



# Representing Drainage Water Level & Flood Risk Management Authorities

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Minutes

Tuesday 11 June 2024

Venue: Black Sluice IDB, Swineshead, Boston, Lincolnshire

09.30 – 12.30

APPROVED

Invited					
Name	Role and organisation	Present	Name	Role and organisation	Present
Tim Farr (TF)	Advisory Committee Chairperson, Deputy Chair, ADA	Y	VACANT	Environment Agency (National Agency)	Vacant
Charles Mills (CM)	Policy Committee Chairperson, Deputy Chair, ADA	Y (Items 1-7)	Catherine Harris (CH)	Partner, Wilkin Chapman LLP (Independent Advisor)	Y
Robert Caudwell (RC)	Chairperson, ADA	Y	Innes Thomson (IT)	Chief Executive, ADA	Y
Peter Bateson (PB)	Company Secretary, ADA	Y	Ian Moodie (IM)	Technical Manager, ADA	Y Online
Jim Hutchinson (JH)	Balfour Beatty (Associate Member)	Y			
Jane Froggatt (JF)	Chief Executive, Witham & Humber Drainage Boards (IDB)	N Apol.	<b>In attendance</b>		
Glen Westmore (GW)	Flood Risk Planning and Consenting Team Leader, Surrey County Council (Local Authority/ASA)	Y (Items 1-6 and 9-12)	Sue Crowther (SC)	Administration & Finance Officer	Y Online

Ref	Minutes
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Welcome and apologies</b></p> <p>Apologies noted from Jane Froggatt. IT reported that the Environment Agency had recently appointed Josie Bateman (Deputy Director Asset Operations and Improvements, FCRM, EA) to the ADA Advisory Committee and would be joining from the next meeting in September 2024.</p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Declarations of interest</b></p> <p>None raised.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Minutes of previous meetings</b></p> <p>Minutes of the former ADA Committees were tabled as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ADA Policy &amp; Finance Committee meeting (14 February 2024)</li> </ul>

	<p><b>ACTION:</b> IM to share minutes of 14 February 2024 with respective former committee members for accuracy and approval.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> Future approval of draft minutes will be via email.</p>
4	<p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <p>None carrying over to this Committee from previous Committees.</p>
5	<p><b>New ADA Committees</b></p> <p>IM presented the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee as approved by the ADA Board of Directors on 5 March 2024.</p> <p>Discussed the new ADA Committee structure and how it will report to and be held to account by ADA's Board of Directors.</p>
6	<p><b>ADA Staff Pay &amp; Conditions</b></p> <p>Discussed how ADA staff pay, and remuneration will be handled by the Committee. TF proposed a subgroup of the Committee Membership (excluding paid members of ADA staff). However, the sub-group could consult with ADA staff members where it had specific questions, or when seeking views.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> TF to invite and confirm the sub-group members</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> IM/IT/TF to draft specific terms of reference regarding the handling of pay and remuneration, explaining how we want the Committee members to handle such matters, (this should include reasonable expectations and timings.)</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> TF/PB to circulate full ADA Remuneration Subcommittee meeting notes from 3 March 2024. TF/PB to direct if redaction is needed before sharing meeting notes with ADA staff.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> IM to circulate staff letter from 21 March 2024 to the Committee after consulting other staff members.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> IT to set out how minutes/notes from committee decisions will be shared/reported to staff and committee members respectively.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> IM/IT to provide overview of ADA staff structure, roles, and functions.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> TF to circulate details of working relationship with Loates HR Consultancy who have been contracted to provide professional HR advice.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> TF to formally acknowledge ADA staff letter of 21 March 2024.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> TF to liaise further with CH, following kind offer of assistance.</p>
7	<p><b>ADA Financials</b></p> <p>Figures were provided as at 30 April 2024 for reporting to ADA Board of Directors on 02 July 2024.</p> <p>a. Bank Balance OK and sitting at almost £429,000.</p>

b. Income & Expenditure

Larger than normal professional services owing to employment of David Thomas and David Hoskins as advisors for the LAPSIP project work that ADA is completing on behalf of Defra.

c. Debtors

CH expressed concern on debtors amount and enquired the credit control process in place.

IT advised we request payment within 30 days but highlighted the unique challenges faced by membership organisations. It was noted that ADA had very few defaults on IDB subscriptions and advertising invoices. ADA has incurred long delays between point of invoicing with Defra and paying consultants. Partly setting up process and contract timings. CH wondered where we could make bigger gains with chasing finances and offered assistance. SC advised debt now down to £23,642

**ACTION:** SC to summarise on debtors report the write off in each year.

**ACTION:** SC to draft clear set of terms and conditions for invoices.

**ACTION:** IT to arrange meeting re debtors with CH & SC

JH identified that it is important that primary contacts within members organisations are kept up to date and copied into membership invoices and outstanding debts. IT acknowledged that some of the debt collection issues were as a result of loss of primary contact.

