

## MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY AXE BRUE FULL BOARD MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM ON 02 NOV 2020

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

<b>Agenda Item:</b>	<b>Detail:</b>	<b>Action:</b>
1. Attendance and Apologies	<p>1.1. Apologies as per the above Attendance List.</p> <p>1.2. Cllr L Scott reported that some Appointed Members had not received Calling notices; could Democratic Services be added to the mailing list?</p> <p>New Action AB/20201102-01: Assistant Clerk took an Action to include <b>SDC Democratic Services to the Axe Brue IDB Calling Notice mailing list.</b></p> <p>1.3. In the absence of a Chairman, Cllr A Gilling, Vice Chair, with agreement of the Meeting took the Chair.</p> <p>1.4. He reported in the absence of the CEO/Clerk, that Mr I Sturdy would act as Deputy CEO and Mrs C-A Morgan would act as Deputy Clerk.</p>	<b>New Action: AB/20201102-01: Clerk</b>
2. Declarations of Interest	2.1. Mr M Watts – supplier of materials to Board approved Contractors.	

<p>3. Strategic Review of Plant, Machinery and Manpower</p>	<p>3.1. The Vice Chair reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Axe Brue, Parrett &amp; NSLIDB T&amp;F Groups had met on 29, 30, 31 July respectively.</li> <li>• 3 x Chairmen had sat on 6 Aug to discuss outcomes.</li> <li>• Revised Strategic Review Paper reflecting T&amp;F Group agreements sent to all T&amp;F Group Members 30 Sep 20 for endorsement.</li> <li>• Strategic Review of Plant, Machinery &amp; Manpower sent in hard-copy to all Axe Brue, Parrett and NSLIDB Board Members for review and deliberation.</li> <li>• The three Task &amp; Finish Groups recommend Option 3 for Board endorsement.</li> </ul> <p>Questions and points of note as follows:</p> <p>3.2. Mr M Watts disagreed with costs relating to Mr M Andrews as he felt Mr Andrews was paid an equal monthly salary despite his work pattern i.e. routine maintenance, handwork or desilting.</p> <p>It was confirmed that it was intended that Mr Andrews would become a shared resource of the Consortium thereby reducing direct cost to Axe Brue. The Parrett and North Somerset Levels Field Staff would also become a shared resource.</p> <p>3.3. Rates had been assisted by Board Reserves to keep the annual rate artificially low. The current year had been set to not use Board reserves.</p> <p>3.4. Mr A Franks expressed concern that the Axe Brue machinery would be disposed of prior to tenders for out-sourced routine maintenance.</p> <p>Mr Franks was assured that the machinery would not be sold in this financial year, and that all contracts would need to be out-sourced to enable the sale to proceed after Apr 2021.</p> <p>3.5. Mr J Fear requested the Board to consider retaining the John Deere and herder for emergency works.</p> <p>Director of Finance, as the Responsible Finance Office (RFO), confirmed that out-source Contractor costs were fully inclusive, whereas the in-house cost includes salary, pension and all machinery costs. Therefore going out-</p>	
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sourced would provide savings to the Board immediately and long term.

Members were reminded that the Parrett and North Somerset Boards were already fully out-sourced and maintenance standards were very high.

Director of Ops (Dir Ops) reported that commercial operations would provide a high standard and be let on 3 or 5 year contracts, which would be monitored by Rhyne Supervisors/Expenditors. Commercial operations would provide a reduction in risk and improvement in service.

3.6. Cllr C Riches expressed concern for emergency cover, stating however, the process in NSLIDB appears to work adequately.

Dir Ops reported that one of the main risks identified by the Review was resilience of Staff. This Option would enable pooling Staff to reduce that risk. All Boards currently relied upon Contractors for mobilisation of machinery and all contracts already included call-out and stand-by rates.

3.7. Cllr L Scott expressed concern for possible under-resourcing in an emergency situation.

Dir Ops reported that, currently, the Board operate in a parochial manner, however deploying people would be necessary in an emergency situation which Option 3 would make possible.

3.8. The Vice Chair requested ***endorsement of Strategic Review of Plant, Machinery and Manpower Option 3 'Immediate' recommendations:***

- ***Move to a fully outsourced maintenance and total engineering works delivery across all Boards of the Consortium***
- ***The conduct of all in-house channel maintenance for the Axe Brue Board for FY2021/2022 onwards if out to tender***
- ***Those Staff specifically required to require access to a 4WD capability are identified within the individual Staff Terms of References (Recommendation 1)***
- ***The current Trial of offering a 4WD Allowance is withdrawn except for those Staff already receiving the Allowance (Recommendation 2)***

