

MINUTES OF THE PARRETT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD FULL BOARD MEETING HELD AT CANALSIDE BRIDGWATER ON 12 APRIL 2022

Attendance:			
Elected Members: Tony Bradford (C) Phil Betty Barrie Bryer Roger Coombes Rebecca Horsington Will Barnard Colin Passmore James Winslade	Appointed Members: Mike Caswell Lance Duddridge Liz Leavy Julie Pay David Durdan Alan Bradford Andrew Gilling Michael Caswell Janet Keen	Officers: Iain Sturdy Phil Brewin Rob Kidson Maggie Hammond Rob King Matthew Wall Nicky Cornish	Public:
Approved Apologies:			
Clarence Rowe Mark Heywood David Vigar	Kathy Pearce Anthony Betty Stuart Kingham Mike Lewis		
Non-Approved Apologies:			
Roger Barrington	Ian Dyer		

Agenda Item:	Detail:	Action:
1. Attendance and Apologies	1.1 As per the above attendance list	
2. Items additional to the Agenda	2.1 Iain Sturdy (Acting CEO) would like to brief Members on the WRFCC meeting. .	
3. Declarations of Interest	3.1 The Chairman and Philip Betty – use of board contractors privately – as per register of members interest.	
4. Opportunity for Members of the Public to address the Meeting	4.1 There were no members of the Public present at the Meeting.	
5. Approval of Minutes	With corrections being made of Janet Keen and Andrew Gillings names from unapproved apologies to approved apologies, the minutes were signed as a true and correct record of the meeting held.	

<p>6. Matters Arising</p>	<p><u>Review of Actions</u></p> <p>6.1 Task & Finish Group Meeting to review Electoral districts – Iain Sturdy has someone in mind who is willing to come and help with this task</p> <p>6.2 Training session on invasive weeds has been arranged for Tuesday 19 April at Langmead and Phil Brewin will be sending an invitation by email to members.</p> <p>6.3 Departmental changes – A review is to be undertaken but officers are not in a position to carry this out at present, Iain Sturdy will provide an update in Item 8</p> <p>6.4 Fly tipping – Rob King reported that this had quietened down. A licence has been procured to carry waste using A House's yard. Currently the IDB will remove waste from the rhyme and arrange for local council to collect. This has been helped by recycling centres now not charging for some regularly fly tipped rubbish. There was some discussion around recycling centres trialing not charging to take household waste in the hope it would reduce fly tipping.</p> <p>6.5 To Promote public awareness of aquatic and invasive weeds via local and social media,</p> <p>6.6 SRA recruitment of Riparian Responsible Officer – The clerk suggested that this would be a shared resource. The Chairman said more information is needed and the rules and regulations need to be simplified. A technical group is arranged for discussion next Wednesday.</p> <p>6.7 Maggie Hammond sent an email to all Members seeking an interest in filling a vacancy in both F&W and SDBC Management Committee but had no response</p> <p>6.8 Review of the Strategic Review (Review 2) –Will be conducted when senior posts are permanently recruited- Iain Study will discuss this under item 8</p> <p>6.9 A review is carried out regarding the format of meeting and committee structure. To be carried forwards to SDBC Management Committee with Tony Bradford stating he thinks it is critical to have a separate F&W meeting for budget setting but he also said there's an opportunity to incorporate the F&W, H&S, Environmental and other sub committees within the Full Board so all Members know what is going on and can get involved. Colin Passmore commented that due to so many changes at the moment there is a need have F&W meetings when required. Will Barnard added there is a lot of changes at the moment with Government Policy and the way the land is managed and the Drainage Board is a key player who needs to help make sure any decisions are the correct ones. Janet Keen added the Board belongs to everyone within the area that it serves and there needs to be regular participation to be publicised to everyone about</p>	<p>Action: 20191105-2 Waiting Action</p> <p>Action : 20220201-01 Ongoing</p> <p>Action : 20210416-01 ongoing</p> <p>Action : 20210416-02 Closed</p> <p>Action : 20210621-02</p> <p>Action : 20211026-01 Ongoing</p> <p>Action : 20220201-02</p> <p>Action : 20211026-02 Ongoing</p> <p>Action : 20220201-03 Ongoing</p>
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	<p>what the Board does to prevent their land and homes being shattered by flooding. Tony Bradford reminded Members they are on the Board to make decisions and that he hasn't seen anything going too fast from the Government himself yet about changes. He further added that he can't see the point of having sub committee meetings where nobody turns up and the meeting is not quorate. F&W meetings are the exception as they will affect Drainage Boards more going forward. Iain Sturdy ended the discussion by saying there needs to be sufficient meetings to make decisions and do governance properly. The current standing order allows the Board to set up sub committees 'as and when required' and it was felt that F&W, H&S and the Environment were important enough to have formal sub committees. There needs to be sufficient, well attended Board Meetings to do Governance and decision making but Drainage Boards are not duty bound to have sub committees and it is up to Members to decide whether they want to have them or not or even whether they are only called as and when necessary. He added it would be beneficial if there could be a consensus across all the Board in the Consortium. It was agreed to add this action to the agenda of the SDBC Management meeting.</p> <p>6.10 Arrange a site visit to Burtle – Rob Kidson advised this action is now complete</p>	<p>Action : 20220201-04 Closed</p>
<p>7. Health & Safety</p>	<p>7.1 Iain Sturdy informed Members that although there were no incidents to report in the Parrett area there had been a safety issue in one of the other Boards where a dog had attacked a Contractor. The injuries required treatment at A&E and currently Officers are in the process of root cause analysis and looking at whether any action is needed to support staff, members or contractors when they are on site.</p>	
<p>8. Governance Updates</p>	<p>8.1 Tony Bradford informed Members that Iain Sturdy would be acting up as CEO for the next 6 months until the end of August 2022.</p> <p>8.2 Iain Sturdy gave a staff update advising that Carrie-Anne Morgan has resigned from her position as Deputy Clerk but is very likely to take a case of unlawful constructive dismissal against the Boards. He said being respectful, fair and legally compliant is one of the reasons the Board has not been able to take the step of starting to recruit the Senior Management posts. However this action from CAM will now enable the Board to move forward.</p> <p>8.3. Iain Sturdy advised that Maggie Hammond is happy to continue helping with the Clerking duties until extra support is found. He will consult with the Management Committee to agree how Members wish</p>	

