

Minutes of the Parrett Board Policy, Finance & Governance Sub Committee Meeting held at Bradbury House, 33-34 Market Street, Highbridge on Tuesday 19 January 2016 at 2.15 pm.

The Clerk (NWS) welcomed members to the meeting and circulated an updated agenda.

- 1 **Attendance & Apologies for Absence:** as per register appended. Tony Bradford (TB) reported that Rebecca Horsington would not be attending.
- 2 **Items Additional to the Agenda:** John Lang (JL) asked for a copy of the Agreement with Somerset County Council regarding the Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) funds. NWS would provide details to JL.
- 3 **Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman:** David Spicer (DS) was proposed by Peter Maltby (PCM) and seconded by Stuart Kingham (SK), Colin Passmore (CP) was proposed by John Lang and seconded by Tony Bradford. The nominees left the room to allow members to cast their vote. A show of hands resulted in David Spicer = 2 and Colin Passmore = 5. Colin Passmore was declared Chairman of the sub-committee. CP took the chair and thanked members for their confidence, he also thanked DS for his previous service. TB nominated DS as Vice Chairman which was seconded by Malcolm Young (MY). DS accepted. TB thanked DS for his sterling service as Chairman.
- 4 **Declarations of Interest:** none
- 5 **Minutes of the Meeting held on 01 September 2015:** Item 8 should read "Proposed Malcolm Young" not P Maltby. With this amendment duly noted the chairman signed the minutes as a true and correct record of the meeting held.
- 6 **Matters Arising:** JL asked for an update regarding the planning services. NWS explained the current situation and reported that Andy Sherwood would continue as a consultant for the present time. Recruitment to replace Mr Sherwood had not been successful. Other approaches to staffing resources were being considered as well. Apprenticeships are being taken forward in conjunction with Bridgwater College or Somerset College.
TB again expressed concern regarding the number of meetings being held – it was agreed to use the current calendar for 12 months.
Stephen Gee (SMG) updated members regarding outstanding drainage rates. At present there are still £7.5k still outstanding.
- 7 **Approval of Revised Agenda:** NWS asked for 3 additional items on the revised agenda to be considered. Members agreed the amended agenda can form the agenda for the meeting today.
- 8 **Budgets:** - appended. SMG explained the 2 versions of the draft budgets that had been provided and asked members for their recommendation to take to the full board meeting. Iain Sturdy (IDS) circulated a project list to show members the work completed and currently being undertaken as well as projects to be brought forward - appended. Members had concerns regarding the following –
 - Sedgemoor Drove culverts
 - the involvement of the SRA in the Wembdon projects
 - Chadmead phases of works
 - H&S works requirements for the Board
 - Minehead – lack of progressThe Chief Engineer dealt with the items raised and satisfied members concerns.
The items shown as yet undefined were also discussed particularly the SRA contribution. JL asked as a new member, for a short meeting to give information on the SRA and the Board's involvement. NWS/IDS agreed to set this up.
SMG circulated a report showing current reserves – appended.
IDS asked members to consider the options for the rate setting and advised the higher option would be necessary to carry out the longer list of Board projects.
Proposed: Tony Bradford, Seconded: Peter Maltby "that the committee recommend to the Full Board that the rate for 2016/17 be set at 6.449p in the £, an increase of 1.99%". 6 for, 0 against and 2 abstentions
- 9 **Policy & Strategy:** NWS introduced the updated risk assessment.
The register needs to be updated as the Boards now have the services of Habilis (Liz Bennett) who is the Boards' Health and Safety advisor.
TB requested an update on the reimbursement from the SRA of IDB costs for works undertaken for the SRA. SG reported that all funds were in order apart from the WM Longreach invoice which had only very recently been submitted.
John Lang proposed : Ian Dyer seconded : That the risk assessment be accepted as read.
- 10 **Governance: Revised Terms of Reference and Time Table of routine agenda items –** appended. NWS circulated a recently amended paper. Members agreed for document to be taken to the full board for approval. PM queried item 9 regarding the works committee – NWS to make amendment to include the Variation to Viewed Rhyne network as a Works Committee activity.

Action

NWS/
IDS

RES 1

Chris Gunn from SWAP had read through the document and was happy with the content. TB asked if the Environment Agency ceased to carry out maintenance on main rivers would they become IDB watercourses. NWS advised that only if they were "de-mained" then they would become ordinary watercourses which the Board could then 'take into view'

3.55pm Ian Dyer left the meeting

Financial Scheme of Delegation - appended. **Proposed: John Lang, Seconded: Stuart Kingham "that the updated document is approved". All in favour**

NWS also introduced a paper entitled Proposed revisions to the Scheme of Delegation. NWS explained the need to try and bring the two Consortium Boards into line and also include additional clauses where activities over recent years had identified a number of shortcomings.

Proposed: Peter Maltby, Seconded: Tony Bradford "that the amendment is agreed and is recommended to the full Board for inclusion". All in favour

Revised Financial Regulations: - appended. Having been checked by the external auditors, SMG had made the amendment and circulated the document for members to read through before the next meeting.

- 11 **Any Other Business:** SMG had been considering collecting the drainage rates by Direct Debit in future. At present the rates are collected by cheque, cash, bank transfer or credit/debit card payments. These are proving to be quite costly. If the rates were collected by Direct Debit it would save the Board money and have a more efficient use of staff time. Members asked SMG to prepare a paper giving all the information and figures for all the systems to bring to the next meeting. PM had received information regarding abstraction licences and asked if they should be on the risk register. Phil Brewin is collecting information. NWS advised that Defra had issued consultation paper and that ADA were going to respond on the matter. Members felt that the proposed charging scheme was unnecessary and should be resisted. A further discussion is required.

- 12 **Date of Next Meeting:** Full Board- Tuesday 02 February 2016
Finance & Governance – Tuesday 17 May 2016

SMG

There being no other business the Chairman thanked members and officers for attending
The meeting closed at 16.30hrs

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CHAIRMAN

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DATE