

**MINUTES OF THE AXE BRUE FULL BOARD MEETING HELD AT BRADBURY HOUSE
ON 02 NOV 2018**

Attendance:			
Elected Members: Mr J Fear (Chair) Mr B Clapp Mr C Durston Mr A Franks Mr J Frost Mr R Adlam Mrs P Thorne Mr D Tratt Mr M E Wall Mrs W Welland	Appointed Members: Cllr C Burnett Cllr J Denbee Cllr A Gilling Cllr A Hamlin Cllr W Human Cllr R Keen Cllr R McKenzie Cllr L Scott	Officers: Mr R Burge Mrs K Kingston Mr I Sturdy	Public:
Apologies:			
Mr C Ainge Mr N Lukins	Cllr L Corke Cllr P Costello Cllr J Savage		
Did Not Attend:			
	Cllr D Hill Cllr T Killen		

Agenda Item:	Detail:	Action:
1. Attendance and Apologies	Apologies as per the above Attendance List.	
2. Items additional to the Agenda	<p>2.1. The Clerk reported that a Freedom of Information (FOI) request had been received from Mr Higgins referring to the Minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Axe Brue Board Meeting of 31 Aug 17. The FOI requested sight of records held to substantiate a Statement made within Minutes that <i>'DCLG consider the Axe Brue Board Membership does not allow effectiveness and good practice.'</i></p> <p>2.2. Following an 'Internal Review' conducted by Mr I Sturdy (Dir Ops), no records or information to substantiate the statement was found. The summary Minutes were found to be incorrect in that the Clerk at the Meeting had only stated that</p>	

	<p><i>‘Defra considered the Axe Brue Board Membership did not allow effectiveness and good practice.’</i></p> <p>2.2. Although it was evident that the Minutes of the Meeting incorrectly captured the Clerk’s statement, the Board concluded that the Minutes did not influence or mislead the Board in any decision made at the Meeting.</p> <p>2.3 The Clerk considered the matter closed and the Board concurred with this.</p>	
3. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Meeting	None.	
4. Declarations of Interest	4.1. Cllr A Gilling – any planning matters and all matters relating to Ashfords Solicitors.	
5. Approval of Minutes	5.1. The Minutes of the Full Board Meeting of 31 Jul 18 were accepted unanimously and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate reflection of the Meeting.	
6. Matters Arising Review of Actions (Clerk)	<p>6.1. The Clerk referred to the Actions arising from the last Meeting at Page 8 of the previous Minutes.</p> <p>6.2. <i>A Dowden to produce a Report to identify annual works and expenditure for consideration at a future meeting:</i> The Clerk reported this Action would be taken in conjunction with Finance & Works AB/20181010-04 Action to conduct a review of the Machinery & Plant across both Boards with a view to VfM and Risk.</p> <p>6.3. <i>SDC Members to seek confirmation of SDC planning consent on the apparent construction works at Pint Pot Cottage and advise the Board accordingly:</i> Ongoing.</p> <p>6.4. <i>Clerk to contact the Director of Bristol Water to request an update of the situation and report back to the Board:</i> The clerk reported that he had sent a letter to Patrick Bulmer (Director Bristol Water) & Nick Gupta (EA)</p>	<p>Action AB/20180624-01: Ongoing</p> <p>Action AB/20180624-02: Ongoing</p> <p>Action</p>

