

**MINUTES OF THE PARRETT FULL BOARD MEETING HELD AT BRADBURY HOUSE ON TUESDAY  
22 APRIL 2025 AT 2.00PM**

| <b>Attendance:</b>  |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Elected Members:</b><br>Roger Barrington<br>Anthony Betty<br>Tony Bradford (Chair)<br>Barrie Bryer<br>Colin Passmore<br>John Perrin<br>David Vigar<br>James Winslade<br>Will Barnard | <b>Appointed Members:</b><br>Cllr Alan Bradford<br>Cllr Mike Caswell<br>Donna Gowler<br>Stuart Kingham<br>Cllr Liz Leavy<br>Julian Taylor | <b>Officers:</b><br>Mr I Sturdy<br>Mrs M Hammond<br>Mr R King<br>Mr M Wall<br>Mrs N Johnson<br>Mrs C Murray<br>Mrs V Martin<br>Mr P Brewin<br>Mr G Oliver<br>Mrs K Carleton | <b>Public:</b><br>Mark Besley<br>Damon Bridge (RSPB) |
| <b>Approved Apologies:</b>  |   |   |  |
| Rebecca Horsington<br>Mark Heywood  | Cllr Norman Cavill<br>Cllr Mike Stanton<br>Cllr Lance Duddridge<br>Cllr Gwil Wren   |   |  |
| <b>Non-Approved Apologies:</b>  |   |   |  |
| Roger Coombes   | Cllr Hilary Bruce<br>Cllr Dave Loveridge<br>Cllr Richard Morgan   |   |  |

