

MINUTES OF THE PARRETT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD FULL BOARD MEETING HELD AT BRADBURY HOUSE ON 16 APRIL 2024 AT 14:00

Attendance:			
Elected Members: Will Barnard Anthony Betty (VC) Tony Bradford (C) Barrie Bryer Mark Heywood Rebecca Horsington John Perrin David Vigar James Winslade Colin Passmore	Appointed Members: Cllr Alan Bradford Cllr Hilary Bruce Cllr Mike Caswell Cllr Norman Cavill Stuart Kingham Cllr Liz Leavey Cllr Mike Stanton Cllr Julian Taylor Cllr Richard Wilkins	Officers: Phil Brewin Maggie Hammond (RFO) Naomi Johnson Rob King Kendra Kingston Iain Sturdy (Clerk/CEO) Matthew Wall	Public:
Approved Apologies:			
Roger Barrington	Cllr Lance Duddridge Cllr Richard Morgan Cllr Gwil Wren		
Non-Approved Apologies:			
Roger Coombes			

Agenda Item:	Detail:	Action:
1. Attendance and Apologies	1.1 The Chairman, Tony Bradford (TB) informed members that John Pope and John Tucker long term contractors for the Board had recently passed away and asked for a minute's silence as a mark of respect. He also said that the Axe Brue Chairman Jeff Fear is very ill in hospital and sends best wishes to him and all his family from the Board. Apologies as per the register	
2. Items Additional to the Agenda	2.1 Colin Passmore (CP) – Little Arch – will be discussed in item 8 of the agenda Maggie Hammond (MH) reminded members there will be a coffee morning and raffle in the office on Thursday 18 April to raise funds for Motor Neurone Disease. TB hoped to see as many members as possible to raise funds for a very worthwhile cause.	
3. Declarations of Interest	3.1 Will be declared throughout the meeting as needed	
4. Members of the public to address the meeting	4.1. No members of the public were present.	

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. Minutes of Full Board Meeting held on 30 January 2024</p>	<p>5.1 Stuart Kingham (SK) advised that he is no longer a Councillor as shown in the draft minutes. With this amendment the minutes were signed as a true and correct record of the meeting held</p>	
<p>6. Matters Arising and Review of Actions</p>	<p>TB went through the minutes asking for any matters arising.</p> <p>Julian Taylor (JT) item 6.7 Saltmoor – asked for the issue to be taken to the Environment Agency along with his concerns at their proposition for North Moor to be designated a flood storage reservoir. These will be discussed later in the meeting in item 8 together with item 6.8 Moors Association</p> <p>SK asked for an update on item 7.2 roof repairs and it was reported that these have been successfully completed.</p> <p>ACTIONS P/20191105-2 Not complete and will remain until election in 2025</p> <p>P/20240130-1 – Attendance is particularly poor from appointed members. Iain Sturdy (IDS) suggested writing to all members to remind them of their responsibility.</p> <p>PROPOSED: Mike Caswell, SECONDED: James Winslade “that members are written to and reminded of their responsibility to attend all board meetings”. All in favour</p> <p>P20240130-2 – Rob King (RK) informed the meeting that the weather conditions had been too wet to enter the area and the issue is now on the defect list.</p> <p><i>2.20pm Will Barnard arrived</i></p> <p>P/20240130-3 – The Chairman said the work is 2/3rd complete but the bank is slowly subsiding. IDS said the feedback will go to Wessex Water to repair the drove adequately.</p> <p>P20240130-4 – Outfalls at Newhouse Farm and Sam Gamlins were due to be jetted by the EA at the end of the summer, but work was not carried out. However a tree stump was removed from the pipe at Sam Gamlins outfall by the IDB yesterday.</p> <p>P20240130 – 5 – Work has not been completed. It has been scheduled for 22 April. If it does not happen on that date it will have to be rescheduled. IDS said it is an ongoing challenge which needs to be kept on top of.</p>	<p>NEW ACTION P20240130-1</p> <p>RESOLUTION 1</p>
<p>7. Health & Safety Report</p>	<p>Naomi Johnson (NJ) gave a verbal update as follows – at the meeting on 27 Feb a Visit In Pairs (VIP) register was updated to include dangerous animals. A policy decision needs to be made about how we handle this data and whether we should write to someone if their name is added to the register, advice is currently being sought.</p> <p>The Deputy Area Supervisors (DAS) have recently completed LANTRA training.</p>	

