

## MINUTES OF THE PARRETT FULL BOARD MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM ON 16 OCT 2020

<b>Attendance:</b>			
<b>Elected Members:</b> Mr T Bradford (Chair) Mr P Betty Mr D Vigar	<b>Appointed Members:</b> Cllr A Betty Cllr A Bradford Cllr D Durdan Cllr L Gibson Cllr J Keen Cllr J Pay	<b>Officers:</b> Mr R Burge (Clerk) Mrs C-A Morgan Mrs M Hammond Mr I Sturdy Mr P Brewin Mr P Struck Mr S Bunn Mr R King	<b>Public:</b>
<b>Approved Apologies:</b>			
Mr W Barnard Mr R Barrington Mr C Passmore	Cllr M Caswell Cllr A Gilling Cllr S Kingham Cllr K Pearce Cllr L Perry		
<b>Non-Approved Apologies:</b>			
Mr B Bryer Mr R Coombes Mr M Heywood Ms R Horsington Mr C Rowe Mr J Winslade	Cllr I Dyer Cllr M Lewis		

<b>Agenda Item:</b>	<b>Detail:</b>	<b>Action:</b>
1. Attendance and Apologies	<p>1.1. The Clerk reported the Meeting was not Quorate until 10 Members were present. He recommended that the Meeting continue however no resolutions could be accepted. The Clerk raised concerns over attendance, specifically where no apologies had been received for those not attending otherwise arrangements could have been made to re-schedule the Meeting if necessary if he had known the Meeting was not going to be Quorate.</p> <p>1.2. The Chairman opened the Meeting by reporting that some Board Members had been abusing their powers of Membership. The Board must operate legally and not undertake functions outside of those parameters. The Clerk would ensure that the functions of the Board are upheld in accordance with the Land Drainage Act 1991, Board Standing Orders and Byelaws.</p> <p>1.3. Apologies as per the above Attendance List.</p>	

2. Items additional to the Agenda	2.1. No additional items were raised at this time.	
3. Declarations of Interest	3.1. No declarations were made at this time, however Members were reminded to express declarations of interest as necessary through the Meeting.	
4. Approval of Minutes	4.1. The Full Board Minutes of 22 Jun 20 were accepted unanimously and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate reflection of the Meeting.	
5. Matters Arising	<p><u>Review of Actions</u></p> <p><b>Action P/20191105-2: To convene a Task &amp; Finish Group Meeting to review Electoral districts:</b> The Clerk reported this Task &amp; Finish Group has been delayed due to Covid-19 but was not seen as a priority item at this stage</p> <p><b>Action P/20191105-5: To convene a Meeting with the Environment Agency to highlight the Pawlett bank erosion:</b> Dir Ops had previously reported that he fully recognised Member concerns and stated this matter had been raised with the EA but currently no IDB funding was available. The Chairman requested efforts continue to arrange a Meeting.</p> <p><b>Action P/20200203-01: To provide a short training session on identification of Invasive Weeds be given to Members and Staff at the next Meeting.</b> The Clerk reported this Action as ongoing as Zoom was not necessarily the best platform to host the training session but would coordinate with the Board's Ecology Officer to look at options.</p> <p><b>Action P/20220622-01: To discuss Etsome Sluice with the Chairman out of Meeting in response to land owner concerns.</b> The Clerk reported a Meeting had been held 17 Jul 20 and considered this Action Closed.</p> <p><b>Action P/20220622-02: To arrange a Meeting of the Sowy Sub-Committee and EA to consider summary documents and Land Drainage Consent application.</b> The Clerk reported that Meetings had been held on 07 Jul 20 and 06 Aug 20 and considered the Action Closed.</p>	<p><b>Action P/20191105-2: Ongoing</b></p> <p><b>Action P/20191105-5: Ongoing</b></p> <p><b>Action P/20200203-01: Ongoing</b></p> <p><b>Action P/20200622-01: Closed</b></p> <p><b>Action P/20200622-02: Closed</b></p>
6. Governance Updates	6.1. The Clerk reported there had been no H&S Near Miss or Incidents reported since the last Meeting.	

