

Minutes of the SDBC Management Sub Committee Meeting held at Bradbury House, 33-34 Market Street, Highbridge on Tuesday 25 August 2015 at 10.30 am. Chairman: Mr J Fear

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman took the chair and welcomed members to the meeting.

1	Attendance & Apologies for Absence: as per register appended. Apologies P Maltby, J Lukins and E Champion; deputies J Taylor, R Adlam and P Thorne respectively.	Action
2	Items Additional to the Agenda: None. Members requested that a Committee contact list be disseminated to all members following November Full Board meetings. An Induction and familiarisation tour for appointed members is to be arranged; concern was expressed for the lack of IDB understanding of some appointed members. Concern was also expressed for the reporting procedures of appointed members to their respective councils. It was agreed that a letter from the Board should be included with meeting papers for a joint scrutiny meeting with Sedgemoor District Council (SDC).	NWS
3	Declarations of interest: None.	
4	Minutes of the Meeting held on 03 February 2015: (appended) having been previously circulated the Chairman signed the minutes as a true and correct record of the meeting held. All in favour.	
5	Matters Arising: (1) Item 5:3 Signage: I Sturdy (IDS) advised that a plaque had been erected at Thorney ring bank listing all partners involved with the works. Signs at structures are in the process of being erected. The signs will include the name of the structure and a contact telephone number, however do not state the water level. Contractor signage has not been taken forward at this time as consideration will be given to including this within the maintenance contracts, however members now feel that this is not necessary; site compounds could display a sign that the works are on behalf of the Board. (2) Item 7 Finance Report: members were advised that funds have been received for works undertaken during 2014/15. The preferred option to recover £40k backfill costs for NWS and IDS would be to invoice 1/12 per month, however there is no process or mechanism in place for this. To date the Parrett Board has £30k of work programme timesheet costs to be claimed. Members were advised that Somerset County Council (SCC) will review procurement policies, however the Board do not have one at present; procurement legislation changed in February 2015 to which the Board has sought advice to enable a policy to be prepared for adoption. Following a question of how the Boards stands if funds are not reimbursed, members were advised that Board reserves will be utilised until such time that funds are reimbursed. S Gee (SMG) assured members that reports are being submitted monthly to the Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA). Members concurred that confidence needs to be put into the Board officers to submit records appropriately, arrange a procurement policy and an adequate mechanism for reimbursement.	
	Proposed B Rowe, Seconded T Bradford ‘that the Board devises a Procurement Policy and adequate mechanism for reimbursement of funds from the Somerset Rivers Authority.’ Vote: unanimous RESOLUTION 1	RES 1
	Members concurred that contracts cannot be let after September unless a reimbursement mechanism is in place.	NWS/ SRA
	(3) Item 8 Dog Leg Ditch: management of water control structures in severe weather; consideration to implement Water Level Management Plans within working regimes have been discussed with the Environment Agency (EA), for the IDB to operate structures during extreme weather events in conjunction with the EA, to maintain seasonal levels.	
6	Chairman’s Introduction: The Chairman expressed concern at the low attendance of appointed members, however following new appointments to outside bodies, the Board has seven new appointed members. An Induction and Familiarisation day will be arranged for all appointed members.	C-AP
7	Finance Report: (appended) S Gee (SMG) briefed members on the current financial position and income and expenditure to year end: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gross salaries: additional funding is recoverable via SRA and North Somerset Levels IDB • Premises Costs: rent includes car park rental and increased cleaning costs • Sundry staff expenses has reduced as the Board no longer purchases two individual 	

annual parking tickets

RES 2

Proposed A Franks, Seconded M Winslade 'that the Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium budget 2016/17 is approved' vote: unanimous RESOLUTION 2

8 **Engineering Programme update:** IDS advised that the work programmes are discussed with members at individual Board meetings. Annual maintenance and schemes for the Axe Brue, Parrett and North Somerset Levels to include:

- Planning response service for the Axe Brue and Parrett to relevant councils
- Delivery and budgets – each scheme has an allocated Project Engineer
- Axe outfall was completed successfully and on budget
- In discussion with West Somerset Council for maintenance and surface water works; the Board is awaiting a response to a re-offer of the proposal to undertake maintenance with part-funding by the Board to assist WSC
- Axe Brue: developing Brent Street culvert scheme, Brent Knoll; secured grant funding of £50k from both SCC and Wessex Water along with Parish Council and Board funding. P Struck is designing the scheme to be implemented by December 2015 the scheme will reduce flood risk to the locality
- SRA: Engineer Rob Kidson is to invite tenders early September for 2.5km dredge over a 6wk contract. The Board objective is to return the stretch of river back to the preferred profile; to minimize disruption to the local community the majority of the contract is accessible from the right side of the bank. It was agreed that a funding mechanism is to be in place prior to awarding the contract to reduce any financial risk to the Board
- Brue de-silt: to be conducted in 2016, funded by LEP. Members expressed concern for the deferral and requested that if this is to be delayed could the EA lower water levels at the North & South Drain accordingly? IDS agreed to discuss this matter with the EA
- Tree work: a survey along the River Brue has identified areas in need of maintenance. A joint inspection is to be undertaken with the Board's Ecologist and EA, where the benefit and impact is to be assessed
- Elson's Clyce: Members were advised that the tilting weir provided good water control. The chamber has been raised to allow more effective pumping if a temporary pump is required; however there is now great capacity at Northmoor pump therefore a temporary pump should prove adequate for the area. Provision of permanent pumps is to be discussed at a future Parrett board meeting
- North Somerset Levels: G Oliver is working with operation and schemes, however development is very time consuming. Consultation has been undertaken regarding Northmoor ring bank however proposals have not been developed at this time. NSL has developed a response to the SRA 5 year plan for consideration

IDS

Parrett

9 **Staffing:** (appended) NWS advised that a temporary Planning & Technical Support Officer has been appointed on a 3 month fixed term basis (Agency) following resignation of the previous Support Officer.

Planning Officer: A Sherwood has indicated that he intends to resign his position at the end of 2015. Advertising has been posted on an internet recruitment site for a full time Planning Engineer to combine both the Planning Officer and Support Officer roles. The core staff resources table was noted by members.

Staff Audit: NWS advised that the report highlights the Boards' structure. Members expressed observations as listed below (this list is not exhaustive):

- Board structure is vaguely similar to other Boards,
- Representation (per hectare) is much better
- Appointed membership is equivalent to most
- Attendance of meetings, both elected and appointed, is far less than most Boards
- The structure of meetings needs to be re-addressed; style, frequency and/or delegated authority/power of committees/meetings

NWS advised that both Boards operate within the structure as constituted due to the size of membership.

- Meetings are not enjoyable
- Works feel distant as things can take so long to achieve
- Much work is achieved i.e. Favourable Conditions projects
- The SWAP report is comprehensive

- Clarity of the relation of staff as no hierarchy or polyarchial structure provided NWS advised that neither structure is necessary as the staff work well together and know who their Team Leader is. It is also not necessary to provide a named Deputy (for CEO or Clerk). The report was accepted by members.

13:00hrs B Rowe left the meeting with apologies to the Chairman

10 Agreement with North Somerset Levels IDB: Members were advised that the agreement with North Somerset Levels IDB was signed in February 2015 with a review meeting due after 18 months; this is to be arranged following the NSL election of November 2015. Positive feedback of engineering provision has been received from staff and members of NSL, however feedback has not been provided on the costs of the service.

The addition of a temporary Development Control Officer was with prior agreement of NSL.

11 Resourcing enforcement work: NWS advised that an enforcement training course had been undertaken with key staff, free of charge by Ashfords Solicitors. Key points:

- Staff will not undertake interviews or cautions
- Staff will undertake evidence gathering
- The Assistant Clerk will undertake evidence registration
- Enforcement Officers will assist with interviews and evidence gathering where necessary i.e. planning contrary to Board advice

Case in Point: works have been completed to install a culvert of approx. 15m. Notice was served to remove unconsented works. If, after 21 days the landowner had not been compliant, the Board can proceed with evidence gathering and enforcement procedures; Enforcement Officers could have provided assistance if the landowner was not compliant.

12 Any Other Business: (1) NWS advised that Martin Buckle is no longer employed by the SRA as his contract has terminated.

PSCA: a meeting is due to be held with the EA in September to commence discussions regarding the withdrawal of maintenance operations and setting up a PSCA with the Board.

ADA Conference: the annual ADA conference will take place on 11 November 2015 in London; invitations will be disseminated during the first week of September.

15 Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 08 December 2015 at 10.30am

C-AP

There being no other business the Chairman thanked members and officers for attending.
The meeting closed at 13.22hrs

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CHAIRMAN

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DATE