	<p>5 staff members have attended a Mobile Works training session.</p> <p>The new Operations Technician Charlie Ford has completed his new starter training.</p> <p>RK has given toolbox talks to all supervisors.</p> <p>1st Aid refresher courses have been booked.</p> <p>The H&S Auditor will be in on Tuesday to look at the H&S procedures. A H&S meeting will take place at the end of May to discuss the audit report and feedback will be given in the June Full Board meeting</p>	
<p>8. Flooding and Operational Issues - Discussion</p>	<p>8.1 The Chairman introduced the item asking for members to keep their points brief, straight to the point and to avoid repetition</p> <p>8.2 IDS has been made aware, in advance of the meeting, of issues at Long Load via Roger Coombes and general dissatisfaction from people in the area around pumping arrangements. This has been taken up with the EA and they have responded</p> <p>8.3 IDS - has received considerable correspondence from a landowner in Wetmoor, Mr Mike Curtis who hasn't seen his grass since September. It is a very difficult challenge in that area generally</p> <p>8.4 IDS – we have problems with the Sowy Operations</p> <p>8.5 IDS will note the discussions and any actions that we have to take away. We may not have technical answers today and if we have to take actions and have discussions with others, we will do that.</p> <p>8.6 Mark Heywood – The IDB have carried out their work but ultimately the EA operations are the problem. IDS responded that the IDB has done everything within its power during the flooding we have had. We depend hugely on main river operations.</p> <p>8.7 John Perrin – In the Long Load/Wetmoor area there could be a problem collecting drainage rates this year as landowners are very dissatisfied with the EA.</p> <p>Maggie Hammond (MH) said that we will explain to landowners the demand is for the work that the IDB carries out and the demand needs to be paid.</p> <p>The area in question is Langport/Martock/Ilchester. The complaints are more aimed at the EA not the IDB but the precept has to be paid to the EA by the IDB.</p> <p>David Vigar advised that the pumping happens at Langport first, Muchelney left to last - causing flooding</p>	

8.8 Will Barnard – Westmoor pumping station concerns in the order in which the various pumping stations are turned on by EA. Landowners want to understand where they sit in the queue and why they sit in that place in the queue.

Mike Stanton - has a copy of the EA response which states that the Moor (Wet Moor) used to be managed in 2 sections now it is treated as 1. Pressure needs to be kept on regarding the order of pumps being operated.

8.9 Will Barnard – general transparency from the EA would help. IDS advised that EA are generally clear about their operations but he also shared some asset condition stats provided by the EA. Brue area 94% in target condition, but further information within the report show that some have a target condition of poor, and some of these are failing.

EA are expected to receive 31% of their requested revenue funding for 2024/25. IDS asked them to work with us to understand the consequences of insufficient maintenance funding and feed that back up the management chain at EA and DEFRA. David Jenkins of the RFCC has also taken on this challenge.

Richard Wilkins – The policy of fixed when failed, is this a declared policy? IDS said it is a coping strategy

8.10 Alan Bradford – Fordgate pump not being used. Locals need to sit down with the engineers. He complimented the works on Northmoor. Things now need to be done differently.

Barry Bryer agreed. There seems to be a political agenda to save Bridgwater or Taunton.

TB agreed that good work had been done on Northmoor but it has just moved water from one place to another. Chedzoy is still flooded. He has been to meetings all over the country with managers from EA – none of them will say anything to people higher up. David Jenkins, who has been very proactive and speaks common sense is retiring in August, someone is needed to follow his way.

