

**Minutes of the Parrett Board Meeting held at Bradbury House, 33-34 Market Street, Highbridge on Tuesday 07 February 2017 at 2.15 pm.** **Chairman: Mr P Maltby**

1	<b>Attendance &amp; Apologies for Absence:</b> as per register appended.	Action
2	<b>Items Additional to the Agenda:</b> N Stevens (NWS) – Henley & Etsome sluices.	
3	<b>Declarations of interest:</b> Cllr A Gilling for any matters concerning planning and Ashfords Solicitors. Members were asked to declare matters of interest as necessary as the meeting progressed.	
4	<b>Opportunity for members of the public to address the Board meeting:</b> No public present.	
5	<b>Consider budget and rate setting for 2017/18:</b> (appended enc 1) S Gee (SMG) briefed members on the explanatory notes for the budget and rate setting recommendation as amended following the Policy, Finance & Governance meeting of 17 January 2017. Members expressed concern at the low level of Board reserves with consideration to any outstanding emergency repair works. Members were advised that emergency works undertaken at Pawlett Hams to enable a summer feed were unsuccessful. Topographical survey, geographical information and design is currently being undertaken with a target of having a new supply by early summer. It should be noted that this work has to be undertaken in conjunction with EA bank slip repair works. This is proving to be difficult. C Passmore (CP) advised that Pawlett Hams had been discussed in depth at the Policy, Finance & Governance meetings, as well as a Minehead project which could have escalating costs. I Sturdy (IDS) advised that works at Minehead are not emergency works; funds were raised over two years for works to be undertaken with partner organisations when their funds can be committed; some investigation and modelling has been undertaken at modest cost and will be funded from the £75k which is currently held in reserves. T Bradford (TB) advised that a sub-committee has been formed which should be made aware of costs at all stages. SMG advised that at the P, F&G meeting a recommendation was made to increase the penny rate by 1%. J Lang (JL) opined that there should be no increase to the rate to prevent an increase in Special Levy. <b>Proposed C Passmore, Seconded D Spicer ‘that the Parrett IDB approves the 2017/18 budget as submitted and set a rate of 6.513p in the £ for 2017/18 to raise a total Agricultural Rate of £148,322.62 and Special Levy of £745,844.15’.</b>  <b>Amendment:</b> <b>Proposed J Lang, Seconded Cllr I Dyer ‘that the Parrett IDB approves the 2017/18 budget as submitted and set a rate of 6.449p in the £ for 2017/18 to raise a total Agricultural Rate of £146,916.01 and Special Levy of £725,391.27’.</b>  <b>Vote on amendment: 7 For, 17 Against – motion not carried</b>  <b>Vote on initial proposal: 20 For, 7 Against (including J Lang) – motion carried</b> <b>RESOLUTION 1</b> TB opined that the Board should have a five year rate setting plan in liaison with local authorities so that the reserves can be built up. The Chairman recommended that this task be undertaken by P, F&G.	RES 1
6	<b>Engineering Report:</b> <b>Maintenance Works:</b> (appended enc 2) P Ham (PSH) provided a brief overview of the maintenance report with the following points of note: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Water Safety Training Part II is planned and will include awareness of Weill’s disease – date and venue to be confirmed</li><li>• The Chairman stated that he was impressed with the work of the Expenditors and expressed gratitude for the work on the ground and public relations; members concurred</li><li>• A request was made for the Expenditors to attend either future Full Board or Works Committee meetings to give a brief presentation of the works and challenges to their</li></ul>	PF&G

individual areas. B Bryer opined that Board members should routinely keep in touch with the Expenditors at all times, therefore attendance at a meeting may not necessary. The Clerk advised that attendance at Works Committee may be appropriate from time to time however detailed information from an Expenditor would not be required at a full Board meeting.

- Cllr Gilling advised that he is attempting to arrange a local authority member's induction of IDBs with presentations from SDBC and ADA to take place prior to a full SDC council meeting.

The report was accepted.

**Improvement Works Programme:** (appended enc 3) the report was taken as read. Of particular note was the request from Officers that the list of schemes in Section 2.2 should be removed from the programme and funds returned to reserves. Additional points included:

- Long Load Flood Bank: after 2013/14 floods it was considered that the Board could promote a cost effective scheme, however a bund across the flood plain would create an increase to upstream flood risk and should not be taken forward
- JL opined the actual cost of Pawlett Hams proposed works should be provided if the project is due to be completed in the near future
- Removing schemes in section 2.2 would allow funds to be re-directed to the Pawlett Hams project.