	<p>on 13 Sep 18, inviting them to present the current status to the Board. A ‘Holding’ response had been received whilst awaiting Legal Counsel opinion of ‘Legal Duty Holder’.</p> <p>6.5. Phil Brewin to advise Members of the Meeting ref Dog Leg Ditch once known: Alan Franks declared an interest. The Clerk reported that Phil Brewin was trying to coordinate a meeting between Somerset County Council and the Site owner. This item was covered further in the Engineers Report.</p>	<p>AB/20180624-03: Complete</p> <p>Action AB/20180731-01: Continues</p>
<p>7. Governance update Co-Opted members (Clerk)</p>	<p>7.1. The Clerk reported that, since reconstitution, the Board no longer had Environment Specialist support within the Board Membership. He recommended that Environment Specialist support was formally brought to the Board through Co-Opted Membership. He clarified that the Co-Opted Members would not have voting rights but have visibility of Board Schemes and an ability to guide Board decisions at an early stage. This Co-Opted position on the Board would complement the advice provided by the Boards’ own Ecologist, Phil Brewin.</p> <p>7.2. David Tratt asked how this would affect the Board’s Ecologist, Phil Brewin. The Clerk advised that, as an Officer, the Board’s Ecologist was not a Board Member.</p> <p>7.3. Ray Adlam proposed, seconded by Wendy Welland “That an Environment Specialist such as Natural England is co-opted to the Board for specialist advice, but with no voting rights”. All in favour.</p> <p>7.4. The Clerk reported that North Somerset Levels IDB (NSLIDB) had approached the Consortium in light of the impending retirement of the NSLIDB Clerk in Mar 19, requesting potential options in mitigation.</p> <p>7.5. The Clerk commented that there were only six members of staff at NSLIDB and two of those (Engineer and Development Control) were currently being provided by SDBC under a formal</p>	<p>RESOLUTION 1</p>

	<p>agreement. Following discussions and Meetings with NSLIDB, the Clerk had prepared a Draft Paper and summarised the four potential Options as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. SDBC to provide an RFO capability 1 day per week as an extension of the current Agreement. b. SDBC to provide a Clerking capability 3 days per week as an extension of the current Agreement. c. NSLIDB to join SDBC with all Board activities being managed at Bradbury House. d. NSLIDB to join SDBC with all Board activities being managed at Bradbury House but retaining the Cider House in order to provide a ‘satellite office’ for operational land-management and engineering business due to having taken out a 3 year lease on the real estate. <p>7.6. The Clerk further commented that, although identified as Options within the Paper, he strongly felt that the first 2 Options were not viable but retained for visibility. The Clerk requested that, if the Board agreed with the current intent and summary of Options, the Board agree to allow the SDBC Management Committee to review and endorse the full Paper prior to submission to NSLIDB.</p> <p>7.7. Cllr Will Human proposed, seconded by Ray Adlam “That the Options Paper prepared for NSLIDB be taken to the SDBC Management Committee meeting to review and endorse for issue” 16 for, 1 against, 0 abstentions, motion carried</p>	RESOLUTION 2
8. Health & Safety - Update (Clerk) H & S Policy Update Accidents and Near Misses	<p><u>Audit Plan</u></p> <p>8.1. The Clerk reported that, following the EOY South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) Audit Report, he had held a Meeting with SWAP to</p>	

	<p>develop an Audit Plan to the EOY 31 Mar 19. The Plan was to focus on the Drainage Rating System (DRS) between now and 31 Dec 18, and then the Health & Safety Policy until Year End in order to provide additional independent assurance to the Board.</p> <p><u>Accidents and Near Misses</u></p> <p>8.2. The Clerk reported 1 x minor Accident since Apr 18:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Expenditor – Grass Seed in ear drum, minor injury. <p>8.3. The Clerk reported 1 x Incident since Apr 18:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A car wing mirror hit the Board’s tractor <p>8.4. The Clerk reported 3 x Near Misses since Apr 18:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Lifejacket did not inflate b. Contractors machine sank in soft ground c. Tree residue flailed by outside contractor landed in private garden. <p>All incidents are being recorded and sentenced for lessons-learnt.</p>	
<p>9. Sub-Committee/Consortium Updates</p>	<p><u>Somerset Drainage Board Consortium Management Committee</u></p> <p>9.1 The Chair reported that the SDBC Management Meeting had been held on 30 Aug 18 and that the Annual General Meeting was expected to be held before the end of Mar 19. The Chair reported that Tony Bradford was remaining as Chair of the SDBC until Nov 19.</p> <p>9.2 He commented that the RFO had reported an expected deficit of SDBC finances at EOY 2018/19 due to reduced income variance from that expected during budget-setting in 2017 due to</p>	

