

Minutes of the Brue Catchment Meeting Held at Bradbury House, Highbridge on Tuesday 22 November 2016 at 10.30 am
Chairman: Mr M Watts

The Clerk, N Stevens (NWS) opened the meeting, welcoming members to the inaugural Brue Catchment meeting of the new Board, following elections held in October 2016.

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| 1 | Attendance and Apologies: as per register appended. Members were introduced to Jack Roberts, Trainee Technician to the Boards, who began his apprenticeship on 07 November 2016. | Action |
| 2 | Items additional to the agenda: 1. A Dowden (AJD) – Meareway, Glastonbury. | |
| 3 | Declarations of interest: R Whitcombe – Fencing at Edgarley. R Adlam (RA) – Meareway. | |
| 4 | Opportunity for the public to address the meeting: None | |
| 5 | Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman to 31 October 2019: The Clerk invited nominations for Chairman of the Brue Catchment sub-committee to 31 October 2019:
Nominated A Neale (AN), Seconded C Ainge (CA) – R Adlam. Mr Adlam declined.
Nominated M Smith (MS), Seconded C Ainge – M Watts. With no other nominations Mr Watts took the chair and thanked members for the opportunity advising that he would take the Chair for the time being, he then asked for nominations for Vice Chairman. None received. It was agreed to proceed with no Vice-Chairman. | |
| 6 | Finance - Overview of expenditure and budget: appended – Enc 1. AJD advised that tractor costs are included in the recharge to the Parrett IDB.
Moggs Rhyne Godney: AJD advised that the Board are awaiting permission from the Environment Agency to erect fencing on the outlet.
The report was duly accepted. | |
| 7 | Maintenance Programme: as report. AJD advised that the upper area annual channel cleaning programme is underway, with some areas completed.
Massey Fergusson routine tractor service will be undertaken in the near future.
Matthew Wall (MSW) confirmed that all work in the Catcott, Mark and Huntspill areas are complete. Back Lane Rhyne in Mark has very narrow tracks however riparian improvements are being undertaken. The EA ditches were completed later than normal, MSW to investigate.
Winter penn has been introduced early due to inclement weather following requests made for some doors and tilting weirs to be lowered.
Colin Pople (CP) queried locks on certain structures; members were advised that IDB structures and gates are padlocked where it is considered a tampering threat. EA structures are routinely padlocked.
10.45 John Frost joined the meeting
C Ainge (CA) expressed concern that Somerset Wildlife Trust (SWT) have differing water levels to the surrounding land and that the IDB appear powerless against operating levels for the SWT. CA opined that SWT do on occasion have a hand in how high the water level remains.
MSW advised that the raised water level in North Drain, Tealham and Tadham is as agreed within the Water Level Management Plan, which was agreed with landowners and Natural England.
CA is not satisfied with the way water levels are handled by SWT and that they appear to use their position to dictate water levels and expressed concern for levels in Burtle (Black Ditch). Members were advised that NE are reviewing the situation in Burtle with regard to the WLMP.
A meeting will be held to include Colin Pople, Charlie Ainge and Ross Whitcombe with N Stevens and M S Wall to discuss the situation.
MSW reported desilting of Northwick and Southwick Rhyne will take place this winter. Silt pump will be deployed during the winter. | MSW |
| | a) Unconsented works: Crown Inn, East Huntspill – MSW updated members and presented slides of the site. The Crown Inn made an application to culvert a section of the Greenway and Cote Rhyne in East Huntspill. This was consented by the IDB with conditions related to further use. The culvert was 20m in length with a chamber.
Without applying for consent, the owners have placed s steel storage containers on the recently infilled channel. Whilst work to convert them to a non storage use was being carried out an application for consent was received for 3 units following contact with the owners pointing out their unconsent status. The Board did not consider them to be temporary and the consent was refused at the Board meeting. NWS has written to Mr and Mrs Cooke and also informed SDC regarding a possible infringement of planning. A 28 day notice has been given to remove the structures. Members approved that officers proceed with enforcement for removal of the steel containers as necessary. Clerk to continue as appropriate. | MSW |
| | b) Unconsented fencing: Edgarley Rhyne, Glastonbury: AJD presented slides of the area and updated members; he had met with a grounds man. NWS has written to the school and is awaiting confirmation from the Bursar that Millfield School will take responsibility for future maintenance of the watercourse. | NWS |

The following discussion points are not exhaustive:

- Officer recommendation is to maintain the bottom end of Edgarley Rhyne with wire fencing moved back and allow the landowner to maintain the top end with wire fencing remaining in situ; this end of Edgarley Rhyne would be taken out of view with maintenance monitored
- If the Board fencing policy was relaxed, contractor costs would rise as they are not in favour of fencing on viewed rhynes
- The lower Axe and Brue areas have little or no fencing
- To confirm the proposal that a length should be taken out of view with the fence left where it is, this would be Mr Walker's responsibility to maintain. Mr Walker would be allowed to fence the remainder, however the fence should be set back to enable our in-house driver to carry out the maintenance
- The contractors in the Parrett Board have a similar view that placing arisings close to the watercourse creates a long term problem with growth and when the fence deteriorates there would be a health and safety issue for the flail to run down through

RES 1

Proposed: R Adlam, Seconded: R Willcox "that Edgarley Rhyne to Coxbridge Brook being 1,167m is taken out of view and monitored to ensure riparian channel cleaning operations are satisfactory with Notice to be served if necessary". Vote 8 for, 0 against, 2 abstentions
RESOLUTION 1

8 **Improvements and capital works programme:** IDS reported that 5 schemes are being promoted under H&S schemes. Black Hatches feed and Redlake Farm flap are complete, Swallows and Moggs Rhyne outfall are out to tender, Old Shard outfall currently at design stage and ROF fishing club tilting weir design is now complete with work to be undertaken in the New Year.