| <b>Agenda Item:</b>               | <b>Detail:</b>  | <b>Action:</b> |
|-----------------------------------|---|----------------|
| 1. Attendance & Apologies         | The meeting started at 14.04. the chair apologised for the late start.  |                |
| 2. Items Additional to the Agenda | The Chair announced that sadly a long-standing member of the Consortium, Jeff Fear passed away last week. Jeff was Vice Chair of the SDBC since its inauguration. His dedication and availability at all times was second to none and since he was taken ill, the Chair has lost a shoulder to lean on and a listening ear. Problems in last few years would not have been so well resolved without him, and the Axe Brue Board of which he was Chair will miss him tremendously. The Chair felt we probably won't see the likes again in terms of dedication and he will be missed very much. We have conveyed our condolences to his family. The board stood and held a minute of silence to remember Jeff.<br><br>The Chair welcomed Damon Bridge from the RSPB. |                |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | <p>The chair also introduced farmer Mark Besley from West Monkton, attending as a member of the public.</p> <p>The Chair also welcomed Katy Carleton, Newly appointed Senior Governance Officer.</p>   |  |
| <p>3. Declarations of Interest</p>                     | <p>None notified, as usual will cover as they arise.</p>   |  |
| <p>4. Members of the public to address the Meeting</p> | <p>Mark Besley thanked the board for allowing him to speak. He farms at West Monkton, where most of his land is non IDB. He purchased some land on Currymoor recently and planted 190 cricket bat willows along the bank of the viewed rhyne. He did some checks, but searches didn't show anything in terms of limitations. He phoned the SDBC office and says he was told that as long as the ditch can be accessed both sides it should be fine. He has since been advised that access is required from his side and the planted trees make this not He wants to come to a solution which suits both parties. The trees are planted 9-10 metres apart, he's not sure if this is enough for machinery to work round. It is possible to work from the other side along part of it. If it is not possible to work between trees, he feels it would be a shame to remove them and is asking if we could try this year. If it is not possible for a contractor, then perhaps take out every other tree to see if this helps. If maintenance is manageable but more expensive, he would be happy to be invoiced for the extra cost. He probably would have sought formal consent if he had been aware of the byelaw.</p> <p>Roger Barrington (RB) asked if the trees grow up rather than out. Mark advised that side growth is pruned by a contractor (CS Wright) and they don't get bushy.</p> <p>Matt Wall (MW) asked who owns the trees. Mark advised that a company supply them. They then hope for them to be harvested and sold back under a gentleman's agreement to the company after 15-20 years.</p> <p>RB said we need to be clear on the law and asked if both sides need to be accessible.</p> <p>Stuart Kingham (SK) asked how many trees there were. It was confirmed to be 190.</p> <p>David Vigar (DV) asked what the possibility is of them coming down in wind. Mark felt this would be unlikely as the trees are very flexible - they bend them over to prune them.</p> <p>SK noted there are some at the side of the road at Edington, but these are not on a viewed rhyne.</p> <p>IDS queried who Mark had spoken to at the office. Mark said he spoke informally to someone and was told it would be ok if accessible from both sides, but doesn't know who.</p> <p>Virginie Martin (VM) confirmed she has spoken to all her colleagues and it is unknown who he spoke to. All her team would have advised Mark to apply for consent.</p> <p>Mark left the meeting at 14.20</p> <p>The Chair noted that there have been many similar cases previously and asked IDS to clarify byelaws. IDS referred to the byelaws which apply to all watercourses in the board's area, viewed or not. The Act says that consent within the byelaws should not be unreasonably withheld so we need to</p> |  |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  | <p>consider whether it is reasonable or not, i.e. if he had applied, would we have consented?<br/> VM confirmed that if he had applied, we would have asked him to move the trees 6 or 9 metres away from watercourse.<br/> Phil Brewin (PB) brought to the board a similar case from a few years ago where an agreement was entered into as non-viewed. Trees were set back where access was not available.<br/> Another member gave an example of a similar case where they were planted more widely apart.<br/> The Chair wondered who owns other side. Does byelaw stop them planting on the other side.<br/> RB suggested this could mean we could be refused access to maintain the rhyne in the future.<br/> IDS confirmed that we have the power to gain access with notice and take entry to maintain. The byelaw also says if we cause damage we must pay compensation in the process of maintenance. It doesn't compel us to access on other side, we have powers to do from either side. We choose this side as it is the best use of public funds.<br/> Will Barnard asked if it is reasonable for us to ask him to move them.<br/> The Chair cited a case of poplars on the banks in Stawell. We compelled them to move these and need to apply the same rules to all. Also the debris causes a risk of snagging the machines oil hoses on branches.<br/> DV noted that if we do damage to the trees with machinery, it is very high value.<br/> James Winslade was concerned about the risk of them going over in a storm.<br/> DV/SK suggested they may still be easy to move if done soon.<br/> IDS asked members if consent would have been approved. Unanimously no. The reasons being interference with access for maintenance, potential effect on stability of banks, and the potential for additional maintenance.<br/> Alan Bradford would have liked to have seen the site, but wondered if taking out every other tree would be an option.<br/> The Chair felt that we could allow Mr Beasley time to move the trees when they would be at least risk of dying.<br/> He has offered to pay additional maintenance which we could call upon if we need to wait and send a contractor back.<br/> VM explained that she has suggested this, but Mark felt they would be too big by Sept.<br/> SK asked who the contractor is.<br/> MW confirmed it is Perry.<br/> Donna asked if they are on the Currymoor SSSI.<br/> It was confirmed that they are not.</p> <p><b>“We refuse to allow the trees to remain where they are, and ask the landowner to move them back 9m to be outside of the bylaw zone. We are prepared to wait and this be done at the first opportunity to move them at a time that causes the least damage/risk and by Sept 2025”</b><br/> <b>Proposed: Stuart Kingham</b><br/> <b>Seconded: Mike Caswell</b><br/> <b>All in favour</b><br/> VM to write to Mark Besley to advise him of the decision.</p> | <p><b>RESOLUTION<br/>01</b></p> <p><b>ACTION:<br/>P/20250422 -<br/>01</b></p> |
|--|--|---|

