

**Minutes of the Axe Catchment Meeting, held at Bradbury House, Market Street on
Tuesday 29 August 2017 at 10.30am**

Chairman: Mr Jim Lukins

- 1 **Attendance and Apologies:** as per register appended. W Welland and P Thorne were welcomed to the meeting.
- 2 **Items additional to the agenda:** A Dowden: Dead man's finger (Hemlock Water Dropwort) issue and Knowle Boards.
- 3 **Declarations of interest: Cllr L Scott** – all matters relating to land within Axbridge, Cheddar and Compton Bishop.
- 4 **Opportunity for the public to address the meeting:** None
- 5 **Finance –overview of expenditure and budget:** (appended) N Stevens (NWS) advised that the finance report includes balance brought forward from year end, not necessarily total budget cost/estimate. The report was accepted as submitted.

6 Engineering Report:

- 6a **Operational and Works updates:** Most contractors had completed the channel cleaning contracts in the upper area, J Tucker & Son Ltd almost complete, however D Rowell has not yet commenced.

Knowle Boards: Anthony Dowden (AJD) advised members that the Environment Agency (EA) installed the Knowle Boards structure as part of the Hixham Rhyne in the 1970s for the benefit of the agricultural landowners. The operation of the boards needs improvement to meet modern standards and that a meeting is to be held with the EA to discuss future operation and long term liability.

Proposed J Fear, Seconded E Badman 'that future responsibility and liability of Knowle Boards is a matter of discussion at the IDB/EA quarterly meeting to be held in the near future.' **Vote: unanimous RESOLUTION 1**

- 6b **Bleadon Sluice – Update:** NWS advised that no feedback had been received from the EA or Bristol Water regarding the meeting held in the spring; following a request from the EA for a position statement, no response has been received from the Director of Bristol Water.

Points of concern from IDB members:

- Heavy rainfall could cause major problems for urban and rural areas
- Historically the River Axe has never exceeded 5.0 AOB
- River Yeo is held up at the confluence
- River Yeo is currently ½m lower than normal – only occurred since Bleadon sluice has been damaged
- Consideration should be given to penning River Axe
- IDB and landowners to bring to attention of local MPs
- Issues with tree kills downstream
- Cattle walking through river
- Water levels need to be brought back to historic level
- Investigations to include survey of landowners
- Circa 1966 Clewer pumping station was installed. River was dredged and pipes installed with inlets and out falls, however the water no longer reaches the pipes
- BW may not be aware of the scale of difficulties that landowners and businesses are experiencing.

Proposed Cllr J Savage, Seconded R Adlam 'that the Axe Catchment writes to local MPs with available information and survey responses from landowners to highlight the concerns and affects experienced as a result of the damage at Bleadon Sluice.' **Vote: unanimous RESOLUTION 2**

It was further suggested that individuals write to local MPs to convey the intensity of the matter.

- 6c **Pint Pot Cottage access update:** Despite correspondence from the IDB, access continues to be denied by Mr & Mrs Sperring.
The last access in 2014 was completed under notice.
Electric gates and vehicles constantly block the gateway.
Mr Sperring has accused the Board of harassment; legal assistance is being sought to execute a notice of entry for the autumn. Members agreed that Notice is to be served to permit channel cleaning operations in September 2017.

Action

RES 1

RES 2

Any further action would require PACE as evidence for prosecution. Legal advice has been sought which recommends prosecution.

S.64 of the LDA 1991 refers to powers of entry for internal drainage boards.

The watercourse provides conveyance of water for a large catchment.

Officers recommend installation of a viewing gate for limited interference with the landowners; members considered this to be a reasonable remedy.

Prop Cllr J Savage, Seconded Cllr L Scott 'that J Lukins as Chairman of the Axe Catchment with an officer of the Board visits Mr Sperring to discuss Mr Sperring's complaint and concerns and offer installation of a viewing gate as a possible remedy. The Board should take all reasonable steps to ensure access is achieved. If an access agreement cannot be reached a legal remedy not to exclude prosecution should be considered.' Vote: unanimous **RESOLUTION 3**

RES 3

- 6d Biddisham Drainage Improvement Scheme:** Works to include channel improvements, tree works and vegetation removal received concern from the Board's ecologist, therefore a scheme design for improved urbanised drainage was introduced to members. The new scheme will increase the original cost estimate by approx. £10k.