to have future Management Team structure – would they like to recruit CEO/Clerk and a Deputy Clerk or do they want to think about other ways to structure up. Once this has been agreed these positions will be advertise nationally as soon as possible.

8.4 Iain Sturdy told Members there had been a few issues around the review of manpower and plant machinery where there has been operational vulnerabilities that have been identified in terms of providing services. The term ‘one brick thick’ is used meaning if someone falls out of the front line there is no one to fill in the gap and everyone else takes on a bit more then holes appear in either the service or functions the drainage board perform.

8.5 Iain Sturdy also added the committee will start looking to review the structure to make the IDB more resilient particularly regarding field work and providing the services staff are here to provide. Once the Management Structure is agreed, it could be up to 6 months before a CEO is in post who can start to work with existing staff and members around structures and deliveries of tasks. He added he had arranged for a general advert on the Dillington jobs website where Government jobs are advertised and also on facebook and so far there was an encouraging response to some of the staff posts.

8.6 Mike Caswell expressed his concern regarding the loss of the CEO, Deputy Clerk and all the vacancies and asked ‘what was going on?’ And there must be something Board Members are not being told’. Tony Bradford said they had signed a legal agreement not to discuss the situation and reiterated that what has been done is in the best interest of the Board, legally advised and correct. Mike Caswell asked for it to be minuted that he was ‘not happy with that decison’. There was some discussion around Somerset County Council asking to know why it can’t be discussed when the new unitary Council is formed to which Iain Sturdy said they would know why we are unable to say these things because they had been through similar circumstances recently. He also added, it is a private matter between the individuals involved and they are unable to divulge any of the details apart from the fact they have resigned from their posts at the IDB. Tony Bradford added they acted on the best advise and Alan Bradford asked Members to ‘move on’. Iain Sturdy reminded Members that there is a Members Code of Conduct and it is important that all Members understand it. Lastly he told Members there were Parrett elections

