

MINUTES OF THE PARRETT FINANCE AND WORKS SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 JANUARY 2024

Attendance:			
Elected Members: Mr T Bradford (C) Mr S Kingham Mr C Passmore Mr J Winslade	Appointed Members: Cllr M Caswell Cllr N Cavill Cllr M Stanton Cllr G Wren	Officers: Mrs M Hammond Mrs K Kingston Mr I Sturdy Mr M Wall	Public:
Apologies:			
	Cllr A Betty		
Non-Attendance:			

Agenda Item:	Detail:	Action:
1. Attendance and Apologies	1.1. Apologies as per the above Attendance List.	
2. Items Additional to the Agenda	2.1. Matthew Wall – approval of tenders to be recommended to the full board	
3. Declarations of Interest	3.1. None	
4. Minutes of the Parrett F&W Meeting held on 13 Jun 2023	4.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 June 2023 were signed as a true and correct record	
5. Matters Arising	<p>5.1 Iain Sturdy (IDS) referred to the table of actions from the previous minutes.</p> <p>P/20230117-01 – almost complete, still a few remain outstanding</p> <p>P/20230117-03 Maggie Hammond (MH) confirmed that interest cannot be added to unpaid rates</p> <p>P/202301176-05 MH reported that she is still making enquiries</p> <p>P/20230613-01 Testing is being carried out and data is being received. Tony Bradford stated that there is no evidence that phosphates are produced via agriculture. He asked whether the water in the Kings Sedgemoor drain had been tested following an</p>	ACTION P/20240116-01

	<p>incident with Wessex Water recently. IDS said this would be taken as an action. IDS confirmed data is being gathered, the correct methodology must be used with data sharing. Colin Passmore added that the work links into the Lancaster University survey being carried out</p> <p>P/20230613-02 Ian Moodie had been invited to the next new members training meeting but was not able to attend. Invitations will continue to be extended. Tony Bradford said that Innes Thompson would also like to attend meetings where possible</p>	
Confidential Paper	<p>6.1 CLOSED SESSION</p> <p>Matthew Wall (MSW) circulated his paper for the tender awards and ran through the details. 6 out of the 16 contractors who had been invited to tender had requested further information. Gwill Wren asked why there was no interest from other contractors, particularly in the Parrett Langport area which has always been carried out by Bernard Perry. MSW replied that there is a lack of willingness to tender as it is such a large area. It was suggested that in future the largest areas are split into smaller parts. Members were concerned that the cost would escalate as there was only one contractor able to carry out the work. IDS is hopeful that in 3 years' time the areas may be split. Tony Bradford supported Bernard Perry's work as he gets on well with the local landowners and no one else is interested. MSW has approached Richard Vaux the area supervisor who sees no problem with a division of the area. IDS confirmed that the tenders were quite close but overall, slightly higher than last time, the process includes checking of track record and method statement. With Bernard Perry carrying out the work there is less need for supervision. Tony Bradford disagreed and said there is a need for a new contractor as it is not all about the price, the ability to carry out the work is essential. Stuart Kingham asked if there were contractors available? MSW confirmed this would be possible and also said that Bernard Perry is available with no standby charge meaning he is on call free of charge. Some areas are still underwater which is delaying work. Gwill Wren queried the Stanmoor and Southlake section which had not received any tenders. MSW said this work could be carried on an hourly rate basis under AC13 contract. The contractors interested will submit annual machine rates which are upgraded yearly and range between £45 and £55 per hour.</p>	

	<p>Members queried the CPI payment. MH confirmed this does not come into place until the second year of the contract.</p> <p>PROPOSED: Tony Bradford, SECONDED: Mike Caswell “that the recommendation to take the tender awards to the full board meeting is approved”</p> <p>James Winslade asked for a proviso to look at other options in 3 years. ALL IN FAVOUR</p> <p>Members thanked Matthew for his hard work throughout the tender process.</p> <p>MSW collected the confidential papers</p> <p>OPEN SESSION</p>	<p>RESOLUTION 1</p>
<p>6. Proposed Reserves Policy</p>	<p>6.1 MH referred to the paper included with the agenda. MH and IDS had looked at the risk register and updated it appropriately. MH would recommend to use the risk based methodology. She would suggest a free reserve in the Parrett of 750k. Last year’s free reserves were 544k. The paper suggests to make this up to 750k over ten years. This would cover items that are not covered by insurance such as a failed structure or a major incident.</p> <p>PROPOSED: Mike Caswell, SECONDED: Tony Bradford “that the Boards Finance and Works committee recommends that the Parrett board adopts the risk based reserve policy and has a plan in the next ten years to increase the reserve at the current point to 750k. The figures to be checked every 2 years” all in favour</p>	<p>RESOLUTION 2</p>
<p>7. Finance Report</p>	<p>7.1 MH reported that bank reconciliations had been carried up to December 23 and checked by Stuart Kingham.</p> <p>7.2 MH referred to the accounts sheet row 3 where the figure had risen as a result of a salary increase. The external services are funded by the underspend on salaries.</p> <p>7.3 There is an increase in the maintenance total which includes desilting and invasive weed control. There is also an increase in the Telemetry budget. Norman Cavill asked if council work is not carried out will it have an impact on the non routine maintenance. IDS confirmed that the budget is only for the riparian system combined with the repairs/renewals. For example the problem in the Perry Green area in Wembdon, whose responsibility is it? Tony Bradford suggested checking with the SRA. IDS reminded members that the board only operates within its own permissive powers. Work</p>	

