

**Minutes of the Axe Brue Full Board Meeting Held at Bradbury House, Market Street, Highbridge**  
**Tuesday 17 October 2017 at 10:30hrs** **Chairman: Mr Jeff Fear**

- |  | <b>Action</b> |
|--|---------------|
| <b>1 Attendance and Apologies:</b><br>Apologies as per register appended.  |               |
| <b>2 Items additional to the agenda:</b> A Chidgey (AC) fly tipping, M Watts (MW) staff attendance at meetings, Charles Ainge (CA) Recruitment process (all to be discussed later in the meeting)  |               |
| <b>3 Declarations of interest:</b> Cllr A Gilling (AG) – all matters relating to planning and Ashford Solicitors.  |               |
| <b>4 Opportunity for the public to address the meeting:</b> None present   |               |
| <b>5 IDB Governance:</b> The Clerk (NWS) reported that at the end of the August meeting it was resolved to reconstitute the Axe Brue Board. Delegated powers were given to the Task and Finish Group that has been set up to finalize matters. The request has been sent to the Environment Agency whose solicitor in their lawyers group has drafted the order and is liaising with Defra. NWS will write to the local authorities and local bodies who have an interest. The paper is then put to the EA national Board who will amend it as necessary. A first advertisement will go out and 1 month after that comments will be received by Defra, EA or ourselves which are normally passed to the EA or ourselves to deal with using the Task and Finish Group. NWS had written a progress paper for the Flood and Costal committee meeting and asked for their support in the process. They are happy with the progress to date. CA commented that landowners are worried regarding the representation particularly where council members are appointed. NWS reminded members that there will be 12 elected seats available and 13 appointed. Members should have received notification from NWS asking for their expressions of interest. He has also written to appointed members who are not councilors and suggested a course of action if they wish to remain on the board. MW asked what would happen if there were too many applicants to be on the Board. This would have to be decided by the Task and Finish group using a selection process. The first term of office is unknown, this would depend when the order comes through. If it came through in May the first election would be in the November of the following year. If it was the first of December 2017 you would go to the next November and then a year on from there giving a much longer term. MW asked if there would be the same process as in the previous amalgamation where Boards were instructed they had to amalgamate and then after the process were informed they did not have to. JF stated that this was as a result of a change in government, and if there was a further change it would be more likely to be compulsory. |               |
| <b>6 Finance Report: Axe Brue - S Gee (SMG) briefed members on the enclosed reports and statements stating that there are no areas for concern. David Banwell (DB) expressed his concerns regarding the large amount of reserves and asked where the money is being spent. Iain Sturdy (IS) stated that there is a list of schemes which include urban investigations which are on hold as they are not considered urgent. These go back over a number of years and the money is for issues when they arise. SMG confirmed that the money will remain in reserves until a decision is made otherwise. JF said that it could be used for something such as the East Brent scheme. The funds could also be made available if necessary for any contingencies.</b><br><b>SDBC Approved Budget</b> – SMG reported that the budget had been approved at the SDBC management committee meeting. A further revised budget was then produced reflecting the decision to appoint a replacement CEO. The Axe Brue Finance and Governance committee proposed that the amended budget is approved showing the increased cost. There is also a 2% increase from the EA on their precept but there is flexibility as there are sufficient reserves which might be used to cover the cost instead of passing the increase on to the district councils. Ray Adlam (RA) felt that it would not be a good idea to use the reserves. SMG agreed that it would be better to keep the rate as it is but without significant impact to the Board.  |               |
| <b>7a Engineering Report: Maintenance Works</b> (Appended Enc 5) the report provided was taken as read with following points of note:<br><b>Works Contract:</b> Matthew Wall (MSW) asked that a small sub-committee is set up to look at the tender documents for the Brue catchment maintenance, this could be set up at the Brue catchment meeting on 5 December He also requested that a small sub-committee is set up to deal with pollution incidents such as checking risks.<br><b>Proposed: Jessica Healey (JH), Seconded: Andrew Gilling (AG) “that a sub-committee is set up with delegated powers to deal with pollution incidents and is made up of Charles Ainge, Pam Thorne, Liz Scott, David Watts and Ray Adlam”.</b> All in favour – <b>RESOLVED 1</b><br><b>Water Level Management Meeting:</b> A further meeting will be set up with the same attendees.<br><b>Hemlock Dropwort:</b> The claim by Mr Stott is still with the insurance company. The papers that had been sent out to members are now available in the public domain. Members would like all landowners to be notified of the situation. Land agents also need to be made aware.<br><b>Proposed: Ray Adlam, seconded: Martin Watts “that an information leaflet regarding Hemlock</b>   |               |