**Proposed D Spicer, Seconded M Winslade 'that schemes in Section 2.2 should be removed from the programme and that funding previously raised for projects at Compton Dundon, Wembdon Church Road, Wembdon Rise, Perrymoor Bank Repairs, B&T Canal Connection, Long Load Flood Bank, Chadmead Culverts and Knapp Drove Bridge are released to assist the Pawlett Hams repair project.'** **Vote: unanimous RESOLUTION 2**

**2.3 Health & Safety Projects:** CP asked: once H&S projects are completed will the Engineers working on these schemes end their contracts?

- IDS recommended to continue raising funds for on-going H&S appraisals and works, therefore Engineers should be retained. Historically H&S projects recovered 45% Grant in Aid (GIA) however this is no longer available.
- The Chairman stressed that H&S standards should not be permitted to slip.
- CP requested IDS to present a paper of future H&S requirements to a P, F&G meeting.

**2.4 Telemetry:** P Brewin (PAB) advised that all sites are working, however a few sites require upgrade to improve reliability and that he would like to extend the network to include sites at Stockland which should be funded from an Environment Agency contribution. IDS recommended to retain the current telemetry budget of £15k, for works to be completed in the next financial year.

**A38 Culvert Repairs Admirals Landing, Dunball:** IDS advised that this was undertaken as emergency works due the proximity of the culvert failure to the highway and the pub entrance. Negotiations with the highway authority are being undertaken to secure a financial contribution. The expected cost is £35k, however a final invoice has yet to be received.

**Nythe Drove:** members opined that diverted traffic during 2014 flood events caused the culvert to collapse and that SCC should be responsible for this highway culvert. The Board should not set a precedent on undertaking responsibility for structures and culverts unnecessarily. Members were advised that the Board is working with the SRA to assess many culverts within the Board area and a joint bid will be submitted for works to repair and improve culverts.

**3.2 SRA Enhanced Programme:** IDS advised that the programme of works has not yet been approved by the SRA Board however the policies and approach to identify and prioritize works have been accepted by the SRA Board.

**3.3 Sowy Enhanced Scheme:** TB stated that as an action from an IDB meeting the Board agreed that dredging of the River Parrett was preferred before work on the Sowy, however this has not been accepted by the SRA.

If the River Parrett was dredged, members would be happy to take the overflow via the Sowy. He will invite SRA members to attend an IDB workshop meeting to get an understanding of the Sowy system.

B Bryer (BB) expressed concern that predictions of flooding seem to be apparent, however this scheme will make the land unavailable for farming.

B Maitland-Walker (BM-W) advised that the Sowy Scheme is not an agreed scheme and that S Diacono has offered to attend an IDB meeting to address concerns of Board members;

RES 2

IDS

NWS

members concurred and accepted the offer.

15.35 *R Horsington left the meeting*

P Brewin, Ecologist, advised that there are no environmental constraints to the on-going maintenance programme; any scheme could be managed over a number of years to mitigate the impacts.

Members were advised that the County Council has a Scrutiny of Place Panel, thereby if the Sowy work were to have unforeseen consequences they could be raised at a Scrutiny meeting.

**Proposed John Lang, Seconded Colin Passmore 'that the Somerset Rivers Authority should give serious consideration to progressing the dredging of the River Parrett between Burrowbridge and Oath Locks and endorses the Board letter of 1 December 2016.' Vote: Unanimous. RESOLUTION 3**

**Development Control:** (appended enc 4) Ref 699, Application No. 37/16/00075/DD erection of 31 acres temp poly tunnels at Folley Farm, North Petherton: J Taylor opined that the Board had submitted a good objection letter highlighting the soil erosion on-site.

The report was accepted by the meeting.

RES 3

**7 Development Control: Adoption of Standing advice from Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium to Panning authorities and developers:**

(appended enc 5) PCM advised that the latest Sedgemoor DC Local Plan shows 3,750 new houses are to be built within the Sedgemoor District Council area, of which approx. 75% will be built within the IDB district.

IDS advised that the proposed standing advice enclosed is used to state the Boards' position when responding to consultations on development control both in and out of the Board area. It sets targets and standards on the way the Board would like developments to look and be maintained to ensure that run-off rates and volumes are controlled. The paper also sets out the costs for pre-development advice. The paper was discussed at the last Policy, Finance & Governance committee at which it was recommended for approval.

