

Minutes of the Employment and Machinery Committee of the Parrett Drainage Board held on Tuesday 24 February 2015 at Bradbury House, 33-34 Market Street, Highbridge, Somerset TA9 3BW at 2.15pm
Chairman: Brian Rowe

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting.

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| 1 | Attendance and Apologies: as register appended | Action |
| 2 | Items additional to the agenda: None | |
| 3 | Declarations of interest: None at this time. Tony Bradford (TB) queried a form he had received regarding his declaration of interest. A discussion followed regarding members involvement in the SRA and that deputies should also submit their Declarations of Interests forms. | |
| 4 | Minutes of E&M Sub-Committee meeting 23 September 2014: (appended) having been previously circulated and with 2 minor amendments in 8.4 – the word “tacking” should read “tracking” and in 9 the word should be “supplied” not “fitted” the minutes were signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the meeting held. All in favour. | |
| 5 | Matters arising: Item 5 Minehead investigations – N Stevens (NWS) advised that he had again contacted West Somerset District Council relating to providing services to undertake works on attenuation ponds and rhyes but was informed that no decision has been reached. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact WSDC for a further response and copy any correspondence to Brenda Maitland-Walker. | NWS |
| | Water Level Management Plan Committee – Some members expressed their concern about the operation of the current WLMPs and enquired about a requested meeting with Natural England (NE). The Clerk informed members that a list of problem areas was being prepared for forwarding to NE after which time a meeting would be convened. Nick Stevens (NWS) asked members to contact Phil Brewin with regard to any areas with water level problems as well as the need for reconvening the committee. | PAB |
| | Somerset Rivers Board (SRB) – a long discussion took place where members expressed concern for the time spent on SRB work by senior officers and wanted reassurance that staff costs will be recharged to the SRA. Proposed: Tony Bradford, Seconded: Colin Passmore “that the finance and engineering work required by the drainage board is safeguarded”. All in favour. | RES 1 |
| | RESOLVED 1 | |
| | Slabgate Sluice - NWS reported that the court case had been dropped as a result of a police evidence problem. | |
| 6 | Health and Safety monitoring Report: - No accidents or incidents to report | |
| 7 | Expenditor’s channel maintenance update and diesel prices (by exception): (appended) P Ham (PSH) gave an overview of the report. He also circulated a report showing the catchment totals and vehicle data together with a draft revised programme of works. (appended). Members agreed that a £10k contribution would be made towards the Chadmead scheme. Malcolm Young (MY) raised concerns regarding the hours spent in the Bower Lane area. TB reported that ditches in the Moorland area were in need of cleaning and asked if this could be carried out as part of the IDB maintenance work. Colin Passmore (CP) suggested it was carried out as part of the flood alleviation scheme. Stephen Gee (SG) advised that similar work to this had been carried out by the board but the landowner in question had been invoiced for the cost. David Spicer (DS) suggested that Phil Ham and he drive round the area to see what is required. Diesel prices – PH had tried to contact a broker with a view to sourcing the best prices but was unable to make any contact. He has been obtaining quotes and at the present time fuel is being supplied by Watsons. | PSH/
DS |
| 8 | Staffing including Terms and Conditions: Mike Phillips retired at the end of December 2014 but is still assisting Nick Lockyer occasionally. NWS advised that the Agricultural Wages Board had been abolished and the IDB would now need to implement and manage their own terms and conditions. He asked members whether they wanted the date of the wages review to be in line with the Consortium which takes place in March or to continue with the October date. Members decided to keep to October.
Lone Working – In his report PH had given details of the Skyguard MySOS device and recommended that the Board purchases a number of these. | |