Code of Conduct

6.2. The Clerk brought to the Boards attention the Members' Code of Conduct (including disclosure of personal interests), endorsed by the Board 22 Jun 20.

- Enforcement Policy had been endorsed by the Board on 22 Jun 20.
- The Clerk reported that there had been a number of occasions where Staff have felt pressurised by Members into conducting actions that may not necessarily be in the best interest of the Board and therefore potentially acting against the Members Code of Conduct. This was an unacceptable situation for both Members and Staff who may compromise their position for the benefit of others
- A number of Members had not submitted their Register of Interests which included a declaration to abide by the Boards' Members Code of Conduct.
- Failure to submit a Register of Members Interest should be seen as a failure to accept the Code of Conduct.

Members endorsed a recommendation to re-issue the Register of Members Interests for signature to those Members not held, for return within 28 days.

Data Protection Officer

6.3. The Clerk reported that, for compliance of Internal Audit Action (Finding 1.7 of Development & Control Audit) to enable improvement of compliance with GDPR, the Board should seek adoption of a Data Protection Officer independent of the Board.

New Action P/20201016-01: The Clerk took an Action to **prepare options for an independent Data Protection Officer for Board consideration at the next scheduled full Board Meeting.**

**New Action  
P/20201016-01:  
Clerk**

Policies

6.4. The Clerk reported that it was increasingly difficult to conduct business without Board policies in-place; Staff enforce works enabled by Board approved policies and, where at all possible, should not be driven by individual Board Member subjectiveness due to potential conflict of interests.

He further reported that a common Watercourse Policy for all Board endorsement was being developed to

	<p>enable Staff to deliver works without seeking independent guidance from Members.</p> <p><u>Board Member Attendance</u></p> <p>6.5. The Clerk reported that Member attendance is constantly monitored. Members regularly do not respond to Calling Notices, which prevents an alternative Meeting being arranged.</p> <p><b>New Action P/20201016-02: The Clerk took an Action to formally write to all Members expressing concern for non-attendance at Board Meetings and the need to respond to Calling Notices.</b></p> <p>The Clerk further reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Drainage Act 1991 Schedule 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charging Authority: Desirability of appointing a person who...has capacity to do so.</li> <li>• Elected member absent from meetings of the Board for more than six months consecutively, shall, unless absence due to illness or some other reason approved by the Board, vacate his office at the end of that six months.</li> <li>• Cllr Ian Dyer (SDC) non-attendance since Nov 19 with no apologies (un-approved absence) except for 1 sub-committee Meeting.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The Clerk recommended a letter is issued to SDC to highlight the non-attendance. Members requested this matter is raised at the next scheduled full Board Meeting for endorsement due to not being Quorate.</p> <p><b>New Action P/20201016-03: The Clerk took an Action to include an Agenda Item for the next scheduled Full Board Meeting for Members non-attendance at Board Meetings.</b></p> <p>6.6. <u>Strategic Review of Plant, Machinery and Manpower:</u> The Clerk reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Axe Brue, Parrett &amp; NSLIDB T&amp;F Groups had met on 29, 30, 31 July respectively.</li> <li>• 3 x Chairmen had sat on 6 Aug to discuss outcomes.</li> <li>• Revised Strategic Review Paper reflecting T&amp;F Group agreements sent to all T&amp;F Group</li> </ul>	<p><b>New Action P/20201016-02: Clerk</b></p> <p><b>New Action P/20201016-03: Clerk</b></p>
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	<p>Members 30 Sep 20 for endorsement of final Paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Review of Plant, Machinery &amp; Manpower sent in hard-copy to all Axe Brue, Parrett and NSLIDB Board Members for review and deliberation</li> <li>• Extraordinary Board Meetings (Single Agenda Item) planned for 02 Nov 20.</li> </ul>	
<p>7. Finance Report</p>	<p>7.1. Director of Finance (Dir Fin), as the Responsible Finance Office (RFO), confirmed the Parrett bank account balances as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current account £29,248.08</li> <li>• Deposit account £1,176,650.95</li> </ul> <p><u>End of Year Report 2019/2020</u></p> <p>7.2. Dir Fin reported the External Auditor, PKF Littlejohn LLP, had reported no matters of concern and had closed the audit.</p> <p><u>SDBC Accounts</u></p> <p>7.3. Dir Fin provided an overview of the SDBC accounts with the following points of note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year-End SDBC forecast was a favourable variance of approx. £47k.</li> <li>• Income forecast was an adverse variance, however an Expenditure favourable variance would off-set this.</li> <li>• I&amp;E Report and Notes to Accounts were accepted 'as read'.</li> </ul> <p><u>SRA Projects</u></p> <p>7.4. The Clerk reported that Projects being delivered by the Board on behalf of the SRA (i.e. Oath to Burrowbridge Dredge) were being closed-off as they came to a conclusion and no new projects were expected to be delivered by the Board.</p> <p>7.5. He further reported that, although staff recharges were cost-neutral, undertaking works for external organisations had caused a lack of internal resource in support of IDB works. .</p>	

