

MINUTES OF THE PARRETT FINANCE AND WORKS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM ON 18 JAN 21

Attendance:			
Elected Members: Mr T Bradford Mr P Betty Mr C Passmore (C) Mr J Winslade	Appointed Members: Cllr A Betty Cllr M Caswell Cllr S Kingham Cllr J Pay (Cllr A Gilling)	Officers: Mr R Burge Mrs M Hammond Mrs K L Kingston Mr I Sturdy Mr P Struck	Public:
Approved Apologies:			
Non-Approved Apologies:			
	Cllr I Dyer		

Agenda Item:	Detail:	Action:
1. Attendance and Apologies	Apologies as per the above Attendance List.	
2. Items Additional to the Agenda	No additional items.	
3. Declarations of Interest	3.1. Mr C Passmore – use of Board Contractors for private contracts.	
4. Approval of Minutes	4.1. The Minutes of the Finance & Works Sub-Committee Meeting of 05 Oct 20 were accepted unanimously and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate reflection of the Meeting.	
5. Matters Arising	<u>Review of Actions</u> 5.1. Action P/20181010-04: (To conduct a review of the Machinery & Plant across both Boards with a view to VfM and Risk); the Clerk reported that the	

	<p>Strategic Review of Plant, Machinery & Manpower had now been endorsed by the Board and therefore this Action closed.</p> <p>5.2. Action P/20191007-02 (To prepare a formal letter, to be reviewed by Ashfords Solicitors, of further justification of the Boards' claim to Somerset County Council regarding the collapsed Culvert at Admiral's Table); Due to resource issues as a result of wider SDBC matters, this matter remained extant.</p> <p>5.3. Action P/20200105-01 (To provide an Etsome Sluice update at the full Board Meeting of 16 Oct 20); The Clerk reported this Action as complete (Minutes refer).</p> <p>5.4. Action P/20200105-02 (To provide an outstanding rate breakdown for the full Board Meeting of 16 Oct 20); The Clerk reported this Action as complete (Minutes refer).</p>	<p>Action P/20181010-04: Closed</p> <p>Action P/20191007-04: On-going</p> <p>Action P/20200105-01: Closed</p> <p>Action P/20200105-02: Closed</p>
6. Finance Report	<p>6.1. Director of Finance (Dir Fin), as the Responsible Finance Office (RFO), confirmed the bank account balances as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current account £30,027 • Deposit account £1,376,685.27 <p>She further reported that bank reconciliation by Officers had been completed and that Cllr S Kingham was due to complete the internal reconciliation in the near future.</p> <p>6.2. Dir Fin reported that the effect of Covid-19 on the economy, had caused bank interest to reduce greatly. She further reported that an Investment of Board Funds Task & Finish Group</p>	

Meeting would be convened as soon as practicable for endorsement of an Investment Policy.

Outstanding Rates

6.3. The Deputy Clerk provided an overview of Drainage Rate payments with the following points of note:

- 01 Apr 20: 2177 accounts, £173,379 owed.
- 15 Jan 21: 90 accounts, £12,446 (7.2%) outstanding.

6.4. Deputy Clerk further reported that recovery of persistent non-compliant debts could be applied for through the County Court as Small Claims. This process did have a cost element, however the Court may award costs to the Board. She further reported that she will investigate County Court Small Claims with ADA Policy & Finance Committee and report back to the Boards as part of a similar Axe Brue Action placed.

End of Year Forecast 2020/2021

6.5. As of 31 Dec 20, Dir Fin reported the Year-end forecast identified a favourable variance of £33,983, due to the majority of in-year Board Schemes being funded by money raised in previous years (ring-fenced reserves).

Cllr M Caswell requested a report to identify when projects were added to the Programme of Works and the funds raised.