Points of note from the discussion (this list is not exhaustive):

- Conditions of planning are designed to ensure drainage works on new developments are maintainable and have robust future maintenance arrangements e.g. management companies with sustainable management and funding
- SRA are funding an inspection service by the County for districts to ensure development drainage works are properly undertaken and monitored
- A member expressed some doubts over the effectiveness of the Norton Fitzwarren flood attenuation dam as impoundment is very rare and on occasion floods the lane – the site is still managed by the developer; The Chief Engineer undertook to seek clarification from the Agency on the operation and status of the dam
- The recent RFCC meeting discussed development sites
- Local authorities will be encouraged to adopt the standing advice
- The Board works well with the Lead Local Flood Authority and responds to all applications
- Pre-application advice may hold weight on Boards being awarded statutory consultee status

IDS

**Proposed T Bradford, Seconded Cllr B Maitland-Walker 'that the Parrett IDB adopts the Standing advice from the Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium to Panning authorities and developers as submitted.' Vote: unanimous RESOLUTION 4**

RES 4

**8 Consideration to formation of policy for Term of Office for Chairman of Full Board and Sub-Committees:**

NWS advised that the Board does not currently have a policy on the term of office for a Chairman. DEFRA guidelines recommend a Chairman sits no more than nine years; Parrett Standing Orders No. 6 states the term of office shall continue until the first meeting of the Board after the next election following his appointment. Parrett elections are held triennially. The Axe Brue Board policy states the term of office for a Chairman will be two full terms.

**Proposed C Passmore, Seconded T Bradford 'that the Parrett IDB forms a policy that states the Term of Office for Chairman of Full Board and Sub-Committees be two full terms with a full term being three years as set out in Standing Order No. 6.' Vote: 16 For, 2 Against, 6 Abstain – motion carried RESOLUTION 5**

**Chairman's Allowance:** PCM advised that he subsidizes the current allowance of £1,200, as £100 per month during an event such as the floods of 2013/14 or the current expectation of a Chairman is not adequate.

NWS

RES 5

It was agreed to delegate the consideration of a reasonable allowance to the Policy, Finance & Governance Committee.

TB opined that the Vice-Chairman should also receive an allowance; NWS advised that this was not permitted within the Land Drainage Act 1991, however officers would research and report to the P, F&G meeting.

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- 9 **Somerset Rivers Authority update:** (appended enc 6) **SRA Scrutiny Panel – approval of MOU/Terms of Reference and authority to sign:** having previously been circulated members considered the Scrutiny Panel to be necessary and the MoU and Constitution acceptable.

**Proposed T Bradford, Seconded C Passmore ‘that authority be awarded to the Parrett IDB Chairman to sign the SRA Scrutiny Panel Memorandum of Understanding and Constitution.’ Vote: unanimous RESOLUTION 6**

RES 6

**SRA Scrutiny Panel – nominate panel member and deputies:** Nominations were received from J Taylor, R Horsington and R Archer. No proposal was received for R Archer.

**Proposed T Bradford, Seconded J Healey ‘that Julian Taylor be appointed the Parrett IDB representative to the SRA Scrutiny Panel for 2017.’**

RES 7

**Proposed D Spicer, Seconded R Barrington ‘that Rebecca Horsington be appointed the Parrett IDB representative to the SRA Scrutiny Panel for 2017.’**

**Vote (by show of hands): Julian Taylor 20, Rebecca Horsington 3. Julian Taylor was duly appointed representative to the SRA Scrutiny Panel for 2017. RESOLUTION 7**

The Chairman called for nominations for Scrutiny panel Deputy:

**Proposed C Passmore, Seconded J Healey ‘that John Lang be appointed the Parrett IDB Deputy representative to the SRA Scrutiny Panel for 2017.’**

RES 8

**Proposed D Spicer, Seconded J Winslade ‘that Rebecca Horsington be appointed the Parrett IDB Deputy representative to the SRA Scrutiny Panel for 2017.’**

**Vote (by show of hands): John Lang 18, Rebecca Horsington 4. John Lang was duly appointed Deputy representative to the SRA Scrutiny Panel for 2017. RESOLUTION 8**

**Progress Update:** NWS advised that SRA Board meetings are scheduled to be held on 08 February and 13 March for which meeting papers are available to peruse on the SRA website.