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p>5. Minutes of the Parrett Full Board Meeting held on 28 January 2025</p> | <p><b>PROPOSED: Anthony Betty</b><br/> <b>SECONDED: Julian Taylor</b><br/> <b>“that the minutes of the Full Board meeting held on 28 January 2025 are signed as a true and correct record of the meeting held”.</b><br/> <b>All in favour</b></p>   | <p><b>RESOLUTION 02</b></p>  |
| <p>6. Matters Arising</p>   | <p>P6 Julian Taylor noted that he has not yet written to another source.<br/> IDS started writing to Emma Hardy, but things changed at that time and the action became superseded.</p> <p><b>Review of Actions:</b></p> <p><b>P/20240130-02</b> Removal of trees at Parchey/Sutton Corner. MW advised completed in conjunction with a highway closure.</p> <p><b>P/20240130-03</b> The Chair confirmed Chedzoy Moor Drove has been reinstated and a fantastic job done.<br/> MW advised that this was agreed at a site meeting and they will be submitting consent for reinstatement of a ditch which will be easier for access later. MW to send courtesy letter of thanks.</p> <p><b>P/20240130-04</b> Jetting Sam Gamblins is complete but will need doing again going forward.<br/> James Winslade (JW) confirmed that Sam Gamblins and Newhouse structure were done, however Newhouse tidal flap was wedged open. He lost 75 acres of corn and nearly flooded 3 houses. The flap was open for 3 months on an EA structure which needs to be operational. We are paying the EA who are saying structures are checked but they are not.<br/> IDS we do ask for them to be done, they will say their powers are permissive, but this is what the precept is for.<br/> JW met with local EA workers who have confirmed it is theirs, but higher managers say it is not a high priority. We have highlighted it wasn't working.<br/> IDS will write more formally to them.</p> <p><b>P/20240130-05</b> Removing trees from Parrett and Tone.<br/> RB advised they are still there and will get harder to remove as they grow. He spoke to someone from EA, and was told it will be done if there's enough money.<br/> IDS will highlight/ask again.</p> <p><b>P/20240619-01</b> Maize policy meeting has taken place and a policy is being developed. We have received helpful legal advice.<br/> MW explained we serve notice under section 14 of the Land Drainage Act. If we damage crops, we are liable to compensate for damage.<br/> RB noted that if farmers are aware, it is their own fault.<br/> MW confirmed that the notice we serve mitigates against claims. They have planted at their own risk, but we need to travel across crop at times and need to be consistent. Officers will bring a paper to the June meeting with a proposed policy.<br/> IDS explained that Wilkin Chapman have advised us to have a consistent policy on how we serve notice and take access to maintain. If we have done this correctly, it will mitigate the amount of compensation we may need to pay.<br/> SK thought that legally land owners aren't allowed to spray crops near rhynes so shouldn't plant them near rhynes..</p> | <p><b>ACTION P/20250422 - 02</b></p> <p><b>ACTION P/20250422 - 03</b></p> <p><b>ACTION P/20250422 - 04</b></p> |

|                                    |  |   |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
|                                    | <p>TB asked if this could be advised in next year's rates notice. MW advised we do every year as a matter of course. TB felt there are areas that EA won't go through due to maize, and it's not economically viable to go back. Will come back to a future meeting.</p> <p><b>P/20250128-01</b> Unconsented fencing at Brickyard Rhyne – update later from VM.</p> <p><b>P/20250128-02</b> Operation of Monksleaze Clyce, IDS has contacted the EA as it is a recurring issue. They only ask if it can be operated outside of normal protocols when they consider it necessary and we take reasonable position. However more water from Sowey is having a detrimental effect in the lower areas of Kings Sedgemoor is showing. Hopefully when the banks are raised at KSD and flaps this will help. A member asked about compensation from EA for damage. The Chair noted that there have been examples all over the country but no action taken. In this case the IDB had reluctantly agreed to the EAs request.</p> <p><b>Resolution 08</b> IDS meeting with Wembdon Parish Council. IDS to progress</p> <p><b>P/20250128 – 06</b> Stretcholt: will report on later in the meeting.</p> | <p><b>ACTION</b><br/><b>P/20250422 - 05</b></p> |
| <p>7. Health and Safety Report</p> | <p>Verbal update from Naomi Johnson (NJ)</p> <p>7.1 Incidents reported: 2 of verbal aggression from landowners. One in person to an Area Supervisor, one over the telephone to finance regarding arrears. These have both been recorded and support has provided where needed.</p> <p>7.2 NJ has set a timetable for monthly awareness topics. She will send out updates to all staff with a monthly focus on H&amp;S. The first is risk awareness &amp; risk assessments. Future topics to include CoSHH, ladder safety, asbestos awareness, fire safety, accident &amp; near miss reporting, wellbeing, manual handling, lone working and driving for work. Hoping that over 12 months this will keep knowledge up to date.</p> <p>7.3 Full H&amp;S audit took place last year (5 yearly). The annual update from Worknest is next week.</p> <p>7.4 Training: 3 staff have recently undertaken Lantra 4X4 training. The new DAS has also completed Defra water safety awareness training. Jody has completed Mental Health First Aid training.</p> <p>No questions</p>   |   |
| <p>8. Staffing Update</p>          | <p>IDS introduced a new colleague, Katy Carleton (KC) appointed as Senior Governance Officer. This will mean that we will endeavour to make Minutes available as a published draft much more quickly. Kendra Kingston (Finance Assistant) retiring at the end of June after 17 years.</p> <p>The Chair proposed presenting something from the Consortium at the next Management Committee. He praised Kendra for her tireless hard work.</p>   |   |
| <p>9. Governance</p>               | <p><b>9.1 Elections for 2025:</b> The process starts now. We have prepared the electoral register which is available to view. To approve the process of the Electoral Register.</p> <p><b>Proposed: Colin Passmore</b><br/><b>Seconded: Anthony Betty</b><br/><b>All in favour</b></p>   | <p><b>RESOLUTION</b><br/><b>03</b></p>          |

