

MINUTES OF THE AXE BRUE FINANCE AND WORKS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT BRADBURY HOUSE ON 12 JUNE 2023

Attendance:			
Elected Members: Mr J Fear (C) Mrs L Scott Mr D Tratt Mr M Watts	Appointed Members: Cllr R Keen Mr C Riches	Officers: Mrs M Hammond Mr I Sturdy Mr M Wall Mrs K Kingston	Public:
Apologies:			
Non-Attendance:			
Mr A Gilling	Cllr M Murphy (Not Currently available for Board Business)		

Agenda Item:	Detail:	Action:
1. Attendance and Apologies	1.1. Apologies as per the above Attendance List.	
2. Items Additional to the Agenda	2.1. Iain Sturdy – Engineering services to be discussed under any other business	
3. Declarations of Interest	3.1. None	
4. Minutes of the Axe Brue F&W Meeting held on 16 Jan 2023 and 30 March 2023 (Enclosure 1)	16 Jan 2023 - Signed as a true record of the meeting held. Roger Keen abstained from the vote as he had not attended the meeting. All in favour except Roger Keen who was not in attendance. 30 March 2023 signed as a true record of the meeting held. All in favour	
5. Matters Arising	5.1 Roger Keen asked that his apologies are added to the attendance sheet 5.2 Martin Watts wished to discuss structures and added that he had an issue the previous Friday evening when a particular structure had been let down resulting in the death of one of his heifers. IDS will investigate.	

Each Board is a statutory public body with responsibilities for flood protection, land drainage and the environment.
All are members of the Association of Drainage Authorities.

	<p>Ongoing actions</p> <p>AB/20230116-01 Investments – a meeting had been held which went very well. Maggie Hammond will be finalising details shortly.</p> <p>AB/20210614-01 -- To investigate County Court Small Claims with ADA Policy & Finance Committee and report back to the Boards - no progress at present, David Tratt mentioned that the current system copes with most issues</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>6.Finance Report</p>	<p>Quarterly Reconciliation of Bank Statements – Will Human is no longer appointed to the board which means a new member is needed to countersign the bank statement reconciliations as a correct record. Charlie Riches volunteered.</p> <p>Proposed: Martin Watts, seconded: David Tratt “that Charlie Rich carries out quarterly checks and couter-signs the bank statements as a true record” All in favour</p> <p>Item 2 from report £2900 has been recovered through the courts over a period of time for a breach of byelaws.</p> <p>The outstanding Drainage Rate Position: £105,000 has been paid since demands went out on 15th May. MH confirmed that arrears listed are from previous years.</p> <p>In response to Mr Watts query Maggie Hammond confirmed that the 1st installment from the Local Authority had been paid</p> <p>End of year financial accounts 2022/23 and AGAR Report (Enclosure 4)</p> <p>Regarding the Accounts, the internal audit report was shared and referred to as Maggie Hammond guided members through the AGAR report.</p> <p>Maggie Hammond asked members to consider the questions on the AGAR report parts 1 – All questions were answered yes.</p> <p>Proposed: Charlie Riches, “that the Finance & Works committee recommend to the full board to answer yes to all the audit questions” All in favour</p> <p>MH moved on to part 2 of the AGAR</p>	<p>RESOLUTION 1</p> <p>RESOLUTION 2</p>

	<p>MH reported SDBC underspend of £266K due to staff vacancies, this surplus has been shared across the three boards based on the consortium agreement..</p> <p>It was clarified that Sundry Income Holiday Purchase was where a member of staff had been given permission to buy additional leave.</p> <p>MH reported AB had a surplus of £238K, broken down into income over-achieved by £24K and expenditure underspent by £225K.</p> <p>MH explained each figure on the Annual Governance Statement (section 2)</p> <p>C Riches enquired how recent the last valuation of Bradbury House was. MH advised that it has not been revalued since purchase.</p> <p>In response to a query from the Chairman, Maggie Hammond confirmed that the figures had been reviewed by the internal auditor.</p> <p>Proposed: D Tratt, seconded: R Keen “To recommend approval of the accounts to the full Board” All in favour</p> <p>Following the meeting of the cross Board Investment Sub Committee, SDBC are addressing some concerns from a Board member from one of the other Boards, once this is complete, a revised Policy will be drawn up for the Boards to consider.</p>	RESOLUTION 3
<p>7. Any Other Business</p>	<p>I Sturdy gave the back ground to difficulties recruiting engineering staff.</p> <p>He reported that M Young has been appointed temporarily to fill the Consents/Enforcement Officer role through a recruitment agency.</p> <p>Following an expression of interest, a proposal for the supply of engineering services has been received from Calm Engineering for up to 6 engineers, up to 22 hours per week at acceptable hourly rates and under and NEC form of Contract</p>	

	<p>It has been requested that the NEC contract should go before the Chairmen next week. Funding for these services will come from the unused salaries budget due to vacancies. Recruitment process will continue for current vacancies.</p> <p>M Hammond advised that additional spend on external workforce may result in a Consortium overspend which would need to be be paid from Board reserves.</p> <p>C Riches asked if these external staff will be expected to comply with Board policies and code of conduct. I Sturdy replied that it will be incumbent on whoever supervises the agency staff to ensure that Board policies and codes of conduct are adhered to.</p> <p>J Fear observed that there had been difficulties in the past in using outside agencies on a Favourable Conditions project, but these were contractors rather than engineering services. I Sturdy commented that that this was more akin to an extended staff resource and these were experienced people .</p> <p>In response to a query fom David Tratt, M Hammond advised that the staffing costs for engineering projects would be charged as an overall consortium cost shared across the three Boards (as it is with existing staff) whilst the engineering work itself would be charged individually to Boards as they have been budgeted for in their individual programmes.</p> <p>Timesheets will be used to record staff costs.</p> <p>Proposed: C Rich, seconded: D Tratt “To recommend to the full Boards to engage Calm Engineering for engineering services as required” All in favour</p> <p>In response to a query from Martin Watts, M Hammond to check spend figure on board schemes as the reserve position shown did not agree to the accounts..</p> <p>In response to a query from Charlie Riches, there was some discussion regarding the availability and recruitment and retention of graduates/ qualified staff and the difficulties surrounding this. I Sturdy explained the Boards previous efforts in this regard which had been successful until the staff involved had been attracted to work for consultants</p> <p>Some discussion took place about the EA foundation degree which may be a suitable approach in future.</p>	<p>RESOLUTION 4</p> <p>ACTION AB/20230612-01</p>
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	M Watts pointed out that the Chairman's salary should be reviewed. M Hammond said this can be looked into and will need to go before DEFRA. This would be investigated .	ACTION AB/20230612-02
8. Date of next Meeting	Not discussed	

Annex:

A. Axe Brue F&W Meeting – Table of Outstanding Actions

CHAIRMAN.....DATE

**ANNEX A TO
AXE BRUE F&W COMMITTEE MINUTES
DATED 12 JUNE 2023**

AXE BRUE F&W MEETING – TABLE OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Action Number:	Action:	Actionee:
AB/20230116-01	Investments – a meeting had been held. Maggie Hammond will be finalising proposals shortly.	MH ONGOING
AB/20210614-01	To investigate County Court Small Claims with ADA Policy & Finance Committee and report back to the Boards - no progress at present.	MH ONGOING
AB/20230612-01	To check the spend on Board schemes in 2022/23	MH
AB/20230612-02	To investigate the chairman's allowance	MH