**Dropwort (HWD) is included with the rate demands next spring". All in favour. RESOLVED 2**  
**Northwater Outfall Agency Structure:** Roy McKenzie (RM) queried ownership of the structure. IDS explained that this structure is not normally operated by the EA and there was dispute over who had ownership. The EA are now going to refurbish the doors of the structure but are not in a position to prioritise the operation.

**Proposed: Pam Thorne, Seconded: Adrian Chidgey (AC) "that the Board undertakes the daily operation of the structure with the Agency retaining liability and ownership of the structure" all in favour RESOLVED 3**

**Unconsented Works – Crown Inn:** NWS is in discussion with solicitors. An offence was committed as the order ran out. The container in question has been sold on eBay - currently waiting for confirmation of collection.

**Pint Pot Cottage, Ivydown Ditch:** Correction to wording, should read "Ivydown ditch adjacent to Pint Pot cottage".

NWS has received communication from Mr Sperring saying his wife is currently in hospital and cannot deal with the situation at the moment. NWS will monitor the situation.

**Biddisham Drainage Improvements:** MSW asked that a sub-committee of Axe members is set up with delegated powers to approve the details of the scheme and to award the work when tendered. It was agreed that the sub-committee would be made up of Jim Lukins, Liz Scott, Andrew Gilling and Jeff Savage with delegated powers. All in favour.

**Blackford Moor Pumping Station:** as report.

IDS added that the Board and the EA are very keen to get PSCA pieces of work started. The first piece of work will start shortly in the Parrett area which should then give confidence in any others.

**Course Ditch Godney:** AJD asked for approval for the work on this structure. The cost will be in the region of £15000. IDS informed members that the ownership of the structure is unclear but the work needs to be carried for safety reasons and better water control.

**Proposed: Ray Adlam, Seconded: Charles Ainge "that the work on Course ditch is undertaken". All in favour. RESOLVED 4**

**Tootle Bridge:** RA is meeting with local residents who would like the work to be carried out. He will update them with the details from the report at a meeting later in the week.

**Favourable Conditions, Hawk and Owl Trust:** AJD confirmed the price for the work came in this week, hopefully the walkway work will start in November, if not it will be carried out in the spring.

**Church Lane Culvert, Lympsham:** work started on this structure today.

**East Brent:** the proposal needs to be reviewed before going out to retender.

AJD added a note that the complaint from Wall and Stamp has now been dealt with and work has been completed.

AC reported that approximately 70 tyres have been dumped either side of a bridge at Woolavington level. MSW has been in touch with district council but has not had a reply. He will ask Richard Duckett to pull them out. AG reported that there were 100 tyres dumped at Edingworth. CA had experience of this on Tealham and asked if there should be a policy or guide for landowners for dealing with this situation. Roger Keen (RK) suggested more complaints need to be made to the local council.

**7c Development Control: Planning -** Brian Stitch (BS) declared an interest in item 1004. He then queried item 1007, AJD had visited site and the applicant will relocate the structure.

**Consents:** MW commented on item 635, MSW advised this was in hand. MSW told members regarding the Notaro development at Rosetree paddock. There has been a site visit and a meeting took place earlier LDC will be submitted for any proposed works.

