



Representing Drainage Water Level & Flood Risk Management Authorities

TECHNICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

12 September 2023

Venue: Team 2100 Offices, 111 Buckingham Palace Road, London
1030 - 1300

Also online via Microsoft Teams

APPROVED

Invited					
Name	Role and organisation	Present	Name	Role and organisation	Present
Chris Manning (CM)	Environmental Officer, Water Management Consortium and Doncaster East IDB	Y	Emily Paterson (EP)	Natural England (guest)	Y
Iain Sturdy (IS)	Chief Executive, Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium	Y	Mat Jackson (MJ)	West Sussex County Council	Y
Diana Ward (DW)	Ecologist for Ely and Bedford Groups of IDBs	Y (Item 1707 only)	Mark Phillips (MP)	Natural England	Y
Catherine Weighman (CW)	Natural England	Y	Dan Martin (DM)	Yorkshire & Humber Drainage Boards	Y
James Yarham (JY)	FCRM Senior Advisor, Environment Agency	Y	Charles Mills (CMS)	Committee Chairperson	Y
Robert Caudwell (RC)	Chairperson, ADA	Y	Ian Moodie (IM)	Technical Manager, ADA	Y
Phil Camamile (PC)	Chief Executive, Water Management Alliance	Apol.	Tim Farr (TF)	Chairperson, ADA P&F Committee	Y
Dan Martin (DM)	Asset Manager, Yorkshire & Humber Drainage Boards	Y	Innes Thomson (IT)	Chief Executive, ADA	Y
Ed Johnson (EJ)	Deputy Committee Chair	Y	Peter Bateson (PB)	Company Secretary, ADA / Chief Executive, Witham Fourth District IDB	Apol.
Oliver Pantry (OP)	Clerk, Upper Medway IDB	Y	Sue Crowther (SC)	Finance & Administration Officer, ADA	Y

Ref	Minutes
	Formalities, Regular Topics & Updates
1698	Apologies received. Apologies were noted from PC. DW joined the meeting remotely to discuss item 1707.
1699	Declarations of Interest None noted.
1700	Approval of Minutes Minutes of the Committee's previous meeting held on 24 May 2023 were approved.

1701	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Buffer strips and watercourse maintenance TF: enquired if there had been any updates regarding Environmental Land Management schemes (ELMs). IT said that he has a monthly call with Defra’s Future Farming team.</p> <p>MP: Provided an update regarding margin options under ELMs and would welcome observations from the Committee, e.g. changes around winter wheat. IT had concerns regarding wording in SF19 guidance, not clear that occasional tracking in margins was acceptable, this has been updated.</p> <p>Discussion followed and IM advised further discussions are needed with Defra. IS highlighted need to be mindful of not undermining the legal powers of IDBs. RC had attended meeting in Wales where farmers have been informed they must plant 10% of land to trees, raising concerns re water management, and branch members had requested ADA support. Discussion following regarding permissions needed for various works. IM and IT to get update.</p> <p>Action: IT to provide an update note to the Committee regarding buffer strips, ELMs and IDB maintenance.</p>
1702	<p>Health, Safety & Welfare</p> <p>The Committee highlighted the importance of conducting a new survey of IDBs regarding health, safety and welfare matters. Members noted that there was no longer a specialist in health and safety matters on the Committee, and this should be addressed for the future ADA Policy Committee.</p>
1703	<p>New Committee Structure</p> <p>IM reported that ADA would move to the proposed new committee structure in 2024. With a Policy Committee focused on members’ work and interests and an Advisory Committee focusing on ADA’s business and finances. The ADA Policy Committee would hold three all-day meetings in London each year. The ADA Advisory Committee would meet remotely and at Stoneleigh Park three times a year.</p> <p>EJ advised that the ADA Lincolnshire Branch’s Engineers Committee, had gradually expanded with representation from outside of the county. It had been agreed to expand this branch committee into a national ADA Engineering Forum, meeting remotely and providing support and input to the ADA Policy Committee. Like the ADA Environment Forum there would be no formal cap on the number of attendees. IM proposed that both the ADA Environment Forum and ADA Engineering Forum would in the future nominate a representative to the ADA Policy Committee.</p>
1704	<p>Electricity Standing Charges</p> <p>IT advised of the increase in electricity supply standing charges being subjected to IDBs and that ADA was keen to receive further data from members. ADA had informed Defra of the issue and would engage with Ofgem, Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ) and Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC). DM enquired what information would be needed from IDBs and a discussion followed regarding the best way to collect such data, with a two phased approach suggested. suggested contacting the JF for further details as she is experiencing huge impact and been researching subject.</p> <p>Action: IM to request data regarding electricity standing charges from IDBs via a spreadsheet.</p> <p>Action: IM to seek a briefing from Witham & Humber Drainage Boards on electricity standing charges.</p>

