

MINUTES OF THE PARRETT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD FULL BOARD MEETING HELD AT THE CANALSIDE BRIDGWATER ON 31 JANUARY 2023 AT 14:30

Attendance:			
Elected Members: Will Barnard Roger Barrington Tony Bradford (C) Barrie Bryer Mark Heywood Colin Passmore John Perrin David Vigar James Winslade	Appointed Members: Cllr Alan Bradford Cllr Mike Caswell Cllr Stuart Kingham Cllr Mike Lewis	Officers: Iain Sturdy Matthew Wall Maggie Hammond Nicky Cornish Naomi Johnson Phil Brewin Virginie Martin	Public:
Approved Apologies:			
Rebecca Horsington	Cllr Anthony Betty Cllr Hilary Bruce Cllr Janet Keen Cllr Liz Leavey Cllr Liz Perry	Maggie Hammond	
Non-Approved Apologies:			
Roger Coombes	Cllr Ian Dyer Cllr Lance Duddridge Cllr Dave Durdan Cllr Andrew Gilling Cllr Julie Pay		

Agenda Item:	Detail:	Action:
1. Attendance and Apologies	1.1 As per the register	
2. Items Additional to the Agenda	2.1 Iain Sturdy (IDS) would like to discuss two pieces of correspondence received about the recent flooding which he will do in item 13	
3. Declarations of Interest	3.1. As per the register of Members interest. 3.2. Stuart Kingham declared an interest in Planning and Will Barnard declared an interest in FWAG, test and trials.	
4. Members of the Public to address the Meeting	4.1 None	

Each Board is a statutory public body with responsibilities for flood protection, land drainage and the environment.
All are members of the Association of Drainage Authorities.

<p>5. Approval of Minutes</p>	<p>5.1. It was agreed unanimously to approve the minutes of the meeting of the 15 November 2022.</p>	
<p>6.. Matters Arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Actions 	<p>6.2. The Chairman (Tony Bradford) noted that Cllr Stuart Kingham (SK) had not received his letter of thanks and possibly Philip Betty and Clarence Rowe had not received one either. IDS apologised and said he would check and request letters were sent out as soon as possible.</p> <p>6.2. To convene a Task & Finish group meeting to review Electoral districts - IDS said he has asked Nick Stevens to prepare a draft paper with options. The Chairman said he would like to create 12 districts to accommodate 12 Members and then asked for Members to put their names forward to be on the Electoral District Sub Committee; Tony Bradford, Will Barnard, Mark Heywood, Cllr Stuart Kingham and James Winslade agreed to form the committee. They will report back to the Board with a recommendation once concluded.</p> <p>6.2 To report to the SDBC Management Committee in six months to advise of any necessary departmental changes to be implemented – IDS reported this was about the staff structure which is completed.</p> <p>6.3. To promote public awareness of aquatic and invasive weeds via local and social media – Phil Brewin (PAB) said this will feature in his report today and the action should be closed.</p> <p>6.5 To complete a review of the Strategic Review of Plant Machinery and Manpower – IDS said he has not moved forward with this action since taking the CEO role and would like to leave it as an ongoing. The Chairman said this will be a long term ongoing action.</p> <p>13.7 A review is carried out regarding the format of meetings and committee structure – It was decided to leave the meeting format as it is until April when there would be new Appointed Members. IDS added he would like to only have meetings if they are needed.</p>	<p>P/20191105-2 – Ongoing</p> <p>P/20210416-01 – Closed</p> <p>P/20210621-02- Closed</p> <p>P/20211026-02 – Ongoing</p> <p>P/20220201-03 – Closed</p>
<p>7. Health & Safety Report</p>	<p>7.1 Naomi Johnson (NJ) updated Members on training and H&S, saying Area Supervisors have completed a Lantra Mobile Works Course and all staff have Conflict Management and Personal Safety training coming up in February.</p> <p>7.2. NJ advised Members she is implementing a new register called Visit in Pairs (VIP) which details properties where there have been issues in the past and this will help staff be aware not to attend alone.</p> <p>7.3 The Committee seeks approval from the Full Board to make the Joint Health & Safety Committee a standing committee and that the Chair be elected for a three-year term.</p>	