Mike Stanton agreed that David Jenkins is doing a tremendous job. There is a meeting on Monday of the RFCC. Tony Bradford has been on the committee for 9 years and is no longer allowed to attend. There are no drainage board members on the RFCC committee currently.

8.11 Rebecca Horsington – there seems to be a common theme, the EA need to broaden their normal procedures for operating of structures. IDS said they have trigger points for procedures.

8.12 James Winslade - Northmoor flooded twice, Currymoor 5 times, it happens extremely quickly. Reliant on Currymoor taking the water away. Otherwise it comes over the spillway which is being altered and needs to be monitored. Water is not getting to Northmoor pumping station. The issue is also at Saltmoor, water stays on the ground for months. IDB silt pump has been used. There is a tree in the watercourse by the pumping station. The pumps are in but water is not getting to them.

8.13 Tony Bradford – Chedzoy/Westonzoyland flooded 5 times with no pumps. KSD flooding more than the Parrett. We have been flexible in the past but we have no way of getting water out. The IDB have done what they can. EA do not seem to be in control of what they operate. Meetings take place regularly but we are not able to criticise and I can't see how things will change.

8.14 Alan Bradford – need locals with experience. People retiring earlier and taking all their experience and knowledge with them. It is important that this knowledge is passed on.

8.15 Julian Taylor – Fordgate – supports James Winslade. Has been looking at Northmoor drainage Board historic reports. The last 200 years reports say the only way to cope with flooding in Somerset is to make sure the main rivers can take as much water as possible as soon as possible. From 1980 decision suggested to concentrate on creating Wetland areas. Need more funding and resources to clear rivers

8.16 Tony Bradford – Moorland – The work carried out by WM Longreach was very well done. More work needs to be done further along the river to remove the reeds. The SRA need to have a look at it.

8.17 Mike Stanton – issues should be dealt with locally. He had received an email from Lincoln Council with regard to revenue v capital funding issues.

8.18 Will Barnard – there is a growing appetite amongst landowners to engage in a holistic review of strategic land use. Assuming that the rivers are maintained landowners can see that the world is getting more challenging wish to discuss the problems with the challenging work required

8.19 David Vigar – 2 Mile Drove penn is too high. A week or so before normal summer penning the levels have stayed the same– why?

Phil Brewin – there are things can be done downstream, but it is at target levels for a SSSI.

David suggested that this needs reviewing.

8.20 NEW ACTION – Tony Bradford – write to the EA with comments from this discussion.

Julian Taylor – suggested writing to the minister responsible.

Tony Bradford - The East have also had terrible flooding issues and have met with the secretary of state. There is a lot going on behind the scenes.

8.21 Colin Passmore – Little Arch - problems with outfalls at Steart. Now extra problems with flooding to properties at Stolford as all the outfalls are blocked except the Southbrook. 2 or 3 years ago discussion with EA. It is now at the point where something has to be done.

IDS – had been contacted by Ben Gibbard/Gibbins – and arranged to visit at Little Arch. There is an EA webcam that looks at the area. The shingle ridge has been washed away and blocks the area of the outfall. The telemetry showed a couple of peaks at high water. Just need to make sure the outfalls are working properly. No funding available for regular planned preventative maintenance. IDB needs to meet with EA and IDB officers and also include Colin Passmore to investigate a solution to this issue.

8.22 **Moors Associations** – TB had recently attended a Moors Association meeting and had to defend IDB. Landowners were very upset. He felt that some of the criticism was unfair on the IDBs.

Rebecca Horsington explained it was the first meeting with people unclear of the purpose and procedure. The association is not just for flooding issues.

Will Barnard said a layer is missing from IDBs and the association fills that gap with the local knowledge.

Colin Passmore said that the IDB is well run with an efficient office staff but feels that things are now slipping back.