Basonbridge: at the Full Board meeting it was suggested the work was not a priority. However, the watercourse is in a poor state and some properties have experienced difficulties historically. An improved drainage route has been proposed by the factory site developer; a deep culvert to be installed under the road to give additional drainage and take pressure off the current pipe.

MSW advised that the culvert is an old pipe with a lot of structural damage which has been jettied several times. It was agreed that an investigation should be completed and review of funding sources carried out.

MSW

Tootle Bridge - Mill Stream: AJD briefed members with a slide presentation, this list is not exhaustive: RA declared an interest.

- A site meeting had taken place in September and members were advised that the structure under the Millhouse falls into an EA watercourse, with little or no control; the EA have advised this structure is not on their asset register
- Localised flooding has occurred, with one property experiencing historical flooding
- Historically a multi-agency scheme installed a concrete spillway to divert water from the junction of Coombe Hill to the Mill Stream
- Mill Stream spillways cross Mill Road into land adjacent then onto the Cunleaze Rhyne.

Recommendation: to find a range of measures as a combined multi organisation scheme where funding could be sought from partners as well as the SRA and EA.

NWS/
AJD

Authority was given to officers to investigate with other bodies and consider all issues.

Meareway Investigation: RA declared an interest. AJD presented recent photographs and advised:

- CCTV has shown a collapsed pipe; A test hole is being made to view the damage.
- A high spot has been removed to relieve the flooding which has resulted in the surface water being reduced, however the ditch remains high
- The landowner has requested funding from the SRA for investigations
- Local members opined that a new pipe will not ease the problem
- Builder's rubble, from a recent refurbishment, tipped into the watercourse may have blocked the pipe.

AJD/
IDS

Members approved officers consider an assemblage of investigations to find a local solution.

12.10 R Adlam left the meeting

9 **Development control:** (appended)

- **ID 574 Mr & Mrs Cooke:** consent refused at the full Board meeting
- **ID 564 Mark Cricket Club:** the Board will contribute a pipe for the gateway
- **ID 569 Robert Willcox:** culverts supplied for access gates
- **For Information:** Hills to Levels funding at Pitland Rhyne; the Board will utilise the replacement 4 gateways for access (Coastal catchment).
- **ID 554 Hawk & Owl Trust:** Site visit to be arranged with Hawk & Owl Trust to review an application for a replacement water control structure, to be attended by Colin Pople, Pam Thorne, Alvin Neale, Martin Watts and Ross Whitcombe.

MSW

The report was accepted by members.

- 10 **Somerset Rivers Authority update:** NWS advised that current funding is derived from local authorities, the existing funding arrangements may continue. Additional funding has been received from the Local Enterprise Partnership, however this will not be repeated. Speakers at the 2016 ADA conference supported legislation for funding – ministers have accepted the briefing however this has not yet been introduced to Parliament. This view has been supported by Neil Parish MP within the recent EFRA report on future flood preventions; raising local funding is a good method of undertaking extra works, particularly maintenance.
- Slow the Flow:** An open invitation has been extended to landowners at Horton Cross to review the natural flood management work that the Hills to Levels project and FWAG have been undertaking, generally outside IDB areas to slow the flow. Slow the Flow meeting to be held on Thursday 24 November.
- Future Works Programme:** Prioritising works for the forthcoming year is to be considered by members in February 2017; IDB Chairs and Vice Chairs to receive briefing on Wednesday 23 November.
- Dredging Trials:** Members were advised that the dredging process lifts the material and holds it in suspension adequately. Investigations continue to ascertain the environmental impact; bathymetric survey also being carried out before and after water injections. It is proving to be an effective and sustainable manner of moving silt.
- 11 **Minutes of the Brue Catchment meeting held on 13 September 2016:** Having previously been circulated the minutes were signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the meeting held.
- 12 **Matters Arising:** none
- 13 **Special correspondence and meetings:** NWS has received the EFRA report which is available to members upon request.
- 14 **Any Other Business:** P Thorne – neighbouring structures do not currently allow water within her holding to release; could this be investigated? It was agreed for MSW to investigate.
- 15 **Dates of next meetings**
- Full Board 31 January 2017, 10.30hrs
 - Brue Catchment 25 April 2017, 10.30hrs

MSW

There being no other business the Chairman thanked members and officers for attending and closed the meeting at 12.40hrs.

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CHAIRMAN

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DATE