantages. **c. APPG Sustainable Flood & Drought Management** Many APPGs have been held by ADA and CIWEM with lowland peat the subject last time and we asked Andrew Newton and Fenland Soil to speak. We have had LLFA speakers in the past and will continue. We have Lord Taylor of Holbeach as an officer for the APPG. IT informed the group how Sam Markille will be getting an OBE. There was a discussion around who could be nominated in the future. On 25th June he has a follow up meeting on main river maintenance, he would like branch chairs to invigorate the branch meetings workstreams.
71	**AOB**

Close of meeting

Dates for 2026 ADA