

Minutes of the Parrett Board Meeting held at Bradbury House, 33-34 Market Street, Highbridge on Tuesday 21 June 2016 at 2.15 pm. **Chairman: Mr P Maltby**

The Chairman welcomed John Swayne, John Rowlands, Rachel Burden and Peter Rossiter to the meeting. A minutes silence was requested in respect of Mrs Jean Reid who recently passed away.

1	Attendance & Apologies for Absence: as per register appended.	Action
2	Items Additional to the Agenda: None.	
3	Declarations of interest: None at this time. Members were asked to declare matters of interest as necessary as the meeting progressed.	
4	Opportunity for members of the public to address the Board meeting: No requests to address the meeting.	
5	<p>Approval of Accounts and Annual Report for Year End 31 March 2016: S Gee (SMG) advised that the minutes of the Policy, Finance & Governance (P,F&G) meeting of 17 May 2016 were enclosed for information purposes (appended Enc 1).</p> <p>1) Annual Accounts to year end March 2016 (appended Enc 2) SMG briefed members on the reports, advising that pumping station costs include running and repair works at Podimore.</p> <p>2) Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 and 2): (appended Enc 3) members acknowledged their responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements by considering each of eight statements and answering 'Yes' to each in turn.</p> <p>14.35 Cllr L Perry joined the meeting</p> <p>Proposed J Taylor, Seconded D Spicer 'that the Parrett IDB confirms a sound system of internal control including the preparation of the accounting statements to Year End 31 March 2016 by answering 'Yes' to Governance Statements 1 to 8 on Section 1.' Vote: unanimous RESOLUTION 1</p> <p>Proposed C Passmore, Seconded M Winslade 'that the Parrett IDB approve the accounts for year ending 31 March 2016 and approve the accounting statements on Section 2 of the 2015/16 annual return.' Vote: unanimous RESOLUTION 2</p> <p>The annual accounts and Annual Governance Statements will be duly signed by the Chairman, Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer at the end of the meeting.</p> <p>3) Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium: (appended Enc 4) SMG advised that the SDBC annual accounts 2015/16 had been approved by the Axe Brue Board at the meeting of 14 June, highlighting a surplus for year-end of £43k which includes £40k contribution from the SRA.</p> <p>The accounts had been discussed in full at the P,F&G meeting of 17 May 2016 at which time a recommendation was given to the Full Board to adopt the accounts.</p> <p>Proposed D Spicer, Seconded J Taylor 'that the Parrett IDB approve and adopt the Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium accounts for year ending 31 March 2016.' Vote: unanimous RESOLUTION 3</p> <p>4) Procurement Policy and Procedures: (appended Enc 5) NWS advised that the policy and procedures were produced in accordance with regulations, and that due to current levels of turnover the Board <u>were unlikely to exceed the thresholds for European wide advertising of available works (using the Official Journal of the European Community (OJEC)) and thus were unlikely to need the use of contractor frameworks to manage this administration process. Instead it is proposed the Boards use Approved Supplier Lists (ASL) to manage the tendering process, and to follow a fair and transparent process to ensure contractors are engaged appropriately. The policy also proposes to not award more than 50% of some works category contracts to any one contractor, where appropriate, to encourage a thriving local market and the opportunity for new and/or smaller contractors.</u></p> <p>C Passmore advised that the procurement policy and procedure had been discussed at length at the P,F&G meeting of 17 May 2016 at which time recommendation was given to adopt both documents.</p> <p>Proposed C Passmore, Seconded J Swayne 'that the Parrett IDB adopts the Procurement Policy and Procurement Procedures.' Vote: unanimous RESOLUTION 4</p> <p>5) Drainage Rates: C-A Porter advised that the current outstanding rates are approx.</p> <p>T:\ADMIN\PARRETT BOARD\Board Business\FULL MEETING\Minutes\to end March 17\2016 06 21 P Full Board minutes NWS.doc</p>	<p>RES 1</p> <p>RES 2</p> <p>RES 3</p> <p>RES 4</p>

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£12k less than this time last year, at £43,060.

First reminder letters had been disseminated on 13 June 2016 with second reminders to be produced mid-July and summons and court notices 4 weeks later.

6 **Arrangements concerning Terms and Conditions for Parrett Board Employees:** NWS advised that annual staff reviews for Axe Brue staff are dealt with under delegated powers to an SDBC Salaries Sub-Committee in March. This year a 1.5% cost of living increase was awarded across both Boards.