- ***The role of Assistant Clerk is retitled to 'Deputy Clerk' (Recommendation 3)***
- ***A new position is established of 'Consent Officer' (Recommendation 4)***
- ***The Consortium recruit a Technical Apprentice to undertake the role of 'Consent Officer', under direction of the DCO, and as the DCO successor in due course through succession planning (Recommendation 5)***
- ***Provision of Development Control IT Application is investigated (Recommendation 6)***
- ***The current NSLIDB Engineer (South) is relocated to Bradbury House Main Offices (Recommendation 8)***
- ***The Senior Engineer position is deleted from the SDBC Organisation Structure (Recommendation 7)***
- ***Option 3 of the Manpower Review is implemented to move to a Contract Manager and single Area (Operations) Manager construct***
- ***A succession Plan is further developed by the CEO to identify specific posts at Risk of being gapped and provide an early route for mitigation by internal recruiting (Recommendation 10)***
- ***The current Axe Brue Area Consultant is retitled 'Operations Consultant' and the contract reviewed in order to provide a source of advice and support to the Chief Executive across all Board Districts (Recommendation 12)***
- ***The Lower Area Brue Area Manger takes on responsibility as the Axe Brue Area Manger with support from the Operations Consultant, and with it in the short-term, taking on Line Management of the Axe Brue Machine Operator (Recommendation 11)***
- ***The Salaries Committee review all Expenditor Salaries with an aim of alignment against the Somerset County Council Pay Scales as from Apr 2021 (Recommendation 14).***

Vote: 13 In Favour; 3 Against; 0 Abstain  
Motion Carried

**RESOLUTION 1**

3.9. The Vice Chair requested **endorsement of Strategic Review of Plant, Machinery and Manpower Option 3 'By Apr 2021' recommendations:**

- ***In order to provide increased resilience and alignment of duties, the Expenditor and Rhyne Supervisor workforce be 'pooled' and TUPE'd under the Axe Brue Consortium Workforce as a single Expenditor/Rhyne Supervisor workforce, but routinely allocated/tasked to a dedicated Board area (Recommendation 13)***
- ***The SDBC Salaries Committee review all Expenditor Salaries with an aim of alignment against the Somerset County Council Pay Scales (Recommendation 14)***
- ***The SDBC Salaries Committee review all SDBC Posts against SCC Grades and Scale Points and capture within each Terms of Reference (Recommendation 15)***
- ***For FY2021/2022 onwards, all in-house channel maintenance within the Axe Brue Board is put out to Contract***
- ***The current Axe Brue Tractor Unit is sold after Apr 2021 and all funds recouped by the Axe Brue Board***
- ***The Axe Brue Operator takes on the role of Expenditor as from Apr 2021 with development and training support of the Operations Consultant***

Vote: 12 In Favour; 0 Against; 4 Abstain  
Motion Carried

3.10. The Vice Chair requested endorsement of Strategic Review of Plant, Machinery and Manpower Option 3 Apr 2022 recommendation:

- ***A review is conducted to investigate the appetite and identify any benefits potential of amalgamation of all Boards of the Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium under a single Somerset Board covering the Axe, Brue, Parrett and North Somerset Levels districts (Recommendation 16).***

Vote: 13 In Favour; 0 Against; 3 Abstain  
Motion Carried

**RESOLUTION 2**

**RESOLUTION 3**

<p>4. Any Other Business</p>	<p>4.1. The Vice Chair reported that an Extraordinary Meeting of the Axe Brue Board held on 30 Oct 20, by majority vote found Mr Adlam had breached the Members Code of Conduct.</p> <p>On 01 Nov 20 Mr R Adlam resigned from the Board with immediate effect.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Vice Chair would preside over Meetings until the next scheduled Meeting of the Axe Brue Board at which time nominations for Chair would be called.</p> <p>The Board expressed gratitude to Mr Adlam for his 22 years of service with the Upper Brue and Axe Brue Boards following amalgamation of the four Upper and Lower Boards in 2012.</p> <p>4.2. Mr J Fear asked what the current situation was with the Boards Offices should a second national lockdown be announced.</p> <p>Dir Ops reported that the Management Team would discuss the matter with the three Chairmen and agree appropriate action.</p> <p>There being no other business, the Vice Chair thanked Members and Officers for their attendance and the Meeting was closed at 1225.</p>	
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Annex:

A. Axe Brue Board – Table of Outstanding Actions

CHAIR.....DATE .....

**ANNEX A TO  
AXE BRUE BOARD MINUTES  
DATED 02 NOV 2020**

**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.	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/20201016-01	To meet with Cllrs A Gilling and M Martin to understand Section 106 Notices and raise an extraordinary full Board Meeting if necessary.	Clerk
AB/20201016-02	To re-issue the Register of Members Interests for signature to those Members not held – return within 28 days.	Clerk
AB/20201016-03	To formally write to Mendip and Sedgemoor District Councils to express concern for Member non-attendance at Board Meetings.	Clerk
AB/20201016-04	To provide options for recovery of outstanding rates for persistent non-payers additional to Liability Orders secured at Magistrates' Court.	Clerk and Asst Clerk
AB/20201016-05	To convene an urgent site Meeting at Lewis Drove for all Members and convene an emergent full Board Meeting to enable an informed decision of necessary works.	Dir Ops
AB/20201102-01	To include SDC Democratic Services to the Axe Brue IDB Calling Notice mailing list.	Assistant Clerk