16:30 *Cllr I Dyer and B Bryer left the meeting*

NWS continued: the meeting of 08 February has an extensive agenda which will include an update on precepting legislation, project works programme, Bridgwater Barrier, dredging strategy and MoU & Constitution of the SRA. The meeting will be held in Taunton Deane.

**Scrutiny Panel Update:** J Taylor advised that the inaugural meeting had been held on 31 January to discuss matters including a dredging strategy report, relationship with the Sowy and prioritisation of works. Scrutiny panel meetings will be held twice a year. J Taylor had been appointed Chairman of the panel for the ensuing year.

- 10 **Special Correspondence and meetings:** NWS advised that he attended a meeting of the Wessex Regional Flood & Coastal Committee at which he provided a report of all IDBs within the SWADA catchment. A vigorous debate was held on Board Governance and the size of IDB membership. D Jenkins, WRFCC Chairman was asked to discuss Board Governance with IDBs.

The Chairman brought item 13 forward on the agenda – members concurred.

13 **Any Other Business:**

- 13.1 **Henley and Etsome structures:** NWS advised that the Board had been approached by the Agency to meet again and consider proposals for these sites now the Agency had developed a preferred option. The River Cary is a man-made watercourse which suffers environmental problems resulting from water quality issues. Henley and Etsome sluices are water control structures not flood risk management structures. Local IDB members have previously been consulted on local options for the assets. Members to meet with the Agency in the future will comprise: D Vigar, B Bryer, T Bradford, P Maltby, D Spicer and Cllr N Weeks.

- 13.2 **SRA Funding:** TB advised that historically the Axe Brue and Parrett IDBs have provided a contribution of £10k to SRA funding and asked if this should be approved annually; SMG advised that this contribution had been included in the 2017/18 budget as there had been no resolution to cease the funding.

**Proposed TB, Seconded J Winslade ‘the Parrett IDB contributes £10k to SRA 2017/18 funding.’ Vote: unanimous RESOLUTION 9**

RES 9

- 13.3 **Park Brook:** J Winslade requested consideration to install a bridge over Park Brook which is a

narrow watercourse. The Chairman recommended that a Land Drainage Consent application is submitted for Board consideration.

- 13.4 **Dredging:** IDS advised that the recent dredging trials have provided greater knowledge and moved a lot of material at a reduced cost per cubic metre than previous dredging methods. Monitoring has provided evidence of how sediment is transported through the system. It was recommended to members that the SRA Board be encouraged to repeat this operation next financial year.

Monitoring work undertaken before, during and after the injection methodology will be assessed to increase our ability to manage the silt more effectively.

- 13.5 **Minutes:** draft minutes of meetings will be provided to members of individual committees accordingly, within fourteen days, when possible.

- 13.6 **Engineering Services:** Cllr N Weeks advised that South Somerset DC (SSDC) has a fully funded post for an Engineer which remains vacant. Cllr Weeks requested that the Clerk contact SSDC to discuss the option of sharing engineering services to prevent this service being unavailable. NWS advised that this matter was discussed at the SDBC Management meeting, and that there is a recruitment programme currently in place. NWS was instructed to investigate this option.

- 11 **Minutes of the Full Board Meeting held on 01 November 2016:** (appended enc 7)  
Having been previously circulated the Chairman signed the minutes as a true and correct record of the meeting held.

- 12 **Matters Arising: Item 11 Amalgamation with Axe Brue IDB:** members were advised that the Axe Brue were reluctant to consider amalgamation with the Parrett IDB, however it was agreed that the Axe Brue Chairman and Vice-Chairman would enter discussions with members of the Parrett Board.

C Passmore requested that the number of votes to instigate discussions of amalgamation is, if possible, included with the minute reference *'It was agreed by majority vote...'*

The Clerk recommended to find common ground and discuss the proposition of amalgamation with members of the Axe Brue following the SDBC Consortium meeting of 21 February 2017.

**Currymoor:** R Barrington (RB) requested the opinion of IDS to water levels in Currymoor, following a visit to the area in November 2016. IDS advised that consideration should be given to RB's opinion that water is running more quickly than historically and what, if anything can be done about it. It was agreed that this matter would be discussed out of meeting.

- 14 **Date of Next Board Meetings:**

- Works Committee: 28 February 2017
- Policy, Finance and Governance: 06 June 2017
- Full Board: 20 June 2017
- Annual Tour – date and venue to be confirmed

There being no other business the Chairman thanked members and officers for attending and closed the meeting at 17.00hrs

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CHAIRMAN

DATE

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