

MINUTES OF THE AXE BRUE FULL BOARD MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM ON 22 JUN 2020

| Attendance: | | | |
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| Elected Members: Mr R Adlam (Chair) Mr B Clapp Mr J Fear Mr D Tratt Mr M E Wall Mrs W Welland | Appointed Members: Cllr P Costello Cllr W Human Mr R Keen Cllr M Martin Cllr A Matthews Cllr M Murphy Cllr C Riches Cllr L Scott | Officers: Mr R Burge (Clerk) Mrs C-A Morgan Mrs M Hammond Mr I Sturdy Mr M S Wall Mr P Brewin Mr P Struck Mr A Dowden Mr S Bunn | Public: |
| Approved Apologies: | | | |
| Mr A Franks Mrs P Thorne Mr M Watts | Cllr A Gilling | | |
| Non-Approved Apologies: | | | |
| Mr C Durston Mr N Lukins Mr R Stitch | Cllr N Cottle Cllr P Clayton Cllr A Hendry Cllr J Woodman | | |

| Agenda Item: | Detail: | Action: |
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| 1. Attendance and Apologies | 1.1. Apologies as per the above Attendance List. | |
| 2. Items additional to the Agenda | 2.1. <u>Standing Orders</u> Following discussions with ADA and the Chairman, DEFRA approved amendments to the Standing Orders to include additional provisions 28 and 29 at the end, allowing changes to the way our meetings are held up to 7 May 2021. 2.2. Members endorsed the Standing Orders amendment, the Chairman signed the Standing Orders. 2.3. The Clerk commented that the public had been invited to the Meeting, having been advertised on the Boards' website, but no members of the public had requested to join the Meeting. | |
| 3. Declarations of Interest | 3.1. No Declarations were made at this time. Members were reminded to express their interests as necessary through the Meeting. | |
| 4. Approval of Minutes | 4.1. The Full Board Minutes of 03 Feb 20 were accepted unanimously and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate reflection of the Meeting. | |

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| <p>5. Matters Arising</p> | <p>5.1. Item 9.7 (<i>Increase in rates</i>): Some Members opined that notice should have been provided with the Rate Demand to explain the rate increase.</p> <p>5.2. The Clerk reported that a notice of explanation endorsed by the Chairman had been placed on the website.</p> <p>5.3. Item 10.2 (<i>desilting Mark area</i>): Dir Ops reported that the desilting programme had been delayed and will continue in the autumn, with new Notices of Entry being issued accordingly.</p> <p>5.4. Item 16.1 <i>Bleadon sluice</i>: The Clerk reported he had written to Bristol Water and Environment Agency. The legal dispute has not been resolved as to whom was responsible for the works.</p> <p><u>Review of Actions</u></p> <p>Action AB/20180624-01: Clerk to produce a Report to identify annual works and expenditure for consideration at a future meeting: The Clerk reported this was aligned with the Strategic Review of Plant, Machinery & Manpower and that the Task & Finish Group had been delayed due to Covid-19.</p> <p>Action AB/20180731-01: Members to be advised of the Meeting ref Dog Leg Ditch once known: Dir Ops and Chairman reported this item as a long-standing issue and remained ongoing despite efforts to initiate the Meeting and agreed to maintain the Action as ongoing for tracking purposes. The Chairman requested efforts continue to arrange a Meeting.</p> <p>Action AB/20190425-02: Dir Ops to review Favourable Conditions Project materials with Mr R Adlam, to ensure compliance with project specifications: Dir Ops reported this Action as ongoing, requiring a Site visit to review specific items of concern.</p> | <p>Action AB/20180624-01: Ongoing</p> <p>Action AB/20180731-01: Ongoing</p> <p>Action AB/20190425-02: Ongoing</p> |
| <p>6. Governance Updates</p> | <p><u>Enforcement Action</u></p> <p>6.1. The Clerk reported that the planned engineering works at Pint Pot Cottage to stabilise the banks prior to issuing a Notice of Entry to conduct planned maintenance activities of the Viewed Rhyne would commence within the next 2 weeks.</p> <p>6.2. The Clerk provided an update to the current Prosecution Action being taken against a home owner in</p> | |

Grange Paddocks, Mark, for blatant breach of Byelaw 17 (Failure to obtain LDC) and failure to comply with subsequent direction of the Board. The Clerk reported that the Board had been totally reasonable in its actions to prosecute for the offence as this was clearly in the interests of both the Board and the Public and was following clear advice from the Boards' legal services.

6.3. The Clerk further reported that the Court procedure for prosecution had been delayed to 08 Jul 20 due to Covid-19.

6.4. The Clerk brought to the Boards attention Land Drainage Consent Application No. 841 Grange Paddocks, advising that an application to erect a fence had been consented as it was set back from the watercourse, however the original works would remain unconsented.

6.5. The Clerk reported a potential breach of byelaws at Meare Road, Glastonbury. Many willow trees have been planted within 9 metres of a watercourse. An Enforcement Notice had been issued and prosecution action would be considered if not actioned. Members endorsed the intended Board action.