|          |  |                          |
|----------|--|--------------------------|
|          | <p><b>9.2 SDBC Management Committee Quorum:</b> A proposal was put forward to reduce the quorum for this committee as it is struggling with attendance. At the last meeting members voted to change the number of members to achieve that. It is currently 4 Axe Brue, 3 Parrett, 2 NSL. This needs to be approved by each board.</p> <p>A proposal was made <b>“to change to quorum for the SDBC Management Committee to 3 Axe Brue, 2 Parrett, 1 NSL”</b><br/> <b>Proposed: Stuart Kingham</b><br/> <b>Seconded: James Winslade</b><br/> <b>All in favour</b><br/> Barrie Bryer (BB) noted that the Parrett Board always had enough to be quorate.</p> <p><b>9.3 Future Boards Structure:</b> IDS advised there is an ongoing interest in what an amalgamated board might look like. Officers have been asked by the Consortium to put together a briefing paper showing what the process would be, how it might look, timescales, benefits, disadvantages etc. The SDBC Management Committee have asked for this to be discussed in Board Meetings. This largely comes from poor attendance and the difficulty in doing business when not quorate. There are also some drivers nationally. There could be benefits locally such as being a bigger local player to perhaps step in when the EA can't, having more resources available. Also ensuring consistency of approach across the IDB districts. Possible disadvantages around local knowledge, so we would need to look at how we deal with that. This is not being pushed, but needs to be on the radar.<br/> The Chair noted that this is not a bolt out of blue. When the Boards reconstituted, it was passed by all 3 boards that it would be looked at in 5 years as ongoing action from that review.<br/> Duplication of process across 3 boards is time consuming and costly.<br/> IDS will bring a paper per to a future Board Meeting.<br/> CP noted that including SDBC everything is done x 4 not x 3. This includes accounts.</p> <p><b>9.4 Finance:</b> IDS explained that whilst this meeting does not usually cover finance there are a couple of updates:<br/> Changes to double cab pickups tax implications. They are being treated as cars not commercial vehicles under new rules. We don't pay corporation tax so there is no implication. They are also not used for personal use, so there is no benefit in kind.<br/> CP felt the tax is based on where they are kept, but these are pool vehicles.<br/> Outstanding drainage rates balance: £6456.20. This is currently double this time last year. Liability orders are all in place, and we continue to chase.</p> | <b>RESOLUTION<br/>04</b> |
| 10. RSPB | Landscape Recovery Projects: The Chair invited Damon Bridge from the RSPB to present.<br>Damon is working on a project in partnership with the Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), and introduced his colleagues: Jamie Lock (Project Liaison Officer), Xanthe Waite (Community Officer).<br>The project is a new environmental Land Management Scheme which is part of the offer from Defra following our exit from the Common Agricultural Policy. Sustainable farming funding has been withdrawn but Landscape Recovery is a ringfenced part of Defra's budget. There were opportunities to bid for 2 years of development  |                          |

to prepare a proposal. FWAG/RSPB have led this from 2023 to support farming and the Environment in this part of the country for the next 20 years on an entirely locally developed project. If Defra agree to fund it, they create a local team to administer and provide support on site.