IT noted that ADA's existing Business Plan requires ADA to be holding at least six months operational costs in reserves. This is judged to be the minimal position in order to complete the winding up of the company if that were to be required. Noted that events such as Flood & Water Live 2024, and project work such as LAPSIP can result in peakier bank balances.

IT reported increasing pressures on balancing budgets and, without added revenues, membership income alone would not cover future costs.

The following summary report would be presented to Directors:

- ADA's cash balance at 30 April 2024 was £428,969 compared to £399,560, on 30 April 2023.
- Invoiced subscription income is just ahead of budget expectations.
- Advertising revenues from the ADA Gazette have been slow in the first quarter but are picking up and estimated to remain in line with budget estimates made. The Board is reminded that the reporting shows a smoothed income profile where in reality, invoicing is carried out quarterly after the production of each Gazette.
- Expenditure for the year to date – this is in line with budget estimates.
- Debtors – There are no specific concerns to report on outstanding debts to ADA although certain debts are taking more time than expected to collect.
- £80,000 has now been invested (£40,000 with Nat West and £40,000 with CCLA) in deposit accounts to provide a return on that investment.

d. 2023/24 Accounts

These were not yet available from ADA's auditors (Streets).

**ACTION:** IT/SC to circulate accounts to Committee members for comments by

	<p>correspondence prior to the ADA Board meeting on 02 July 2024.</p> <p>Noted actual surplus of £6,000 for 2023/24, but budgeting for a deficit of around £18,000 for 2024/25 which will be reduced due to the delay in hiring a new member of staff.</p>
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>ADA Membership Fees</b></p> <p>a. Fees for 2025 Board approved a 6.5% uplift in membership fees for 2024. The Board also gave indicative approval of subscription fees of 6.5% in 2025. Discussion followed on how this figure was calculated and the need for sufficient funds to not only allow for inflation but also ADA’s future i.e., additional staff, technology, upcoming projects etc. The Committee supported IT’s concerns that the current proposals may not be enough to achieve a balanced budget.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> IT to present how ADA subscriptions would have to change over time to allow for the adjustment of staff terms and conditions, inflation and an additional member of staff.</p> <p>b. Future possible restructuring of membership fees IT expressed opinion that the current structure of membership fees will need to change to anticipate a changing membership list, notably where IDBs merge. Generally, where IDBs merge, the new single membership rate will be less than the total of the previous multiple membership incomes, in some cases quite considerably.</p> <p>CH asked about individuals and student membership. There was also mention of the opportunity to explore membership rates for academic and research institutions.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> IT to prepare a future Committee paper explaining future challenges and opportunities for ADA subscriptions.</p>
<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>ADA Events</b></p> <p>a. Flood &amp; Water Conference 2024 – Wednesday 13 November 2024 Running on the same format as last year, it was suggested to reduce speaking slots from six down to five so that the Conference closes earlier – 16.00 instead of 17.00.</p> <p>b. AGM 2024 – Tuesday 3 December 2024 – Online General support from Committee to keep this as a separate event.</p> <p>c. ADA Environment Day 2025 – Wednesday 5 February 2025 – Park Farm, Thorney Event has gained a lot of momentum. Full attendance from the first two events. We have some excellent senior speakers for 2025, including from WWT and Environment Agency.</p> <p>d. Future events IT recommended combining forces on Flood &amp; Coast with ASA for 2025 and offering to be an event partner. ADA and ASA would welcome a day focused around sustainable water management for flood and drought, aligned with the debate and discussion at the APPG. The Committee agreed with that suggested approach.</p> <p>There are no immediate intentions for ADA to start planning a future “live” working demonstration event.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> IT to engage discussions with ASA and CIWEM regarding Flood &amp; Coast 2025.</p>

<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>ADA Business Plan</b></p> <p>The Committee referred to the previous ADA Business Plan 2020-2023.</p> <p>A new business plan is now required due to new committees' structure, and IT suggested that ADA focus on developing a joint plan with ASA to help move towards amalgamation of the two Associations. TF suggested a group to define document, with 2-3 people from each organisation.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> TF (with IT) to confirm Business Plan Group.</p>
<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>Committee activities – planning ahead</b></p> <p>This item was deferred to the next meeting.</p>
<p><b>12</b></p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>Thanks were recorded to Black Sluice IDB for allowing ADA to host the Committee meeting at their offices.</p>
	<p><b>CLOSE</b></p>
	<p><b>Next meetings</b></p> <p>ADA Board of Directors, 11.00 – 15.00, Tuesday 2 July 2024, Westminster Kingsway College, London</p> <p>ADA Advisory Committee, 10.30 – 13.00, Wednesday 25 September 2024, Rural Innovation Centre, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire / Online</p>