

**Minutes of the Axe Catchment Meeting Held at Bradbury House, Market Street, Highbridge**  
**Friday 18 November 2016 at 10:30hrs** **Chairman: Mr Jim Lukins**

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|----|--|------------------------|
| 1  | <b>Attendance and Apologies:</b> as per register appended.   | Action                 |
| 2  | <b>Items additional to the agenda:</b> N Stevens (NWS) Bristol Water update.<br>J Lukins – penning structure, Culvert Rhyne, Axbridge Moor.  |                        |
| 3  | <b>Declarations of interest:</b> Cllr A Gilling: planning and any issues relating to Ashford Solicitors.<br>Mr J Lukins and Cllr L Scott: Item 7d) Removal of existing fencing, Cross Moor.  |                        |
| 4  | <b>Opportunity for the public to address the meeting:</b> None   |                        |
| 5  | <b>Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman:</b> the Clerk invited nominations for Chairman of the Axe Catchment:<br><b>Nominated J Fear, Seconded J Healey – Jim Lukins</b><br>There being no other nominations Mr Lukins took the Chair for the ensuing three year term, thanking members for their continued support.<br>Nominations were invited for Vice-Chairman of the Axe Catchment:<br><b>Nominated J Lukins, Seconded J Fear – Cllr L Scott</b><br>There being no other nomination Cllr Scott accepted the position, thanking members for their support.   |                        |
| 6  | <b>Finance – overview of expenditure and budget:</b> (appended Enc 1) in the absence of S Gee, NWS briefed members on the report with the following points of note: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cocklake upstream bank repairs are no longer required, therefore fund re-directed to H&amp;S Brinscombe works (Ref UA21 and UA22)</li> <li>• Post flooding work has been undertaken, with £4,420 balance remaining</li> <li>• The majority of routine maintenance works are now complete</li> </ul> Members noted the report as submitted.  |                        |
| 7  | <b>Engineering Report: a) Maintenance and Improvements:</b> A Dowden (AJD) and M S Wall (MSW) advised that routine annual channel cleaning is almost complete with some areas having a second or third cut where necessary. AJD was given authority to exceed budget for additional cuts where required.   |                        |
| 7b | <b>Pint Pot Cottage:</b> MSW advised that the channel cleaning operations are carried out with a machine that has low ground pressure tyres to minimize land and ground impacts. Due to over head cables and low mounted transformer box on commercial premises, as well as an adjacent ditch confluence the watercourse needs to be maintained from the paddock at Pint Pot Cottage over some lengths of this section of Ivy Down Ditch.<br>Notice of entry has been served by independent legal services, however access was impeded by an electric gate as well as vehicles blocking the route. There are also trailers, vehicles and storage buildings blocking access in the yard – this is not a landscaped residential garden area.<br>The Land Drainage Act does not provide for a warrant to be served, however NWS was instructed to seek a second opinion. The LDA does provide prosecution powers; the Board will need to demonstrate that all reasonable steps have been taken before a prosecution should take place. It was agreed, but not voted upon, that officers proceed to continue to seek entry for works from Pint Pot Cottage side. | MSW/<br>NWS<br><br>AJD |
| 7c | <b>Proposed Access Improvements Hellier’s Stream (lot 140) Cheddar:</b> AJD advised members that the narrow lane is causing access difficulties for the Boards’ contractor as well as a Health & Safety issue. However, the top three fields along the access route are out of the Board area. Members recommended that a smaller machine with a side arm be used in this area rather than widen the gateways.<br><b>Proposed J Lukins, Seconded M Smith ‘that the top sections of Hellier’s Stream and Ellenge Stream are withdrawn from the contractor contracts and undertaken by the Axe Brue in-house operative.’ Vote: unanimous RESOLUTION 1</b>  | RES 1                  |
| 7d | <b>Removal of existing fencing, Cross Moor:</b> AJD advised that post and barbed wire fencing was erected along Middle Rhyne, Axbridge many years ago and is now in very poor condition in some areas, other areas have brash growth mixed in with the fencing and is therefore unable to be cut by machinery. This fencing and vegetation is now a danger to the works operations on this channel and should be removed.<br><b>Proposed J Healey, Seconded E Badman ‘that the wire is removed off site, the posts left for landowner removal and banks cleared of brash and other vegetation as appropriate.’ Vote: unanimous RESOLUTION 2</b>  | RES 2                  |
| 7e | <b>Axe Catchment Tender Sub-Committee membership:</b> MSW invited interest to attend the tenders   |                        |

meeting to be held 21 March 2017 to consider tenders for a three year contract.

**Proposed J Fear, Seconded Cllr Scott 'that the Axe Catchment Tenders Committee be awarded delegated powers to consider and award three year channel cleaning contracts.'**

**Vote: unanimous RESOLUTION 3**

**Tender Committee:** J Lukins, Cllr Scott, E Badman, J Fear and M Smith.

RES 3

7f **Development Control:** (appended Enc 2) Consent application. M Norris Mark Cricket Club and Mr R J Popham, should be discussed within the Brue Catchment.