	<p>Proposed by Cllr Mike Caswell and seconded by Colin Passmore ‘to make the H&S committee a standing committee and elect a Chair for a three year term’ All in favour</p>	<p>RESOLUTION 01</p>
8. Governance and Staff Update	<p>8.1 IDS gave a staff update saying the post of Consents & Enforcement Officer has been advertised recently, and expressions of interest are being sent out internally within the office next week. Furthermore, there will be some adverts for Engineering Technicians and the Engineering posts in the next few weeks. IDS added that three Deputy Area Supervisors have been appointed across the Boards leaving the Operations team fully populated. Cllr Stuart Kingham asked why apprenticeships have been removed and IDS said at the moment the Boards needs to concentrate on core business but once there is some capacity in the future we should reconsider.</p> <p>8.2. IDS told Members that the calendar of meetings has been revised so the SDBC Management Committee meeting is held before the individual Boards Finance & Works meetings. Also, a new Environment Committee meeting will be taking place in June.</p>	
9. Finance Report	<p>9.1 Maggie Hammond (MH) the Responsible finance Officer ran through the budgets advising that bank reconciliations were up to date and the position as of 31 December 2022. At the end of quarter 2 there was a surplus of £379,352k with an estimated year end deficit of £7,250k due to spending money from previous years on Boards schemes. She added if the forecast y/e position is accurate there will be free reserves of £411k and the Parrett will get 36.1% of the underspend. Colin Passmore asked what the expected underspend will be in the Consortium and MH replied possibly as much as £200k.</p> <p>9.2. MH discussed the proposed budget for 2023/24 in more detail and as the Finance & Works Meeting hadn’t been quorate. She told Members the proposed budget had gone up by £227k and the increase in rates and levy’s is £103,541. The Admin increase was due to salaries and the cost of living increase and she had allowed 10% for CPI figure for contractors.</p> <p>Proposed by Colin Passmore and seconded by Cllr Alan Bradford ‘to increase the pennyrate to 8.615p’ All in favour</p> <p>9.3 MH updated Members on drainage rates saying there were 43 accounts in credit, 1363 accounts paid in full with a ‘0’ balance and 122 accounts with a debit balance of £9046.34 between them. There has been no Court Summons this year due to the Courts catching up from Covid, and Drainage Rates not being a priority.</p>	<p>RESOLUTION 02</p>
10. Engineering & Operational Report	<p>10.1 IDS asked Members to take the report as read and reported the Environment Agency updates show an improving situation with regards to the flooding, although the Hydrology reports don’t fully reflect the recent rainfall. The Chairman said he wanted a review into what went right/wrong and also said the SRA wanted a review.</p>	

	<p>James Winslade told Members the moors have not filled so fast in living memory with water coming from Taunton, down the Parrett faster than ever. He said trigger points need to be revised.</p> <p>10.2 Matthew Wall gave an overview of maintenance so far saying approximately 96% has been completed. There are various reasons for some not being completed from maize to access issues but overall there have been very good reports about the new contractor Rousell Plant Hire. With regards to this year, preliminary invites have been sent and there is quite a lot of interest in all areas.</p> <p>10.3. Roger Barrington said Athelney Bridge has been replaced but it is lower than the water. IDS said although the beams are lower in the water he had measured the upstream and downstream water levels and there is no difference between them.</p> <p>Cllr Michael Caswell left the meeting @ 16:00.</p> <p>10.4 IDS updated Members on the dredging of the River Parrett saying it was very successful and although it was the final year there is a budget for next year with the presumption that the Drainage Board will continue with the work.</p> <p>10.5 James Winslade (JW) and Colin Passmore (CP) asked about the trees in the River Parrett as there is a build up of silt where the trees are in the bank of the River. IDS reported that the EA have committed to remove all saplings with a trunk diameter of less than 4 to 6 inches.</p> <p>10.6. Virginie Martin (VM) updated Members on Development Control, saying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She was investigating fencing adjacent to the rhyne along the A38 South of Dunball which the County Council had erected. • The developer for Kingsdown phase 3 has been in contact regarding drainage and connecting to the rhyne • The A38 Dunball roundabout (Bridgwater) works have been done before consent was granted. <p>10.7. The Chairman asked IDS to investigate why the attenuation ponds were dry during the floods. IDS said attenuation ponds are designed to attenuate flood flow and release it at greenfield rates so unless they have a penstock on them the excess water over and above greenfield rate will go into the attenuation at greenfield rate.</p>	
<p>11. Environmental Report</p>	<p>11.1. PAB told Members he was hoping to have more Environment Committee meetings in the coming year and was seeking approval from the Board to make the Joint Environment Committee a standing committee and for the Chair to be elected for a three year term.</p>	