MW asked to return to planning item 1001 – he reported that the land is contaminated so building has stopped.

**8 Somerset Rivers Authority – progress update:** A board meeting is due to take place on Friday 20 October at Sedgemoor District Council. The agenda items are: the Board interim arrangements, a progress report on the Bridgwater Barrier, the Taunton strategic flood alleviation improvements which is a storage facility upstream of Bradford on Tone, and other works, the dredging strategy and information on the Soway KSD area. A half year progress report has been issued and NWS has a copy if members would like to see it. When the report is approved it will be available on the website. Finance and funding request for a further flood alert system based on highways flooding.

IDS will be presenting a paper on the dredging progress which includes Parrett water injection dredging, Parrett pioneer dredging (to develop a high level programme). Brue de-silting is unlikely to happen in this financial year as evidence is still being gathered. A new member of staff has been taken on – Eleanor Maxfield – who is focusing on tree work in the Brue area and making good progress. A culvert (under highways) inspection has also taken place with the top 10 structures identified. Work will hopefully start at the end of the year. A further project is being undertaken with Natural England which is the resilience of wet grass, the Parrett moor being used. Alan Franks had previously brought the board's attention to the problems with access maintenance on Decoy Rhyne. AJD and IDS have been

in discussion with EA and it seems likely that there will be maintenance access improvements.

**Taking over Management of Work stream W1:** Since the beginning of the Flood action plan the EA have managed the reporting. The work has now been divided into two parts for management purposes. The EA wish to continue to report on the larger schemes such as the Sowy and have asked that the smaller local works be managed by the drainage board, this would mean reporting and ensuring the pieces of work are delivered within budget and on programme. The Parrett Board were happy with the arrangements. JF asked members if they were also in agreement.

**Proposed: Charles Ainge, seconded: David Watts “that the board should agree to take over the management of Work stream W1”. All in favour. RESOLVED 5**

AG asked if the injection dredging would have any effect on the Bridgwater harbor. IDS confirmed there would be no effect.

**SRA Scrutiny Panel update:** RM had attended one meeting and attended the tour earlier in the year reporting back to local councilors.

The Chairman asked that the additional items be discussed at this point.

CA was very disappointed with the recruitment process as it did not reflect the high level of the position. It should be advertised on a wider level and perhaps handed over to a recruitment consultant. It is a job of great responsibility and influence. He feels strongly this is a very big move for the board. He would have expected the advertisement to appear in publications such as the Guardian. JF said it was too late to change the process now and added that the four Chairman plus 2 people from outside the board have been invited to be on the appointment panel, 1 to chair and 1 to peer review the applicants. The comments will be noted for future reference.

MW is concerned that staff are attending meetings that are not required. JF pointed out that staff are needed to report on their particular areas. As this has been previously mentioned staff that are not required do not attend. NWS commented that at a previous meeting not all staff were in attendance, the meeting went away from the agenda which then called for particular staff member's comments. If the agenda is adhered to then the necessary staff will be in attendance.

9 **Minutes of the Full Board meetings held on 13 June 2017 (enc 4):**

**Proposed: David Watts, seconded: Polly Costello “that having previously been circulated the minutes were signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the meeting held. 21 for, 0 against, 3 abstentions**

10 **Matters Arising: Item 9 -** Mr Adlam expressed concern for the accuracy and transparency of minutes, citing two examples that he felt justified minutes may have been inaccurately recorded:

1. Minutes stated that a discussion on an SRA dredging strategy had been held during the meeting, when in fact the particular discussion had not been discussed with IDB members, only with SRA dredging strategy members.
2. Minutes of joint SRA working party did not include discussion or resolution to invite appointment of Mr R Cauldwell. The motion was not acted upon thereafter.

**Item 8C –** M Watts declared an interest and had received notification from MDC. Building is currently taking place and the conditions are being ignored. RM has been in touch with MDC but NWS stated that this needs to be addressed through the board. AG said the correct route of investigation is to contact a higher authority. NWS will make further enquiries.