	<p>lack of recharge costs (currently gapped Senior Engineer and Project Engineer) and additional and unexpected recruiting costs for the CEO/Clerk and RFO.</p> <p>9.3 The Clerk stated he would be producing a 5 year Budget Forecast and a monthly Budget review process as from FY2019/2010.</p> <p>9.4 From an Officer perspective, the Clerk reported that Phil Ham had retired leaving a vacancy for a Project Engineer. Rob Kidson had been unwell and was on a phased return to work. Iain Sturdy explained that two Apprentices were currently undergoing BTEC and Higher BTEC in Civil Engineering along with gaining experience in the field. The Trailblazer Scheme, at a National level, was gathering pace in order to accredit 'Water Workers' with an NVQ Level 3 Qualification. This could be used to bring in additional trainees.</p> <p>9.5 The Clerk commented that a quarterly Strategic meeting with the EA had been reinstated and a one-year agreement was still in-place with Braunton Marsh to provide Clerking and Engineering support.</p> <p><u>Finance & Works Committee:</u></p> <p>9.6 The Committee Chair reported on the recent Axe Brue Finance and Works Committee conducted on 10 Oct 18.</p> <p>9.7 The headlines of note arising from that Meeting were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. He had been elected as Chair. Cllr Liz Scott had been elected as Vice-Chair.b. The Clerk had reported closing-out the Actions arising from the End-Of-Year SWAP Audit Report 2017/18.c. An Audit Plan had been agreed for SWAP to provide assurance to the Board	
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	<p>on Drainage Ratings System (DRS) and Health & Safety by EOFY 2018/19.</p> <p>d. Financial Report: Axe Brue Accounts to EOY were expected to come in 'on-budget'.</p> <p>e. As a 'heads-up', he re-iterated that the SDBC Accounts were expected to exceed the approved Budget by around £65k due to an inability to recruit against engineering vacancies and subsequent over-estimate of Recharge Costs from External Organisations, in conjunction with additional costs incurred with recruiting for the CEO/Clerk and RFO positions. He expected these variation would be passed on to both Boards at EOY.</p> <p>f. Improved Financial processes were being worked-up to ensure greater visibility and monitoring of Budget in order to inform earlier decision making and direction.</p> <p>g. The Clerk had taken an Action to conduct a full review of all Machinery & Plant across both Boards with a view to providing options of 'Value-for-Money' and Risk and would report back findings to the Board, through the F&W Committee.</p> <p>9.8 Cllr Will Human had agreed to carry out a Quarterly Bank Reconciliation of the Axe Brue Account, to be conducted before, and reporting into, each Board Meeting.</p> <p>9.9 Ray Adlam raised concerns regarding Risk being carried by the Board with respect to the SRA and LEP funding. Iain Sturdy reported that the Axe Brue Board was not currently exposed to LEP repayments as all works were currently locally funded.</p>	
10.Somerset Rivers Authority Update	10.1. The Chair reported that the last SRA Board Meeting was held on 7 Sep 18. The SRA Technical Group is currently working on a budget for a programme of works for the next financial	