	<p>Proposed by Cllr Stuart Kingham and seconded by James Winslade ‘to make the Joint Environment Committee a standing committee and for the Chair to be elected for a three year term. All in favour</p> <p>11.2. PAB told Members Drainage Boards are required by DEFRA to report on their work and standards in an annual report known as the IDB1 form. There are questions about environmental expenditure and other environmental matter such as access to expertise and the preparation of Water Level Management Plans and Biodiversity Action Plans. Currently the Boards do not collect financial data on environmental expenditure despite significant investment in environmental and SSSI management. Advice is being sought from ADA.</p> <p>11.3. PAB discussed proposals for updating the Policy Statement saying the Environment Act 2021 has been passed by law to require public bodies to be more transparent in how they are helping the environment. The committee recommends that the Boards update their Policy Statement to cover changes in legislation and to better reflect the Boards’ commitment to environmental protection and nature recovery.</p> <p>Proposed by James Winslade and seconded by Will Barnard to adopted the words ‘further to the requirements of the Environmental Act 2021, the Boards will review their Water Level Management Plans and Biodiversity Action Plans with reference to the local nature recovery strategy and relevant species conservation or protected site strategy for their areas’ All in favour</p> <p>11.4. The Chairman asked if plans can be given to the Area Supervisors to check areas that need to be desilted by contractors to make sure the water flows. IDS suggested himself, MSW & PAB draw up a programme for each problem area to try and do things better where possible. John Perrin said the EA and riparian owners are not doing their job properly and silt removal needs to be done as well as weed cutting. He did congratulate the Boards contractors who have done a good job at West Sedgemoor this year.</p>	<p>RESOLUTION 03</p> <p>RESOLUTION 04</p> <p>Action: P/20230131-01 To draw up a programme for problem areas of water flow</p>
12. Somerset Rivers Authority Update	12.1. IDS gave an update on the SRA saying a review of the 20 year flood action plan has been extended until the year end. The funding for the Water Injection Dredging on the River Parrett in 2023/24 has been approved. The EA has agreed to have a review of operations and flooding once they are out of incident response. At the RFCC meeting IDS heard the Government have agreed to implement Schedule 3 of The Flood and Water Management Act giving the lead local flood authority the responsibility to oversee, approve, inspect and adopt SUDS. Finally, the EA bid for £13 million for maintenance in Wessex Area this year but have only been awarded £8.2 million. David Jenkins (Chair of WRFCC) will write to	

	the EA and the minister asking them to identify all work that will not be done due to the lack of funding. Other Regions have also been affected.	
13. Any Other Business	<p>13.1. IDS said the Board had received two letters, one from David Steer, a resident at Fordgate scrutinising the EA's flood operations and how they are operating the Soway and the Parrett. IDS said he will share the questions with the EA and get back to him. The second letter was received from people in Allermoor saying how shameful and deceitful the EA flood operations of the Soway had been. Mark Heywood said there needs to be more clarity and honesty about how water is going to be moved around the moors.</p> <p>With regards to the new unitary council, Cllr Mike Lewis suggested the Board contact Bill Revins and say continuity is important and some Members are very knowledgeable and would like to remain on the Board even though they will no longer be councillors.</p> <p>IDS agreed to do so.</p> <p>Cllrs Stuart Kingham left the meeting at 16.55.</p> <p>13.2. James Winslade asked who polices the work the EA do. Tony Bradford said critical rhynes should be desilted every other year.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 17.10</p>	
14. Date of Next Meeting	Tuesday 18 April 2023	

Annex:

A. Parrett Board – Table of Outstanding Actions

CHAIR.....DATE

**ANNEX A TO
PARRETT BOARD MINUTES
DATED 31 JANUARY 2023**

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 - Ongoing
P/20211026-02	To complete a review of the Strategic Review of Plant Machinery and Manpower.	CEO – Ongoing
P/20230131-01	To draw up a programme for problem areas of water flow	Clerk, Contracts Manager & Ecologist