This is one of 56 Landscape Recovery projects in the UK. Some of the round 1 projects are close to implementation. Defra are likely to announce 3 later in the year

The last year has been spent bringing landowners together who have agreed to engage in the development stage. After this they can decide individually if they wish to accept any offer from Defra. Of the 2.5k parcels of land involved 50% are within the protected sites network and most have already had previous agri-environment support in the last 10-20 years. This is an opportunity to bid for critical infrastructure and also fund a local delivery team which could include water management under the guise of the IDB. This is where Defra focus is, and they have some goalposts: food (pasture & meadow management), ditch management. They will need to make sure that the management within that site fits within the constraints of flood and drought. Open farmed beef grazing is the vision with pockets of nature rich wetland.

Helen White (FWAG Farm Liaison Officer) advised that the team have spoken with landowners to assess and come up with priority outcomes. Suggested and spoken to farmers about land use and if there is any appetite for change. They have found that much of what is being looked at under LR fits well with traditional methods. There has been a mixture of reactions, but feedback of all kinds is valuable as landowners' priorities vary, and all involved so far are happy to remain within the consultations. Moor Associations engagement has been encouraged. Payments being considered using other schemes as a benchmark. Damon confirmed that where there are no existing benchmarks, they are working with Harry Lang (surveyor).

Damon explained that they are undertaking community engagement to determine the impact on businesses and people living there, and talking to local initiatives. Drop-in sessions are scheduled for May and later in the year. The first year has been exploratory, and are now sharing the ideas.

Questions:

Julian Taylor (JT) asked about the level of community consultation. Landowners are a small population in comparison to the land represented. He feels drop-in sessions are controlled and not always the best way to consult, and that publicised open meetings with conversation and questions are better.

Alan Bradford (AB) regarding community networks, there is nobody from Somerset council involved.

BB asked where the picture of traditional meadow is from. Damon advised it is West Sedgemoor.

BB noted that Kings Sedgemoor is mostly rushes now.

Damon advised that on an SSSI rush control is carried out.

DG confirmed that it is not favourable for an SSSI to be all rushes.

CP asked who will police the state of the moors.

Damon confirmed that Defra will not continue to fund a project if it is not meeting proposed conditions.

DV noted that this will only work with cooperation and talking to IDB's. He is concerned that rhyes will be low in the summer to facilitate these schemes.

Damon countered that if there is not enough water they would have to look at other outcomes.

AB asked if this will upset the balance of farming. Grassland loss may mean people move upland and affect rents.

Damon said it might need to change regardless as the climate is different. They prefer open grazed farmed landscape, but some of lowest parts might change.

JT asked if the scheme has assessed what the proposals will mean for those living there but not farming. He asked if water tables were going to be raised.

Damon confirmed that yes in some areas for peat. If a stringent flood risk assessment showed detriment, then the scheme wouldn't be funded.

The Chair interjected that this is an initial presentation, and the IDB responsibility is to its ratepayers.

CP asked what would the effect on the cost be to the running of the IDB. He felt they need to look at existing water levels and maintenance costs

IDS reiterated the Chair's point. It is important asap to start to get to detail of what a water level regime needs to be, and we need to be involved in discussions. It might be opportunity to improve where it is currently difficult to get water in/out. There are various stakeholders who all need to be part of process developing the future. His uncertainty lies in the levels of payment to landowners, and the water level regime and where needs to be established/decided.

WB declared that he works for FWAG so has an interest.

Landscape affecting drainage systems this is the first opportunity for a local team to develop schemes themselves rather than someone from central government deciding.

Damon showed map of parcels of land. If changes are made they would be interested to know how much buy-in there would be. He showed a map of West Sedgemoor, made up of separate hydrological blocks and structures which prevent the movement of water. They would like to see something simpler, and showed map of what this could look like.

IDS asked if it would be a one water level moor.

Damon advised it is modelled as 3.

Kings Sedgemoor/Sutton Moor map showed high and low areas which would require a different approach and could not all be the same. They would also need to consider how a proposal might look in 20 years.