Rebecca Horsington said that the moors were represented by many in this meeting, it is more about like-minded people coming together.

James Winslade added that locals will contact the association who will pass on the information. The area supervisors are available but cannot be in all places all of the time. IDS agreed that we cannot be everywhere all the time and it is good to be directed to the places where we are needed. FWAG is also on the committee.

John Perrin said there are discussions on all subjects which can help with conflicts.

P/20240416-2

**NEW ACTION
P/20240416-3**

	<p>IDS had attended the Northmoor meeting and felt it was useful.</p> <p>Mark Heywood added that it is more an approach to land management and enables landowners to let off steam.</p> <p>Tony Bradford reminded the room that at each Full Board meeting there is an opportunity for the Public to address the Boards.</p> <p>Colin Passmore said not to lose sight of the time Tony Bradford spends voluntarily.</p> <p>Barry Bryer is concerned over 40 years tendency for people to change from seeking the greater good over all to what suits them personally, they should represent the area.</p> <p>Julian Taylor agreed and asked who could join a moors association. There are concerns they do not include the right people.</p> <p>Tony Bradford has concerns re different requirements for each moor.</p> <p>James Winslade – raised water levels doing this already.</p>	
<p>9. Engineering, Operational Report & Environment Report</p>	<p>9.1 Rob King gave a verbal update.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many flooding issues being dealt with. • Standbys have been arranged during critical times. • The defects list is only 50% complete due to the weather conditions. • The Pawlett Mead tilting weir gear box failed but has now been repaired. • Surveillance is being carried out in some areas with signs in place informing there is CCTV in operation. This has resulted in less tampering with structures. • Penning discussion – if water is required, please phone Rob King who will arrange for levels as required as best we can. <p>9.2 James Winslade asked if the process could be staged. The EA is not able to stage but the Water Level Management Plans do have flexibility.</p> <p>9.3 Matthew Wall reported that maintenance was 82% complete in January, up to 92% today. This is a good result considering the ground conditions.</p> <p>9.4 Contract distribution – good spread of contractors but only one in the North Somerset area which is being tendered this year.</p> <p>9.5 Fordgate – Park Brook – drone footage was shown – desilting had been well carried out. Culvert cleared 90%. Saltmoor also desilted, with a job well done.</p>	

Tony Bradford asked James Winslade to monitor.

Colin Passmore said a bigger version of the desilt pump would be useful.

9.6 IDS reported on the work that Caroline Murray from Calm Engineering is involved in. In 2023/24 8 projects have been worked on with contracts awarded on 4 complete 1, out to tender on 1 and 2 at the appraisal stage. Good progress has been made. Slides were shown of the work being carried out.

9.7 At Knowle, which is outside of the Board's area, Richard Vaux had visited the site with an engineer who came up with a number of recommendations and shared the information with the lead local flood authority and other organisations

9.8 The current year programme 2024/25, there are a number of projects in this year. Slides were shown. There are quite a few projects that have been carried forward from previous years that are funded. The SRA maintenance dredge is complete. The dredging and bank scraping work needs to be tendered again. The KSD Banks project completion plan is a report we have agreed to undertake for the SRA, to review the outstanding works the EA didn't complete on that. Cobbs Leaze – a repair has been carried out and the EA are not keen on a collaborative project with the combined structure the project is now on hold

9.9 Development Control – Virginie Martin informed members of 2 sites and showed slides of the area One is a planning application for a solar farm at Nythe Road, Walton, Street. An objection is in place as there are access concerns and more detail is needed.

Mike Caswell, Richard Wilkins and Barry Bryer declared an interest in this item. No decisions were being made so they remained in the room.

The second is a consent application from Wessex Internet for 100 locations for cables to cross watercourses. These must be 2m below the bed of the watercourse.