Following the recent review and adoption of new Terms and Conditions for the Parrett employees (after the abolition of the Agricultural Wages Board and the Parrett Employment and Machinery Committee), the Clerk suggested that new arrangements need to be put in place to oversee the Parrett employees terms and Conditions and pay. The Board was asked to to provide delegated authority to the Salaries Sub-Committee to streamline processes for all employees and prevent possible inconsistencies in staff terms and conditions.

Proposed R Barrington, Seconded M Winslade 'that the Parrett IDB awards full delegated authority to the Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium Salaries Sub-Committee for future staff review and pay considerations.' Vote: unanimous **RESOLUTION 5**

7 **Defra/EA consultation on water extraction license exemptions – ADA and IDB responses:** (appended Enc 6) Having been previously circulated P Brewin (PAB) provided a summary of the Defra consultation Changes to water abstraction licensing exemptions in England and Wales – New Authorisations. PAB advised that the SDBC responded by objecting strongly to the removal of the IDB exemption from transfer charges as it is considered that the financial and administrative costs imposed would exceed perceived benefits.

Members concurred with the response adding that the situation is to be monitored.

8 **Engineering Report:**

a) **Maintenance Works:** (appended Enc 7) P Ham (PSH) provided a brief overview of the maintenance report with the following points of note:

- **Park Brook:** Investigation being undertaken for correct levels to be included in WLMPs; may be necessary to hold Northmoor catchment meeting
- **West Somerset Flood Group** quote in the PSH paper should be entitled West Somerset District Flood Board
- **Pawlett Meads Water Supply:** concern was expressed for the loss of water supply to Pawlett Meads from Pawlett Hams; members were advised that there is no feed under the river due to a bank slip and I Sturdy (IDS) will provide an update later in the meeting

The report was duly noted by members.

b) **Improvement Works Programme:** (appended Enc 8)

2.2/3: IDS provided an update of works funded by the SRA which includes Parrett and Tone maintenance dredging and sediment monitoring with a presentation of slides of the work that has been carried out.

2.4: The Board would seek to undertake future dredging at reasonable cost with consideration to future maintenance following the dredging.

Concern was expressed for the cost of the pioneer dredge let by the SRA and a breakdown of costs was requested. NWS advised that all SRA works are subject to public scrutiny, and assured members that the work was awarded through an approved procurement framework; all SRA board members are aware of IDB concerns for costs.

T Bradford, SRA Vice-Chairman, advised that the recent dredging contract was awarded at a time of public scrutiny requesting dredging and that this has been undertaken to meet public expectations, despite the cost. The current section is the most difficult and that silt has had to be 'handled' several times it take the material to its reuse site.

15.40 Cllr A Moore left the meeting

Concern was expressed regarding frameworks which may prevent alternative companies from tendering for the works; Cllr A Fraser reminded members that all SRA meetings are open to the public and by giving notice in advance criticisms and comments can be discussed at those meetings.

IDS reported that modelling consultants are testing a dredging strategy upstream of Burrowbridge and downstream of Northmoor (as report).

Tone Bank above Knapp Bridge: a presentation was provided of flooding in February 2016. R Barrington expressed concern for the depth and speed of flooding particularly from the left bank.

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IDS advised that all aspects need to be considered and that a strand of the SRA Flood Action Plan is to consider land use and future works.

2.6 Beer Wall (EA): Update confirmed that this project is going to progress to time scales (as report).

2.7 Sowey Scheme (EA): the scheme is aimed to reduce the depth and duration of flooding above Langport, however members expressed concern for any impacts to low land in the KSD area and impact of additional flow through the system. IDS advised that being mindful of LEP funding timescales, the IDB is working with EA to determine the best outcome; Natural England are not seeking to establish further wetland areas but wish to keep the areas they currently have.

The Clerk proposed to formation of a sub-committee, to consider the scheme in detail, consisting of local board members, EA, Consultants and NE. Members agreed to reconstitute the sub committee.

Sub-Committee: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Barrie Bryer, Rebecca Horsington, Cllr Liz Perry, John Swayne, David Vigar, James Winslade.

16.05 Cllr R Caswell left the meeting

4.1 Pawlett Hams Water Supply: (as report) IDS advised that the supply pipe which runs through an EA flood bank and under a temporary trench sheet piled defence, had been damaged due to a bank slip resulting in no water supply to Pawlett Hams and Mead areas, and that an investigation had taken place to achieve a freshwater supply from the Huntspill River, however due to the presence of a non-native shellfish this option is not possible. For an immediate measure local landowners would be able to deliver water themselves with bowsers.