It was agreed that final design and cost are to be presented at a future meeting.

Consideration should be given to sourcing external funding i.e. SRA.

Proposed J Fear, Seconded J Healey 'that the Axe Catchment approves to deviate from the existing agreement with modifications to culvert and channel works to provide improved drainage at Biddisham with an approximate increased cost of £10,000.' Vote: unanimous **RESOLUTION 4**

PBS
NWS

RES 4

11.35 W Welland left the meeting

- 6e Development Control:** (appended enc 2) the report was duly accepted.

Deadman's Finger: Hemlock Water Dropwort, commonly known as Deadman's fingers, grows along watercourse banks with foliage eaten by cattle, however the roots are toxic to cattle. Following channel cleaning operations many landowners walk the banks to collect the roots.

The meeting was advised that a grazier recently lost cattle and is awaiting post-mortem results. Members felt that landowners/graziers have the responsibility for arisings following channel cleaning operations and management of the risks.

The Board will remind landowners in the newsletter and provide methodology to reduce/manage the risk. It was agreed that ignorance is not an excuse.

A policy is to be drawn up by the Full Board.

Newsletter

Full Board

- 7 Minutes of the Axe Catchment Tenders meeting 22 March 2017:** (appended enc 3) having previously been circulated, the minutes were signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the meeting held.

- 8 Minutes of the Axe Catchment Sub-Committee meeting 18 April 2017:** (appended enc 4) **Amendment:** Item 6a Biddisham Drainage Improvement Scheme: "The work is designed to provide for a 2km (loop) of Viewed Rhyne connecting at each end into the Ivy Down Ditch and Old River Axe on Biddisham Lane" should read "The work is designed to provide for 2km of viewed rhyne connecting Badgeworth Great Rhyne and Old River Axe on Biddisham Lane".

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

- 9 Matters arising: Item 9 (7g) Land Drainage Consent Badgeworth:** a dumper truck is now on site at Badgeworth; it was agreed that MS Wall would investigate.

MSW

Item 10 1) Panborough Sluice: it was agreed that the sluice would be lifted and investigated at winter penn.

AJD

- 10 Date of next meetings:**

- Extra Ordinary Full Board 31 August 2017, 7pm
- Full Board 17 October 2017, 10.30am
- Axe Catchment 28 November 2017, 10.30am

All present were thanked for attending. There being no other business the meeting was closed at 11.55 hrs

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Chairman

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Date

ATTENDANCE SHEET - AXE CATCHMENT

DATE : 29 AUGUST 2017, 10.30AM

VENUE: BRADBURY HOUSE, 33-34 MARKET STREET, HIGHBRIDGE

BOARD MEMBER	MILEAGE	PRESENT	APOLOGIES
Ray Adlam		<i>R.C. Adlam</i>	
Edwin Badman		<i>E. Badman</i>	
David Banwell (SDC)		<i>D. Banwell</i>	
Ed Champion			
Lorna Corke Cllr			
Polly Costello Cllr			
John Denbee Cllr			
Colin Durston		<i>Colin Durston</i>	
Jeff Fear		<i>Jeff Fear</i>	
John Frost			✓
Andrew Gilling Cllr (SDC)			
Philip Ham Cllr (MDC)			
Jessica Healey (SDC)		<i>J. Healey</i>	
Dawn Hill Cllr (SDC)			
Tom Killen Cllr (MDC)			✓
Jim Lukins	16	<i>Jim Lukins</i>	
Jeff Savage Cllr		<i>Jeff Savage</i>	
Liz Scott Cllr (SDC)			
Martin Smith			✓
Brian Stitch	16	<i>Brian Stitch</i>	
Tom Tinnell			
STAFF			
Philip Brewin			
Anthony Dowden		✓	
Stephen Gee			
Carrie-Anne Porter		✓	
Nick Stevens			
Peter Struck			
Iain Sturdy			
Matthew Wall		✓	
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC			21/8/2
NAME	ADDRESS	NAME	ADDRESS
<i>Wendy Welland</i>	<i>Coastal 100</i>		
<i>Pam Thorne</i>			
<i>David Good</i>	<i>NSDC</i>		