The scheme would also like input on the creation nutrient interceptor sites, i.e a small 10-hectare block designed to remove nutrient en-route to protected sites. Potentially Monksleaze Clyde could hold water to ease elsewhere. They are currently working through what might work, the EA are supportive. It could save the cost of pumping and compensation.

In terms of timeline: they must submit deliverables to Defra by the end of December. They would like to work with the IDB on viability.

Damon is here to ask how the board suggest is best to proceed.

Now is the best time to develop water level planning. There is the potential for capital work on ageing structures to support management. How would the IDB like to be involved in delivery.

The Chair has suggested a subcommittee as the IDB does need to be involved. He noted that all water in/out comes from main rivers and unless EA maintain these, it's not possible. His concern is paying farmers to leave and not maintain their watercourses.

**Proposal to set up subcommittee to work alongside the scheme and Phil Brewin:**  
**Proposed: David Vigar**

|   |  |                                      |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|
|   | <p><b>Seconded: Alan Bradford</b><br/> <b>All in favour.</b><br/>         DG suggested a similar subcommittee for Axe Brue. More Parrett specific.<br/>         WB asked if officers could offer connectivity.<br/>         PB suggested the Parrett Board should take a lead.<br/>         Committee Members: John Perrin, Julian Taylor, Will Barnard, Alan Bradford, David Vigar, James Winslade<br/>         The chair thanked Damon for his presentation.</p>   | <p><b>RESOLUTION 05</b></p>          |
| <p>11. Flooding and operational issues – Discussion</p> | <p>IDS referred to the mention of lack of EA funding for main river maintenance. The IDB have worked hard to obtain a statement from the EA of what maintenance will and won't be done by them including maps. IDS showed these. On these, red shows where main river maintenance will not be funded, green shows main river maintenance that will be done this year, amber is undetermined. JT would like copy of the document.<br/>         IDS to circulate.<br/>         EA summary: <i>"Whilst an additional £1.2m of FCRM Grant in Aid funding has been received in comparison to 2024-25, Wessex have still only received 63% of the total 2025-26 bid of £15.2m meaning the programme has had to be prioritised. The increase in funding has allowed us to keep pace with inflation and contract out work in high consequence systems where Field Team are unable to deliver, in contrast to last year when no work was contracted out.</i><br/> <i>The 5% increase in IDB Precept enables us to keep pace with inflation, meaning a similar operation and maintenance programme as the previous year.</i><br/> <i>The £540k SRA Grant will enable us to deliver weed cut work in locations that would not have met the prioritisation criteria for FCRM Grant in Aid this year."</i><br/>         IDS read the list of what will not be maintained (as per EA Summary).<br/>         BB asked if the EA are not maintaining will they need less people to pay.<br/>         IDS advised EA have said they will be retraining staff.<br/>         JT wrote to his local EA to ask if they would maintain North Moor Main Drain. They said he as the riparian owner is responsible. He only owns 100m of the bank.<br/>         The Chair advised that 99% of land adjacent to main river is owned by the EA so they are the riparian owner.<br/>         VM asked how the EA decided on which watercourses were priority for maintenance.<br/>         IDS Explained they use their AIMS system which identifies if they own it and which features benefit as a result of the maintenance, rather than the current standard of the river.<br/>         WB asked how do we do the best with what we have and how do we get more money in to prop it up.<br/>         The Chair said the EA have money but not the will. If the money can be found, it will fall to the IDB's to deliver. It costs more to get consents than to get work done and it will cost more in the future if left.<br/>         CP asked if we have any money from the Flood Recovery Fund.<br/>         IDS advised this will only fund work within the year and we must give back what is not used.<br/>         JT noted it was interesting that from recent government statements they are looking to get rid of quangos, the EA is likely to be eventually removed, and go back to Defra as a long-term plan.</p> | <p><b>ACTION P/20250422 - 06</b></p> |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | <p>Anthony Betty (ABe) asked how we make sure that the half a million given to the EA by the SRA is spent in Somerset. Have they looked at giving these funds to other flood bodies rather than the EA.</p> <p>The Chair advised that the SRA income is about £3m a year. This is the first time they have given any to the EA for maintenance following pressure from the IDB. There was another half a million for dredging. The money should be there for main river maintenance as per the SRA initial set up.</p> <p>JW agreed that when Owen Paterson asked what could be done the vision was for river maintenance and we are far from this now. IDS confirmed that more SRA funding goes into main river work than anything else. The SRA request a list of what that will be done with that funding and the money is paid on completion of work. The SRA is paid for by everyone via Council Tax not just IDB ratepayers.</p> <p>BB asked if the EA are not maintaining a river by your land, can you maintain it yourself instead.</p> <p>IDS gave an example of Alan Franks (Axe Brue Board), who knew work on the River Brue would not be done He has filled in paperwork to obtain consent and has appointed contractors to carry out works.</p> <p>WB asked if this is a point of leverage we have the EA, can we engage with them.</p> <p>IDS noted there was a bigger challenge. We have knowledge and capability to do some more of the work, but how do we fund it and where is the capacity in our small organisation. If any rivers become critical, we perhaps need to look at either reserves or another public funding agreement.</p> <p>JW noted that the precept is paid to EA, but no responsibility taken.</p> <p>IDS quoted from the EA summary of precept which says that 2 thirds is spent on operations.</p> <p>CP said we will get a bit more from bank interest.</p> <p>The Chair blames the problem mostly on abandonment, letting people just store water.</p> <p>IDS suggested looking at the list of what is not being done and identify/prioritise what will cause the Board most problems.</p> <p>MW clarified pie chart includes 44% which will not be done.</p> |  |
| <p>12. Maize/ Crops update</p>                   | <p>Covered under Item 6. Matters Arising – Outstanding Actions</p>   |  |
| <p>13. Operational &amp; Engineering Reports</p> | <p><b>13.1 Environment:</b> Phil Brewin (PB) noted that lack of main river maintenance is already causing environmental issues.</p> <p>13.1.1 Defra funded Peat projects: In the Parrett this was small engineering and telemetry. In Kings Sedgemoor, they struggled with water not getting to the peat in dry times. The aim was reduced leakage and increase capacity to deal with dry periods which was impacting wildlife and farmers.</p> <p>DV asked why only one of the 2 pumps is working at Henley. In December there will be some funding available. We need to be ready to deliver projects. The pumps are a critical structure for the IDB. It was EA constructed but they are no longer interested. We are looking to repair it and ask Defra to make it an IDB asset.</p> <p>13.1.2 Telemetry. New non-contact sensors have been used in North Somerset.</p> <p>13.1.3 Eels: a training day was organised with SERP and Sustainable Eel Group where they made eel ropes. The ropes</p>  |  |