	<p>this year and he felt confident that there would be some experienced assistance to help.</p>	
9. Finance Report	<p>9.1 Maggie Hammond informed Members that the bank had been reconciled up to the end of February 2022 and she would give updated figures in the June meeting. She advised that the current auditors, South West Audit Partnership's contract ended on 31 March and the only tender received was for £400 plus VAT per day from TIAA who currently provide audit services to other Drainage Boards. Colin Passmore asked how many days it would take in comparison to the previous auditors, with TIAA charging £400 + VAT per day, Maggie said it might take 3.5 days possibly longer than last years auditors.</p> <p>Proposed :Janet Keen, seconded : Colin Passmore "To award the tender for the provision of the Internal Audit function for 3 years from 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2025 to TIAA"</p> <p>9.2 Maggie Hammond gave an update on the drainage rates as at the 31 March 2022, informing Members there was an outstanding balance of £6,653.53 with 52 accounts in credit and 85 in debit. Janet Keen asked whether any ratepayers were on a payment plan to which Maggie Hammond said no one had asked to go on a payment plan and anyone who had any issues should call the office. Will Barnard enquired whether there were any non payments for other reasons such as protest, Maggie advised that as she had just taken over the drainage rates she did not have the knowledge and Tony Bradford added anyone who was struggling last year will again this year with the rising cost of living.</p>	RESOLUTION 1
10. Engineering & Operational Report	<p>The Acting CEO asked for the Operations and Engineering report be taken as read.</p> <p>10.1 Tony Bradford commented that the Enviroment Agency started summer penn a week early. James Winslade told the Members as representative for Northmoor he's had received 3 complaints about high water. Iain Sturdy added that 1st April and 1st December had always been formal change over dates for penning but flexibility and pragmatism is exercised. Rob King, Area Manager informed Members he communicates with the Chairman over any changes made.</p> <p>10.2 Janet Keen informed Members the SCC inhouse ecologist Pete Grainger is promoting 'no mow May' for ecological reasons. She queried whether there was room for this in the maintenance plans for IDB work. Phil</p>	

	<p>Brewin advised very little weedcutting work is done in May.</p> <p>10.3 Matthew Wall, Contracts Manager informed Members that preliminary invites have been sent out to contractors with a return date of 25 April 2022 for work previously held by Spratt Plant Hire. He gave an update on the HMRC fuel situation stating he believes if it's of agricultural benefit it is ok to use red diesel with Iain Sturdy stating that's the information received from ADA and the guidance should be followed because if there are any problems there would be a strong defence that guidance had been followed from the National Body. Regarding the increasing fuel prices Will Barnard added we need to support working with the contractors and Tony Bradford said nobody could envisage the fuel prices increase. Matthew Wall will set up a sub-committee to discuss fuel prices and Iain Sturdy called for 3 members to join Matthew. Maggie Hammond requested to be involved as RFO and Colin Passmore, Tony Bradford and Will Barnard volunteered to form the committee.</p> <p>10.4 Rob King advised Members that Matt Eldridge, Acting Area Supervisor had passed his assessment and just needs to complete the practical to be fully qualified as a Watercourse Environment Worker (WEW).</p> <p>He added that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knighton sluice at Langport has been repaired • Kingsmoor at Long Sutton is a failing culvert and needs a full repair. • Park Wall, Chedzoy has been repaired and lengthened. <p>He add that summer penning was 80% complete.</p>	<p>Action : 20220412-01 Form a committee to discuss fuel prices</p>
<p>11.Environmental Report</p>	<p>11.1 Phil Brewin, Ecologist advised Members he had set up a meeting to help them identify invasive species. The meeting would be held at Langmead Westonzoyland on Tuesday 19 April @ 14:30. Andrew Gilling asked if an email could be sent to Members with the details.</p> <p>11.2 Phil Brewin presented a paper on strategic environmental challenges and opportunities facing IDBs. The paper included and update on new legislation and developing national and local policies regarding climate change and biodiversity. It also highlighted developments in agricultural payments and the types of actions the Board might wish to include in a reworking of the Board's Biodiversity Action Plan and Water Level Management Plans. The Board produced a Biodiversity Action Plan and a series of Water Level Management Plans some time ago and they are now in need of review and updating. This is something that needs to be picked up to show that we are complying with the Environment Act, which requires public bodies</p>	