	Action: IT to decide how best to proceed, and to write to OFGEM.
1705	<p>Lowland Agricultural Peat Small Infrastructure Pilot (LAPSIP) IM reported that following the publication of the Lowland Agricultural Peat Task Force's report in June 2023, Defra had announced two grant schemes relevant to water level management to improve lowland peat soils. One of these would be for the installation of small-scale infrastructure by IDBs and be developed and administered with the assistance of ADA. ADA received 40 expressions of interest for projects by IDBs in June, and the intention was to launch the application window by the middle of September. ADA had written to IDBs to encourage them to pre-register on Defra's e-sourcing platform, Atamis. IT expressed thanks to IM and ADA's consultants on the project David Thomas and David Hoskins for all of the hard work involved.</p>
1706	<p>Asset Renewal Allowance (ARA) IT had a meeting with Tony Andryszewski from the Environment Agency's national asset management team exploring extending the ARA to other risk management authorities (RMAs). The Environment Agency were still awaiting further details from Defra. IT emphasised the increasingly tight time scales involved to deliver any projects and that ADA and RMAs would welcome an update by the end of September for the next financial year. The total scale of funding involved was thought to be in the region of £8-10 million. JY advised that there was no further update. IT advised that there was no change to the criteria required for this scheme.</p>
1707	<p>Biodiversity Net Gain DW explained an ongoing development and planning matter related to a former clay pits that was now a designated a county wildlife site. The development would involve creating two lakes that will become reservoirs, diverting water into an IDB managed watercourse. The IDB was not aware of any geotechnical or hydrological studies, no proper biodiversity net gain, nor detailed compensation measures.</p> <p>DW highlighted a lack of clarity for IDBs and other RMAs in relation to their broadened duty to conserve and enhance under the Environment Act 2021 in respect of biodiversity net gain while undertaking their consenting and byelaw functions.</p> <p>DW asked if there was any guidance as to what constitutes justifiable grounds for an IDB to refuse consent where it is considered that biodiversity interests have not been properly addressed by a development?</p> <p>MP offered to forward the matter to a specialist within Natural England. IM & IS highlighted need for clarification, general, further discussion re aspects and agreement that clarity & guidance is required. MD suggested Section 28G,</p> <p>Action: DW to forward to IM details of the questions to be posed.</p> <p>Action: IM to write to MP and JY to see if guidance to RMAs was available regarding consenting and byelaws in relation to biodiversity net gain and their duty to enhance the environment. If not the matter is to be referred to Defra.</p>
1708	<p>Protecting Hedgerows and timing of works CM updated committee on consultation, advised 20th September consultation date, expressed concerns and committee discussed good working practises and exception rules. He is happy to draft strong consultation and would welcome ADA's support. IM clarified difference between legal dates & funding dates. Committee would welcome flexibility.</p>

1709	<p>Updates</p> <p>Environment Agency - JY</p> <p>a) PSCA Order – Completed review of renewal of 2021 order, would welcome comments back, prior to rolling out later this year. IT highlighted sediment is co-operation & not contract, JY highlighted aim to clarify and make order more robust.</p> <p>b) Guidance Water – Aim to bridge gap between Living on the edge and information on Gov.com. Will be published on Gov.com and availability to download hard copy. Updating wording in Owing a Watercourse, with option to discuss prior to publishing early October.</p> <p>c) RACC– Completed initial assessment, further screening to follow and then to consultants for specialist surveys. EA unable to share internal guidance but happy to offer assistance. ADA would appreciate framework to assist boards.</p> <p>Natural England – MP updated committee on “Plans for Water”. Water restoration funds available next few months. Landscape recovery, closing date mid-September. CW has been working with Andrew Newton and advised lowland peat workshops in Ely coming up.</p> <p>Consultations – IM updated committee. DW raised query on accreditation on water quality metric. MP will investigate.</p>
1710	<p>Events</p> <p>IT reported:</p> <p>a) Flood & Water Live 2023, thanked all involved, and had received good feedback from visitors and exhibitors. Financially the event just about broke even. For future events more resource would need to be dedicated to marketing and promotion, although it was noted that this would divert further resource away from ADA’s work for members and increase event costs. A future event would not be held before 2026, because of the specific requirements for a suitable site and the team needed to deliver such an event.</p> <p>b) ADA AGM was to take place online on 27 September 2023. Members were encouraged to register to attend.</p> <p>c) ADA Flood & Water Conference would take place on 21 November at One Great George Street, London with a new format starting at 11:00, with a buffet lunch served between 12:00 – 13:20 before the Conference proceedings commenced, and running until 17.00:30. ADA had now confirmed its lineup of six speakers.</p>
1711	<p>Wash up of outstanding Committee actions.</p> <p>IM presented a list of ongoing and incomplete actions of the existing ADA Committees. It was noted that such a list would always be longer than ADA has the resources to deliver and therefore ADA would welcome help from members to deliver work streams in the future. RC pointed out a need for prioritisation, IT would welcome thoughts of additional items to be discussed by the ADA Policy Committee in January 2024.</p> <p>Action: ALL committee members to provide feedback on the list and additional areas of work for ADA.</p>
1712	<p>AOB</p> <p>IT reported that His Royal Highness Duke of Gloucester had become an ADA Patron.</p>
	<p>Future meeting dates</p> <p>Dates for the new ADA Policy Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31 January 2024 • 22 May 2024 • 11 September 2024

	Close of meeting