	<p><u>Parrett Accounts</u></p> <p>7.6. The RFO provided an overview of the Balance Sheet, reporting that she had no concerns for the year-end forecast.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I&amp;E Report: Income showed a favourable variance mainly due to Parrett staff vacancies, providing a year-end forecast surplus of £46,921.</li> <li>• Expenditure variance showed an adverse variance of £39,643 due to expected increased routine maintenance contracts being outsourced due to In-House Maintenance Staff gapping.</li> <li>• I&amp;E Report and Notes to Accounts were accepted 'as read'.</li> </ul> <p>7.7. The RFO gave assurance that dedicated Budget Managers held a monthly Budget Monitoring Meeting for budget clarity throughout the year.</p>	
<p>8. Operations &amp; Maintenance</p>	<p>8.1. Mr R King, Parrett Area Manager, requested the Engineering Report be taken as read with the following points of note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All maintenance Contractors were well working within the scope of their current Contracts.</li> <li>• Contractors were having to return to some areas due to near harvesting of maize.</li> <li>• Overgrown trees have proven problematic; Limited capital tree works were included in the 3-Year Programme of Works.</li> </ul> <p><u>3-Year Programme of Works</u></p> <p>8.2. The Programme of Works Status highlighted all current planned Projects with an expectation to complete by year-end, and those Projects that may not be delivered due to limitations. It also enabled early visibility of achievable and deliverable future projects to allow movement of Projects between years as necessary. The Clerk recommended that Projects were able to be brought forward for delivery of schemes where able to be prioritised and given assurance of in-year delivery. Members agreed in principal.</p> <p>8.3. Project Identification Documents (PIDs) were introduced to provide background and estimated cost of future projects.</p>	