	<p>to report on their biodiversity work. Will Barnard declared an interest saying the Board should have an input into the development of the forthcoming Environmental Land Management Scheme. Tony Bradford stated Phil Brewin was engaged with the issues and would help lead the IDB through the challenges.</p> <p>16.00 Mike Caswell and Julie Pay left the meeting.</p>	
12. Somerset Rivers Authority	<p>12.1 Iain Sturdy informed Members the SRA are reviewing their Flood Action Plan and the timescale for this is the end of the year to hopefully be in use by the next financial year.</p> <p>12.2 Iain Sturdy and Rebecca Horsington attended an SRA meeting where they discussed the SRA flood action plan. Iain Sturdy said there was discussions about climate change, flood risk, climate emergency, nature recovery strategies food and fuel security.</p> <p>13.3 Tony Bradford reminded Members that the SRA was started due to the 2013/14 floods but he feels that they have lost their way. Will Barnard added that with climate change, more attention is needed to the landscape. Tony Bradford said the Parrett Barrier is a great achievement but suggested a pumping station alongside it and a Water Level Management Plan including a pumping station at Dunball.</p> <p>13.4 James Winslade told Members he has noticed some new housing developments are not using attenuation ponds correctly and he also feels strongly that trees should not be allowed to grow in rivers as this will cause problems. He said the SRA as not spending money in the right place. Rebecca Horsington admitted the last couple of SRA meetings she has found the Environment Agency's attitude quite difficult, very defeatist and they are not willing to be proactive. Iain Sturdy advised that we need to be careful how we say things but as the IDB is a Member of the SRA we can have our say but keep it professional.</p>	
13. Risk Review	<p>13.1 Taken as read. Iain Sturdy advised the biggest change on the risks register is fuel and staff. He said we are moving in the right direction regarding staff.</p>	
14. Correspondence	<p>14.1 Tony Bradford informed Members that Frits Van Den Boogaard of Royal Smals had invited Members to Weston-super-Mare, where they are dredging the marine lake. On Wednesday 4 May 2022 @ 14:00 with a short presentation followed by a site visit. Members are invited</p>	

	<p>14.1 There were further invitations from;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robert Cauldwell, ADA Chairman to the 'Keeping our Rivers Flowing' summate 2022, on Thursday 12 May 2022 at Stoneleigh. • Flood and Coastal Conference 2022 <p>14.2 Iain Sturdy told Members ADA have launched an online educational resources training package regarding flood risk and drainage and finally the ADA 'Newstream' monthly newsletter, he asked if any Members were interested in receiving this to let him know.</p>	
15. Any Other Business	<p>15.1 Maggie Hammond asked Members if the F&W meeting in June could be a 1 item agenda to discuss the end of year accounts. All other matters can be discussed at Full Board the following week.</p> <p>15.2 Colin Passmore asked what was happening with regard to the impending unitary council and having disucssions with them. Tony Bradford said he has been assured by David Hall that when they are in a position to they will send someone to address the drainage boards.</p> <p>15.3 Iain Sturdy told Members at the WRFCC, the Environment Agency's flood risk strategy they have developed from 2021-2027 and beyond is where they will be focussing their funding and efforts.</p>	
16.	<p>Tuesday 21 June 2022 Full Board 14.30pm</p> <p>The Chairman thanked all members for their attendance and added if they have any problems Iain and himself are available to talk to. Members where happy to receive papers by post.</p> <p>Meeting closed at 16.38</p>	

Annex:

A. Parrett Board – Table of Outstanding Actions

CHAIR.....DATE

**ANNEX A TO
PARRETT BOARD MINUTES
DATED**

PARRETT BOARD – TABLE OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Action Number:	Action:	Actionee:
P/20191105-2	To convene a Task & Finish Group Meeting to review Electoral districts. Awaiting action	Clerk
P/20200203-01:	To provide a short training session on identification of Invasive Weeds be given to Members and Staff at the next Meeting. Ongoing	PAB
P/20210416-01	To report to the SDBC Management Committee in six months to advise of any necessary Departmental changes to be implemented. Ongoing	Clerk
P/20210416-02	To discuss responsibility of fly tipping with ADA and other Organisations to define clarity. Closed	Clerk
P/20210621-02	To promote public awareness of aquatic and invasive weeds via local and social media. Ongoing	Ecologist
P/20211026-01	To discuss with the SRA the recruitment of a Riparian Responsible Officer at the next technical SRA meeting. Ongoing	Dir Ops
P/20211026-02	To complete a review of the Strategic Review of Plant Machinery and Manpower. Ongoing	Acting CEO
P/20220201-02	The write to all members seeking interest in filling a vacancy in both F&W Committee and SDBC Management Committee. Closed	Acting Clerk
P/20220412-01	To form a Committee to discuss ongoing fuel prices	Contracts Manager