Enforcement Policy

6.6. The Clerk presented the SDBC Enforcement Policy, updated to align all Boards' Policy, which has resulted in no change to the Axe Brue Policy.

***Cllr M Martin proposed, seconded by Mr R Keen
"that the Axe Brue IDB endorse the (joint)
Enforcement Policy Version 1.0 dated 22 Jun 20."***

Vote: Unanimous

6.7. The Clerk presented the SDBC Procurement Policy, updated to align all Boards' Policy, which has resulted in no change to the Axe Brue Policy.

***Mr R Keen proposed, seconded by Cllr C Riches
"that the Axe Brue IDB endorse the (joint)
Procurement Policy Version 1.0 dated 22 Jun 20."***

Vote: Unanimous

6.8. The Clerk presented the SDBC (joint) Members Code of Conduct, updated to align all Boards' Code of Conduct, which has resulted in no change to the Axe Brue Code of Conduct.

RESOLUTION 1

RESOLUTION 2

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| | <p><i>Mr D Tratt proposed, seconded by Mrs W Welland “that the Axe Brue IDB endorse the (joint) Members Code of Conduct Version 1.0 dated 22 Jun 20.”</i></p> <p>Vote: Unanimous</p> | <p>RESOLUTION 3</p> |
| <p>7. Finance Report</p> | <p>7.1. Director of Finance, as the Responsible Finance Office (RFO), confirmed that the quarterly accounts reconciliation was continuing, however, due to Covid-19 restrictions, had not been signed by a Board Member.</p> <p>7.2. The RFO reported the Bank Account status at 22 Jun 20 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current account = £33.5k • Deposit account = £1.23m <p><u>End of Year Report 2019/2020</u></p> <p>7.3. SDBC Accounts: RFO, provided an overview of the End of Year Report with the following points of note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year-End SDBC surplus had been divided between Axe Brue, Parrett and North Somerset Levels in accordance with the Consortium Agreement share to enable a zero balance; Axe Brue £26k. • Expenditure variance was primarily due to vacancies in SDBC Staffing. • I&E Report and Notes to Accounts were accepted ‘as read’. <p>7.4. Axe Brue Accounts: The RFO provided an overview of the Balance Sheet with the following point of note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I&E Report: deficit £41k. • Income variance due to Grant in Aid, additional interest, commuted sums and SDBC income. • Expenditure variance due to less maintenance and Board schemes with funds raised in previous years. • I&E Report and Notes to Accounts were accepted ‘as read’. <p>7.5. Internal Audit has been completed by South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) who provided substantial assurance that all necessary controls were in place and working.</p> <p>Members endorsed the annual accounts as submitted.</p> | |

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| | <p>7.6. Section 1 Annual Governance Statements 2019/20 The Board acknowledged their responsibility for ensuring that there was a sound system of internal controls in-place, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements and answered ‘Yes’ to the eight Accounting Statements at Section 1 of the AGAR.</p> <p><i>Cllr W Human proposed, seconded by Mr J Fear “to approve the eight Accountability Statements within Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20.”</i></p> <p>Vote: Unanimous</p> <p>7.7. Section 2 Accounting Statements The RFO provided an overview of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 to ensure Member understanding.</p> <p><i>Mr J Fear proposed, seconded by Mr D Tratt “to approve of Section 2 of the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20.”</i></p> <p>Vote: Unanimous</p> | <p>RESOLUTION 4</p> <p>RESOLUTION 5</p> |
| 8. Operations & Maintenance | <p>8.1. Director of Operations (Dir Ops) asked for the Engineering & Operational Report to be taken as read.</p> <p>Questions and points of note as follows:</p> <p>8.2. Bargeman’s Cabbage: the three year trial of sensitive and targeted control had been successful. It was agreed that advice could be provided to landowners to help prevent/control the issue.</p> <p>8.3. Mr M Wall expressed concern on the current de-silting works within the Greenway & Cote Rhyne area considering it to be dredging and too severe. Dir Ops reported that the works undertaken were to improve conveyance and provide benefit to the whole system. Full reinstatement works were still to be conducted.</p> <p><i>Cllr C Riches proposed, seconded by Mr B Clapp that a Site Visit is held at Greenway & Cote Rhyne to observe the de-silting and spoil deposits and report back to the Full Board.</i></p> <p>Vote: unanimous</p> | RESOLUTION 6 |

New Action AB/20220622-01: Dir Ops took an Action to convene a site Meeting at Greenway & Cote Rhyne to discuss recent de-silting and spoil deposits and to report back to the Full Board.

**New Action:
AB/20200622-01:
Dir Ops**

8.4. Mrs W Welland enquired about the Animal Farm Family Theme Park that was reported as continuing with unconsented works. Dir Ops reported that Officers were attempting to work with the site owner to resolve the issue. The Development Control Officer reported that the works were being monitored closely. A further site visit was required to understand the Land Drainage Consent proposal.