	<p>8.4. The Clerk reported that a Defects Register would assist the Programme of Works with prioritisation of works. The Defects Register would be presented in due course for FY 2021/2022.</p> <p>8.5. The Clerk reported that no Enforcement Actions were being undertaken in the Parrett area at the current time.</p>	
<p>9. Somerset Rivers Authority</p>	<p>9.1. Mr R Kidson, SRA Project Engineer, provided an update to the Engineering Report inclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Impact has been resolved</li> <li>• The Parrett Maintenance Dredging was to commence winter 20/21</li> <li>• PSCA to be renewed in due course</li> </ul> <p>Due to being non-quorate, the Board could not endorse the Chairman to sign the PSCA out of Meeting, however agreement was provided in principal if the PSCA should require signing prior to the next scheduled Meeting.</p> <p><b>New Action P/20201016-04: The Clerk took an Action to include endorsement of the PSCA as an Agenda Item for the next scheduled Full Board Meeting.</b></p> <p>9.2. <u>Bisley Spillway</u> Members were advised that this was a temporary spillway, due to be hard and robust that had recently been re-seeded.</p> <p>Mr P Brewin, Ecologist, reported that the temporary spillway was due to be removed in Spring 21.</p> <p>9.3. <u>SRA Scrutiny Committee</u> Mr D Vigar and Cllr A Betty, Scrutiny Panel Members, reported that the last Meeting was conducted remotely and was disappointing from an IDB Member perspective as the agenda was not followed, and the Meeting was taken as an opportunity for Councillors to address Council business. Mr S Coles was the current Scrutiny Panel Chairman.</p> <p>It was agreed Mr T Bradford, as SRA Vice-Chair would discuss the concerns with Mr D Hall, Somerset County Council.</p>	<p><b>New Action P/20201016-04: Clerk</b></p>
<p>10. Risk Review</p>	<p>10.1. The Clerk had distributed the updated Risk Register Dashboard with the Calling notice and provided an overview of the Top Risks.</p>	

	10.2. He further reported that the Top 4 Risks were a reflection of lack of free reserves.	
11. Any Other Business	<p><u>Outstanding Rates</u></p> <p>11.1. The Clerk presented an update on outstanding rates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2,177 accounts in total.</li> <li>• £89k outstanding as of May 20</li> <li>• £21k outstanding as of Oct 20</li> <li>• Second Reminder Letters - end of Oct 20</li> <li>• Summons Notices - end Nov 20</li> <li>• Court Hearing – 16 Dec 20</li> <li>• Liability Order diminimus - £25</li> <li>• Approx. £6k outstanding each year, the majority of which were under £25.</li> </ul> <p>11.2. He further reported the Land Drainage Act 1991 allowed recovery of outstanding rates in the same manner as a Local Authority for non-payment of a domestic rate, i.e. Magistrates' Court. This action, whilst securing a Liability Order, was limited on further action for persistent non-payers.</p> <p>It was agreed that options for persistent non-payers is discussed at the SDBC Management Committee Meeting.</p>	
12. Date of Next Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extraordinary Full Board: 02 Nov 2020 @ 1430</li> <li>• Full Board: 01 Feb 21 @ 1430-1630</li> </ul> <p>12.1. The new Meetings Calendar for 2021 is to be shared with Members with the draft Minutes.</p> <p>12.2. Cllr Durdan provided apologies for the Board Meeting scheduled for 02 Nov 20.</p> <p>There being no other business, the Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their attendance, and the Meeting was closed at 1545.</p>	

Annex:

A. Parrett Board – Table of Outstanding Actions

CHAIR.....DATE .....



**ANNEX A TO  
PARRETT BOARD MINUTES  
DATED 16 OCT 2020**

**PARRETT BOARD – TABLE OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Action Number:	Action:	Actionee:
P/20191105-2	To convene a Task & Finish Group Meeting to review Electoral districts.	Clerk
P/20191105-5	To convene a Meeting with the Environment Agency to highlight the Pawlett bank erosion.	Dir Ops
P/20200203-01:	To provide a short training session on identification of Invasive Weeds be given to Members and Staff at the next Meeting.	Clerk
P/20201016-01	To prepare options for an independent Data Protection Officer for Board consideration at the next scheduled full Board Meeting.	Clerk
P/20201016-02	To formally write to all Members expressing concern for non-attendance at Board Meetings and the need to respond to Calling Notices.	Clerk
P/20201016-03	To include an Agenda Item for the next scheduled Full Board Meeting for Members non-attendance at Board Meetings.	Clerk
P/20201016-04	To include endorsement of the PSCA as an Agenda Item for the next scheduled Full Board Meeting.	Clerk