9.10 Environment – Phil Brewin reported on landscape work and eel projects – there is an eel conference on 5 July in Glastonbury. He is currently involved in work on a beaver strategy in Somerset. There is a lot to think about when it comes to beavers. Phosphorous – Phil will attend a Somerset Council Scrutiny meeting to be held at the end of the month to give evidence on how the water is managed in Somerset. Local Nature Recovery Strategy – currently being developed

	<p>9.11 Tony Bradford asked for more information regarding mink traps and would like the Board to purchase a few – Natural England have purchased some which will be tested in Somerset. Phil is keen to interact. Rebecca Horsington asked if places can be nominated for the traps. Phil offered to talk outside of the meeting about this.</p> <p>With regard to the eel projects, a community led project from the Wedmore group have teamed up with the sustainable Eel group who are carrying an Eels in the Classroom programme this year.</p> <p>Phil gave an update on the KSD peat project telemetry. Slides were shown. Phil has been creating a list of works and will be liaising with local Board members to ensure they are onboard with the works.</p> <p>Pipe at Fiddlers End has been jetted recently and it has helped. Regular jetting would be beneficial.</p> <p>The pipe under Nythe Road is prone to blocking and would benefit from minor work to make it more flumed and easier for water to flow through. There is a possibility of carrying restorative maintenance to some areas. There are some existing telemetry sites in the area, and are hoping to extend this.</p> <p><i>Julian Taylor left the meeting and asked for his apologies to be noted for the next meeting</i></p> <p>IDS informed members that all of the work that Phil is carrying out on the Peat Project is grant aided through Defra who are frequent visitors.</p>	
<p>10. Issues and items to be raised with ADA</p>	<p>10.1 IDS informed Members that DEFRA are promoting a consultation on the draft strategy of English Drainage Boards Alternative Valuation Calculation Regulations 2024.</p> <p>It is work that ADA has been doing with DEFRA to allow new Drainage Boards to be created or existing Drainage Boards to expand their boundaries. IDS said it will not be compulsory to use the new valuation process so the Boards can continue using the existing systems.</p>	
<p>11. AOB</p>	<p>11.1 Alan Bradford – outlet at North Newton into the Board area – Councillor Frazer always mentioning this area, it is very silted up and needs clearing. The soil when it has been cleaned has been left on the bank and cannot be removed until it has been tested.</p> <p>Phil Brewin said it is outside the district and had been dealt with in the past using the Boards own machinery.</p> <p>Matthew Wall will meet Alan Bradford on site with a few to finding a solution.</p>	<p>NEW ACTION P20240416/4</p>

12. Date of next meeting	Finance and Works – 4 June 2.00pm Full Board – 18 June 2.00pm	
	Tony Bradford thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 4.30pm	

Annex:

A. Parrett Board – Table of Outstanding Actions

CHAIR..... DATE

**ANNEX A TO
PARRETT BOARD MINUTES
DATED 16 APRIL 2024**

PARRETT BOARD – TABLE OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Action Number:	Action:	Actionee:
P/20191105-2	To convene a Task & Finish Group Meeting to review Electoral Districts. IDS has asked Nick Stevens if he could arrange this meeting as soon as possible and he has already drawn up draft papers with options.	Special Advisor – Ongoing, Had been arranged but was cancelled due to members availability Bring forward closer to elections
P/20240130-02	Removal of trees in viewed rhyne between Parchey and Sutton Corner	Operations Manager
P/20240130-03	Reinstatement of Chedzoy Moor Drove following damage by Wessex Water	MSW/ Contracts Manager
P/20240130-04	Prompt EA to jet Sam Gamblins Corner	Clerk/CEO
P/20240130-05	Speak to the EA regarding removing the trees from the River Parrett	Clerk/CEO
P20240416-01	IDS to write to all members regarding importance of meeting attendance	Clerk/CEO
P20240416-02	To write to EA regarding comments at the meeting	Clerk/CEO
P20240416-03	MSW arrange site visit with Alan Bradford at North Newton	MSW-Contracts Manager