	<p>would not be taken on requiring another authorities powers without full agreement or additional funding.</p> <p>7.4 A new budget line has been added for Water Quality Sampling.</p> <p>7.5 Tony Bradford asked if the Water Level Management Plans need reviewing. James Winslade agreed particularly in the Saltmoor area. IDS also agreed that the board should be targeting the areas that have the greatest difficulties first.</p> <p>7.6 The EA precept will increase by 2% and has been held at 2% for a number of years. The origin of this is this is a contribution from the boards for the work the EA does to alleviate flooding on main rivers. The cost of the recent pumping alone would easily cost the level of our precept several times over. IDS commented that it was good value for money.</p> <p>7.7 No new schemes have been set up in the last 2 years. There is a need to start putting funds in place, which is now possible due to external engineering resources. The SRA schemes are fully funded.</p> <p>7.8 Expenditure has increased by £410,000.</p> <p>7.9 Income – bank interest is up significantly.</p> <p>7.10 With the increase in the routine maintenance the penny rate is going up by 7.43%</p> <p>7.11 MH has spoken to the council to inform them of the Special Levy which is £1,112,650.00.</p> <p>PROPOSED: Tony Bradford, SECONDED: Mike Caswell “that the accounts are recommended to be taken to the full board for approval” All in favour. Maggie Hammond was congratulated on the report.</p> <p>7.12 MH reported that as of today rates outstanding are £8732.27 which is equal to 4%. Last year the figure was £8100. Maggie is very happy with the current position. At the moment there are 17 accounts to be taken to court. There was no court procedure last year but letters were written to debtors which resulted in more payments. This exercise will be carried out again this year.</p>	<p>RESOLUTION 3</p>
<p>8. Any Other Business</p>	<p>8.1 James Winslade would like more information to be sent out to riparian owners to make them aware of their responsibilities concerning maintenance of</p>	

	<p>their watercourses. MH said a newsletter is sent out each year with information regarding this issue. IDS agreed it is an enormous problem, areas need to be identified with the biggest problems where the board can use its permissive powers to carry out non routine maintenance and to focus work where lack of riparian maintenance affects properties. James Winslade said the cost should not go to the IDB. The riparian owner needs the opportunity to carry out the work perhaps in 6 months, if it is not done then the board would arrange for the work to be carried out but the cost to paid by the riparian owner. IDS agreed that the board has powers for this so notice could be served. It would not be an offence until the notice is not complied with, which could result in prosecution or as mentioned above the work is carried out by the board and the owner recharged. He believes a better way is to identify problem areas and get everyone in agreement to carry out the work with help from the board. He pointed out that any crisis needs to be averted, the Board should be proactive and work with people for a better outcome.</p> <p>MSW stated that in the Axe Brue area a Notice of Entry system has been used, but this is a time consuming exercise and there is no point serving notice unless it can be backed up.</p> <p>8.2 Mike Caswell queried the flooding problem at Combwich. IDS said this issue had been discussed previously in 2012 and thought it was agreed it was not a board problem. This will be looked into.</p>	
9. Date of next Meeting	Meeting closed at 4.10pm	

Annex:

A. Parrett F&W Meeting – Table of Outstanding Actions

CHAIRMAN.....DATE

**ANNEX A TO
PARRETT F&W COMMITTEE MINUTES
DATED 16 Jan 2024**

PARRETT F&W MEETING – TABLE OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Action Number:	Action:	Actionee:
P/20230613-02	An invitation will be extended to Ian Moodie to attend each Board's introduction to new members	Iain Sturdy - CEO
P/20240116-01	To test the water in the Kings Sedgemoor drain following a recent incident with Wessex Water	Iain Sturdy - CEO