8.5. Mr B Clapp enquired about Tootle Bridge. Dir Ops reported that a survey funded by the SRA identified that a scheme to increase the flow under the bridge may increase conveyance upstream but there would be little or no benefit to downstream properties. The Clerk commented that the Main River was the responsibility of the EA

8.6. Mr R Adlam enquired about the Brue Dredge project. Dir Ops reported that the SRA had local partnership funding, which would prevent risk to the Board, and it was intended to make progress this year. Dir Ops reminded Members that the Board had no powers to undertake this work on main river.

New Action AB/20220622-02: Dir Ops took an Action to provide a Brue Dredge progress report to enable discussion out of Meeting.

**New Action:
AB/20200622-02:
Dir Ops**

8.7. Cllr C Riches opined excellent work had been undertaken on invasive species, particularly in the production of the reports and educational process.

8.8. Mr R Keen enquired if the Rhyne slippage at Brue Farm, Highbridge, would need stabilising or become Board responsibility. Dev Control Officer (DCO) reported the works had been undertaken by the site contractor who would conduct remedial works. The Board has been involved but, as yet, there was no long term agreement of the Board to adopt the responsibility for maintenance of the Rhyne.

8.9. The Board was advised that the applicant of Land Drainage Consent No: 846 considered the Board had been unreasonably harsh in asking him to provide an ecological survey. DCO reported that extensive culverting was proposed, therefore, as standard

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| | <p>procedure, the applicant would need to prove there was no detriment to land or the environment due to the length and size of culvert proposed.</p> | |
| <p>9. Risk Review</p> | <p>9.1. The Clerk had distributed the updated Risk Register Dashboard with the Calling notice and took members through the Top 10 Risks.</p> <p>9.2. The Clerk reported the Board had £230k 'free' Reserves which he considered to be a relatively comfortable position at present in relation to the current Risks being carried.</p> <p>9.3. Mr B Clapp enquired about the ongoing necessity of Bradbury House as all Staff have been working remotely during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Clerk commented that lessons should be identified in due course and this issue should be a consideration of future working of the Board.</p> <p>9.4. Mr B Clapp recommended an Apprentice be appointed to Mr A Dowden to enable successful succession. The Clerk reported that resilience and succession planning forms part of the Strategic Review. The three Boards had been supportive of forward planning by enabling establishment of the two current Water Environment Worker Apprentices.</p> <p>9.5. Dir Fin provided a breakdown of SDBC accounts 'on costs', reporting that this included Employers National Insurance, Employers Pension, gross salary, overtime, leave trading and Statutory Sick Pay.</p> <p>9.6. Mr R Keen expressed concern that a smaller office would require Meetings to continue on-line, which may result in limited attendance. The Clerk reported that the non-attendance at this Meeting is similar to the last Full Board Meeting conducted at the office, so did not consider technology to be a defining matter of concern.</p> <p>9.10. Mrs W Welland requested a detailed remittance advice to be provided with Board Member travel allowance payments.</p> <p>New Action AB/20220622-03: Dir Fin took an Action to provide detailed remittance advice notes for Board Member travel allowance settlements.</p> <p>9.11. Mr R Adlam announced the pending retirement of Mr M Snook, who had worked as an Expenditor to the Parrett Board since Jul 2000. The Chairman, reiterated</p> | <p>New Action: AB/20200622-03: Dir Fin</p> |

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| | <p>by Members, expressed many the thanks for the years of dedication to the Consortium and the Parrett Board and wished Mr Snook best wishes for the future.</p> <p>9.12. Mr R Adlam further announced the retirement of Mr V Fursland, who had worked as an Asset Inspector to the Boards from 2016. Mr Fursland was thanked for his instrumental asset inspection work which would leave the Board in a much better position regarding asset management.</p> | |
| 10. Any Other Business | No other business was reported. | |
| 11. Date of Next Meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Board: 16 Oct 2020 @1030 <p>There being no other business, the Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their attendance, and the Meeting was closed at 1240.</p> | |

Annex:

A. Axe Brue Board – Table of Outstanding Actions

CHAIR.....DATE

**ANNEX A TO
AXE BRUE BOARD MINUTES
DATED 22 JUN 2020**

AXE BRUE BOARD – TABLE OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

| Action Number: | Action: | Actionee: |
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| AB/20180624-01 | To produce a Report to identify annual works and expenditure for consideration at a future meeting. | Clerk |
| AB/20180731-01 | Members to be advised of the Meeting ref Dog Leg Ditch once known. | Clerk |
| AB/20190425-02 | To review Favourable Conditions Project materials with Mr R Adlam, to ensure compliance with project specifications. | Dir Ops |
| AB/20220622-01 | To convene a site Meeting at Greenway & Cote Rhyne to discuss recent de-silting and spoil deposits and to report back to the Full Board. | Dir Ops |
| AB/20220622-02 | To provide Brue Dredge progress report to enable discussion out of Meeting. | Dir Ops |
| AB/20220622-03 | To provide detailed remittance advice notes for Board Member travel allowance settlements. | Dir Fin |