	<p>year for approval at the next Board meeting in Jan 19.</p>	
<p>11.Engineering Report</p>	<p>11.1. Dir Ops referred to his Engineering Report previously circulated and asked members to consider the four recommendations contained within.</p> <p><u>Brent Knoll Station Road</u></p> <p>11.2. Slides were shown of the current culvert positions and the new route. It was recommended to promote and improve the scheme which will move water away quickly. Maurice Wall expressed concerns regarding Crooked Lane which could be very problematical. Wendy Welland proposed, seconded by Cllr Liz Scott, “That approval is given to implement the Brent Knoll Station Road Improvement Scheme”. Cllr Andrew Gilling declared an interest. 16 for, 0 against 1 abstention. Motion carried</p> <p><u>Biddisham Drainage Improvements</u></p> <p>11.3. Slides were shown of the area concerned. The proposal was to take a length of approximately 1042m of Rhyne into view. David Tratt proposed, seconded by Bob Clapp “that the Biddisham Drainage Improvements to take 1042m of improved channel into View is Approved”. All in favour</p> <p><u>Preparation of a paper to consider the replacement of the Boards Massey Ferguson tractor</u></p> <p>11.4. Dir Ops commented that the Axe Brue Area Manager, Anthony Dowden, had raised concerns over the of condition and potential need for replacement of the Board’s Tractor. The Clerk commented that this would form part of, and inform, the review of all Plant and Machinery being conducted as part of his Action previously briefed</p>	<p>RESOLUTION 3</p> <p>RESOLUTION 4</p>

	<p><u>Withdrawal from Project leadership of the SRA Brue Plan</u></p> <p>11.5. Dir Ops raised concerns regarding his ability to deliver the Brue Plan project. It has become difficult to promote the Desilt and Dredge on the Brue and very little progress had been made. Ray Adam commented that he had no confidence in the SRA and the onus should be back on the EA for maintenance of main Rivers and Local Authorities for the Highways. Iain Sturdy had suggested that the IDB withdraws from leadership from the project but to remain firmly within the SRA as a Stakeholder.</p> <p>11.6. Cllr Liz Scott proposed, seconded by Maurice Wall, “that the IDB withdraw from the leadership of the SRA Brue Plan but remain as stakeholders promoting improvements to conveyance in the River Brue as it passes through the Axe Brue Drainage District” 16 for, 0 against, 1 abstention: Motion carried</p> <p><u>West Rhyne Sub Committee</u></p> <p>11.7. Dir Ops referred to the West Rhyne Sub Committee Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 Sep 18. Slides were shown of the proposed works and the structure that needed improvement. The sub committee had approved the recommendation. (12.20 Cllr Will Human left the meeting)</p>	<p>RESOLUTION 5</p>
<p>12.Risk Management</p>	<p>12.1. The Clerk circulated a revised Risk Dashboard and explained the Risk Management Policy and Process. The Risk Register was now a live working document and a valuable management tool and would be used on a monthly basis to actively manage Board Risk.</p>	
<p>13. Any Other Business</p>	<p>13.1. The Chair invited the retiring RFO, Mr Stephen Gee, into the meeting and thanked him for his services over the past 9 years. Margaret Hammond was introduced to Members and was warmly welcomed to the Consortium and as the new Board RFO.</p>	

	13.2. David Tratt kindly asked that all Paperwork for Meetings could be emailed as one document where possible.	
14.Date of Next Meeting	14.1. The next Axe Brue full Board Meeting will be held on 31 Jan 19 at the Board's Offices in Bradbury House, Highbridge. 14.2. The Chair thanked all the Staff and Members and closed the meeting at 12:32.	

Annex:

A. Axe Brue Board – Table of Outstanding Actions

CHAIR.....DATE

**Annex A To
Axe Brue Board Minutes
Dated 11 Nov 18**

AXE BRUE BOARD – TABLE OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Action Number:	Action:	Actionee:
AB/20180624-01	To produce a Report to identify annual works and expenditure for consideration at a future meeting. <i>(Continues)</i>	A Dowden (AB Area Manager)
AB/20180624-02	To seek confirmation of SDC planning consent on the apparent construction works at Pint Pot Cottage and advice the Board accordingly. <i>(Continues)</i>	SDC Members
AB/20180731-01	Members to be advised of the Meeting ref Dog Leg Ditch once known. <i>(Continues)</i>	P Brewin