6.6. Dir Fin presented the proposed Budget for FY2021/2022 line-by-line,

	<p>highlighting that implementation of the Strategic Review would increase the SDBC Admin charge by 29% but would be offset by a reduction in the direct Board costs.</p> <p>6.7. The proposed Budget had resulted in an increase in the Penny Rate of 1.81%.</p> <p>Cllr Caswell questioned how the proposal would impact SDC. Dir Fin reported the increase to SDC would be 5.51%, £41,155.89.</p> <p>6.8. The Clerk reported that the predicted Free-Reserves at yr-end were £127,000. The Clerk strongly recommended that the Board proceed with the sale of plant and machinery to increase the forecast Free-Reserve status to circa £200,000 in order to cover Board Risks on the Risk Register.</p> <p>6.9. Detailed discussions were held with respect to ensuring that the maintenance contracts were robust and managed appropriately to ensure timescales for delivery of services were adhered to.</p> <p>6.10. Cllr M Caswell proposed, seconded by Cllr A Betty ‘that recommendation for the Penny Rate for the year 2021/2022 be increased by 1.81% to 7.502 to be taken to the Board Meeting of 01 Feb 2021 for endorsement.’</p> <p>All in favour – none against</p>	<p>RESOLUTION 1</p>
<p>7. Engineering & Maintenance Works</p>	<p>7.1. Dir Ops provided an overview of Engineering & Maintenance with the following points of note:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine maintenance was 98% complete. • Aspiration to complete all contracts in good time and within ecological constraints, cognisant of Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS) and planting timetables. <p>7.2. Dir Ops reported that the delivery of routine maintenance contracts can be held-up by crops being planted close to the watercourse, thereby hindering access. A Watercourse Management Policy was being formulated, in-line with Board Byelaws, to enable unhindered access to in-view watercourses.</p> <p>Mr J Winslade requested that direct access routes along rhynes be investigated to prevent tracking through crops and on highways.</p> <p><u>Maintenance Contracts</u></p> <p>7.3. Dir Ops reported that the current in-house maintenance contracts were awarded on a one-year term to assess works delivered. He recommended to extend contracts for a further 2-years as a variation to the contract.</p> <p>7.4. Mr T Bradford proposed, seconded by Cllr S Kingham ‘that a recommendation to extend the current in-house maintenance contracts for a further 2 years as a variation to the contract to be taken to the Board Meeting of 01 Feb 2021 for endorsement.’</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">RESOLUTION 2</p>
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	<p><u>3-Year Programme of Works</u></p> <p>7.5. Dir Ops provided an overview of the programme reporting that restrictions i.e. bird nesting season and ground conditions would determine commencement of projects.</p> <p>Mr C Passmore expressed concern that one large asset failure could draw all Board Reserves.</p> <p>The Clerk replied that a Critical Asset Failure was a Risk fully acknowledged within the Risk Register, hence essential that the Board had sufficient Free-Reserves to cover such a Risk materialising.</p>	
<p>8. Risk Review</p>	<p>8.1. The Clerk reported that the full Risk Register would be reported at the Full Meeting of 01 Feb 21, however the Register would be updated for 01 Apr 21 following implementation of the Strategic Review and the subsequent sale of plant and machinery where a number of Risk mitigations would realise.</p> <p>8.2. The Chairman stated that when all Members were confident that Contractors were adequate in managing all in-house maintenance, he would propose plant and machinery was sold.</p> <p>8.3. Mr C Passmore offered storage at Kings Farm as an undercover location to store the plant and machinery until sold.</p> <p>The Clerk thanked Mr Passmore for the generous offer, reporting that a full review was being conducted of yard space requirements and locations.</p>	

9. Any Other Business	9.1. Mr T Bradford requested the WLMP for Kings Sedgemoor Drain be reviewed as a matter of priority as the area was considered critical.	
10.Date of Next Meeting	<p>10.1. The date of the next Finance & Works meeting was reported as being 22 Mar 21.</p> <p>10.2. Future key dates in the short-term were highlighted as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parrett Full Board: 01 Feb 21 <p>10.3. There being no other business, Members and Officers were thanked for their attendance, and the meeting was closed at 1616.</p>	

CHAIRMAN.....DATE

**ANNEX A TO
PARRETT F&W COMMITTEE MINUTES
DATED 18 JAN 21**

PARRETT F&W COMMITTEE – TABLE OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Action Number:	Action:	Actionee:
P/20191007-02	To prepare a formal letter, to be reviewed by Ashfords Solicitors, of further justification of the Boards' claim to Somerset County Council regarding the collapsed Culvert at Admiral's Table.	Clerk