**Item 11 –** CA had attended a previous SDBC management committee meeting where Tony Bradford took over as Chairman. Since then he has not received any further communication or paperwork notifying him of meetings. CA strongly resented the fact that he had a bad attendance record and would resign if asked to. He does not want it put in the minutes that he has not been in attendance as he was unaware of the meeting taking place. NWS apologised that he had not received the paperwork but all paperwork was sent out at the correct time. JF thanked CA for bringing this to the board's attention but reminded all members that a list of dates is sent out at the beginning of each year with dates of all meetings. JF suggested that a private discussion take place after the meeting.

11 **Date of next Board meeting:**

SDBC Annual Meeting	21 November 2017, 7pm
SWADA	29 November 2017, 10.30am, Oaktree Arena
Axe Catchment	28 November 2017
Brue Catchment	05 December 2017
Coastal Catchment	12 December 2017
Policy, Finance & Governance	16 January 2018
Full Board	30 January 2018

Speakers are being sought for the Annual meeting and the SWADA meeting, likely to be employees/directors of the EA

Liz Scott apologized for her lateness to the meeting and passed on Jim Lukins apologies for non-attendance.

The Chairman thanked members and officers for their attendance and the meeting was closed at 12.45 hrs.

CHAIRMAN

DATE

## AXE BRUE IDB FULL BOARD MEETING

VENUE: BRADBURY HOUSE, MARKET STREET, HIGHBRIDGE  
 DATE: TUESDAY 17 OCTOBER 2017, 10.30 HRS

NAME	MILEAGE	PRESENT	APOLOGIES
Ray Adlam	20	R.G. Adlam	
Charlie Ainge	10	CPA	
Edwin Badman		ES Badman	
David Banwell (SDC)	10	David Banwell	
Mat Boley			
Cheryl Burnett (SDC)			
Heather Case (SDC)		H. Case	
Ed Champion			
Adrian Chidgey (SDC)		AS Chidgey	
R (Bob) Clapp			
Lorna Corke Cllr (SDC)		L. Corke	
Polly Costello Cllr (SDC)		Amy Costello	
John Denbee Cllr (MDC)			
Colin Durston			X
Jeff Fear		Jeff Fear	
Alan Franks			X
John Frost	30	J.F. Frost	
Andrew Gilling Cllr (SDC)	10	A. Gilling	
Philip Ham Cllr (MDC)			
Alison Hamlin Cllr (SDC)		A. Hamlin	
Jessica Healey (SDC)		J. Healey	
Dawn Hill Cllr (SDC)			
Phil Holms (SDC)			
Steve Hughes (SDC)			
Will Human Cllr (SDC)			X
Phoebe Judah			
Roger Keen Cllr (SDC)		R. Keen	
Tom Killen Cllr (MDC)			
Jim Lukins			✓ via email Scott
Noel Lukins			
Roy McKenzie Cllr (MDC)		R. McKenzie	
Steve Mewes SWT (SDC)		S. Mewes	
Alvin Neale			X
Graham Noel Cllr (MDC)			
John Parham Cllr (MDC)			
David Poole (NSC)			

NAME	MILEAGE	SIGNATURE	APOLOGIES
Colin Pople			
Jeff Savage Cllr (SDC)		<i>J. Savage</i>	
Liz Scott Cllr (SDC)		<i>L.B. Scott</i>	
Richard Shaw (SDC)	3	<i>R.P. Shaw</i>	
Martin Smith			X
Brian Stitch	16	<i>Brian Stitch</i>	
Pam Thorne		<i>P. Thorne</i>	
Tom Tincknell			
David Tratt			X
Maurice Wall			X
David Watts	3	<i>D. Watts</i>	
Martin Watts	30	<i>M. Watts</i>	
Wendy Welland			X
Ross Whitcombe			
Richard Willcox			
John Woodman Cllr (SDC)			