Crestmoor Construction have been appointed to consider a short term solution for connection to the existing pipe with anchoring pipes to the bottom of the bed for stability during July to enable discussion with the EA for permanent repairs; budget price for temporary works £18,500.

Three tenders have not been sought. There is a financial risk due to the unknown ground conditions of the works, therefore day rates would need to be agreed.

If this scheme proves successful, the permanent solution will be simpler as the temporary scheme will provide exploratory works however, should the temporary scheme not work it would show that the pipe is more damaged than previously thought.

Proposed B Rowe, Seconded Cllr N Weeks “ that the Parrett IDB accepts a temporary solution to connect to the existing pipes with anchoring pipes to the bottom of the bed to be undertaken by Crestmoor Construction on agreed day rates to a maximum cost of £18,500” Vote: 23 For, 3 against, 0 abstain – Motion carried RESOLUTION 6

Minehead – Butlin’s are planning to undertake clearance works on the moat during the Autumn. West Somerset Council is re-creating its infrastructure delivery plan; it is intended that a workshop for local authorities/bodies will be held, to which the IDB will be invited.

Henley and Etsome Sluices: these structures penn summer water but not winter water, however irrigation and supply is essential for the district. EA may not have FDGiA to finance the work to these structures as they have no flood risk benefit, however the IDB considers them to be essential.

A meeting was held with EA to discuss options at which the IDB members were influential in guiding the Agency to the preferred options of sluice replacement at both sites. (Notes of the meeting prepared by the Agency’s consultants are available.)

16.55 J Healey left the meeting

Castle Cary Recycling Centre: Cllr Weeks advised the meeting that Castle Cary Recycling Centre (known locally as Dimmer) has discharged poor quality effluent in to the River Cary; is the Board aware of the volumes released?

Cllr Weeks was advised that the EA are aware of the contamination, however the Board is not aware of the quantities involved.

c) Development Control: (appended Enc 9) the report was accepted by the meeting.

Update on the Bridgwater Barrier Proposals: NWS advised that the EA set up an Operations and Silt Management Stakeholders group.

- The barrier is most likely to be a tidal surge barrier rather than an exclusion barrier
- NWS and PCM had attended a recent meeting and received a presentation from the project consultants CH2M Hill

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The EA preferred option is to replace both Henley and Etsome sluices with tilting weirs or similar

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- IDB will require a special **Board** meeting to discuss the barrier **to allow a complete understanding for members**
- The IDB will be engaged with the Project Board via **the Operation and Silt Management Group**
- EA will seek **a Transport and Works Act Orders, to enable the works to be carried out.**
- Concern was expressed for the settlement of silt, cost and condition
- Will the dredging strategy assist **the Agency in their investigation of silt management?**
- EA are looking at the whole system for silt movement
- A surge barrier will provide increased flexibility which **could allow more silt flushing to take place**

Sub-Committee: it was agreed that **there** should be an extra-ordinary Board meeting **with a sub group following up the development of the Barrier proposals.**

10

Somerset Rivers Authority update of proceedings: NWS provided an update of the Flood Action Plan (FAP) and Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) advising that local funding had been raised from Local Authority Council tax as well as Axe Brue and Parrett Board contributions. More funding is also to become available from the Local Enterprise Partnership.

16.10 Brian Rowe left the meeting

The SRA works programme is available to view on the SRA website.

An undertaking from the Secretary of State proposes to introduce legislation to Parliament this autumn which will enable the SRA to be established as a separate legal entity able to raise its own funding from council tax payers as a precept.

Concern was expressed that initial discussion has agreed a Private Bill, however this will now be a General Bill which may, unintentionally, alter IDBs. NWS advised that the SRA Chairman has secured an undertaking from the Minister that **the SRA will be consulted on the drafting of the bill clauses.**

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Special Correspondence and meetings: None

12

Minutes of the Full Board Meeting held on 02 February 2016: (appended Enc 10)

Having been previously circulated the Chairman signed the minutes as a true and correct record of the meeting held. All in favour.

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Matters Arising: None

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Any Other Business: None

15

Date of Next Meeting:

- Consortium Management Committee 30 August
- Policy, Finance and Governance 06 September
- Works Committee 20 September
- Full Board 01 November

There being no other business the Chairman thanked members and officers for attending and closed the meeting at 17.20hrs

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