Planning applications: Ref ID 824 siting of 2x shipping containers – NWS advised that the application is adjacent an ordinary watercourse, siting the units 4m from the brink of the watercourse as temporary structures which may be removed. The ditch is on the opposite side of the road, and are sited behind a hedge.

7g **Land Drainage Consent application to culvert 60m of ordinary watercourse at Badgworth, LDC ref AB/BA/2016/79:** MSW advised that the application refers to the culverting of an old field boundary ditch which is an ordinary watercourse and now runs through residential gardens. MSW identified the site on an aerial view slide of the area showing that agricultural land has been acquired to extend the residential curtilage. The watercourse connects parts of the village to the improved Viewed Rhyne Network. MSW reminded members that such extensive culverting was contrary to the Board's adopted policy and, particularly in this situation, due to difficulties that occur with the maintenance and unblocking of long culverts.

Although not in-view, this is also an important watercourse for conveyance and storage. MSW reminded members that the village had suffered badly from flooding and that the Board had undertaken an extensive scheme to reduce flood risk which included upsizing of poor culverts and the installation of some new culverts. To date the scheme had been successful in preventing a reoccurrence of flooding.

NWS advised of a recent similar application at a nearby site, in which an application for a long culvert was refused however, an 8m culvert and the realignment of a ditch was approved to facilitate the applicant's development aspirations. The Clerk advised the Board that it needs to be consistent in this approach.

**Proposed J Healey, Seconded E Badman 'that the application to culvert is refused and a recommendation be given to cut a new ditch at the same cross section as the existing ditch around the existing boundary and to infill the existing ditch.'** **Vote: 7 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstain RESOLUTION 4**

It was agreed, but not voted upon, that responsibility of future maintenance of any possible new ditch would remain with the householders as riparian landowners.

8 **Minutes of the Axe Catchment meeting held on 08 April 2016:** (appended Enc 3)

Having been previously circulated, the minutes were signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the meeting held.

**Proposed J Fear, Seconded T Tincknell 'that the minutes of the meeting held on 08 April 2016 be approved as a true and correct record of the meeting held.'** **vote: unanimous. RESOLUTION 5**

9 **Matters Arising: Item 6 UA21 & UA22 Health & Safety Update:** MSW advised that contractors had been invited to tender for installation of a split door and tilting weir. K Marsh declined to tender. Tenders were received from JD Pope & Son £42,943 and Spratt Plant Hire £16,390.

The Board contributed a split door £4,525, tilting weir £3,175 and delivery £450.

Total scheme cost £25,540.

After discussion it was approved, not voted upon, that the contract be awarded to Spratt Plant Hire.

**Item 7 Minutes of the meeting held 08 April 2016:** Bleadon Sluice – NWS advised that following information from Bristol Water (BW) in June that works would be the subject of consultation and commencement in the autumn 2016, a further letter had been sent by the Clerk to Bristol Water requesting an update. BW have replied that they are not in a position to provide a formal reply to the request and referred the Board to the Environment Agency.

The Chairman suggested the EA be asked to install a structure across the Cheddar Yeo to penn the water if problems with progress on the sluice works continue.

There has been an environmental impact; the EA have removed some dead trees from the bottom end of the catchment.

It was agreed that NWS and IDS would continue with efforts to resolve communication with the EA and BW; issues to be discussed are powers to do works and future responsibilities.

**Item 8 Cheddar Canal:** a meeting is to be held with the EA at the end of November to discuss arrangements surrounding Public Sector Cooperation Agreements. Cheddar Canal is a structure

RES 4

RES 5

that would come under a PSCA, therefore it will be included in the discussions.

**Outstanding Drainage Rates:** members were advised that approx. £5k remains outstanding.

**Item 9 Dairy Show:** the IDB stand received a very good number of visitors, both Board members and members of the public who engaged with officers and the Axe Brue Chairman during the day.

**Water Levels:** MSW advised that water levels at Rooksbridge are high, however these are affected by channel maintenance on the Mark Yeo. This is a localised issue which is being monitored.

10 **Any Other Business:**

1. Health & Safety – Wedmore Moor Rhyne titling weir will be going out to tender in the New Year.

2. Winter Penn – MSW advised that a meeting is scheduled with the EA on 25 November to agree winter penn from 1<sup>st</sup> December, if not before. Due to predicted inclement weather some structures may need to be lifted early.

3. SWADA meeting 23 November, members were reminded that lunch must be ordered and paid for.

4. Children in Need collection is being undertaken in the main office today.

11 **Date and venue for next meeting:** unless stated all meetings will be held at Bradbury House, Highbridge commencing at 10:30hrs.

- SWADA 23 November 2016, 10.30am, Oaktree Arena, Highbridge
- Full Board 31 January 2017, 10.30am
- Axe Catchment 18 April 2017, 10.30am

There being no other business the Chairman thanked members and officers for attending, and wished all present a Merry Christmas.

The meeting was closed at 12.00hrs.

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CHAIRMAN

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DATE