have been tried along with some engineered solutions. Some funding has been allocated to put in a dozen more passes.

13.1.4 Mink control was discussed at the AGM and a guest speaker explained a successful programme which has eradicated mink in East Anglia using telemetry traps. They are looking at the possibility of introducing something in Somerset, probably in conjunction with existing projects.

SK advised there are many mink on Catcott Moor.

The Chair noted the amazing results in eradicating mink in East Anglia and wondered if the RSPB could look at this. There are hundreds of mink in the KSD.

13.1.5 Invasive species: floating pennywort is back following good control previously. It is very hard to control, but the best thing to do is prevent. Contractors follow a biodiversity policy. The EA are looking at more effective substances to control.

13.1.6 Beavers are now present in the area. We are preparing and the SWT have produced some work on how to manage them. Licencing is explained and Phil ran an ADA training day, he is now qualified and holds a licence to manage Beavers and reduce impacts on flood risk assets.

13.1.7 PB ran through some other environmental matters: Nature Recovery Strategies; Land Use Framework (Defra document) on what is required to meet objectives on housing/nature etc. Defra study into IDB's and their relation to carbon, working with local partners, barriers. There is a meeting next Tuesday if any members want to attend.

Lady member left at 16.46pm

Donna Gowler DG asked about Land Use Framework for which the consultation ends on 25<sup>th</sup> April and if the IDB is putting in a response.

The Chair feels there are too many organisations all trying to do things and there should be a more joined up approach.

IDS advised we were consulted and he asked for input. Phil Brewin attended the meeting. We will collate anything that comes back.

WB pointed out that there were lots of doers in the room. We need to focus on the future items on Phil's list and be part of the conversation.

PB said we need to make sure we are resourced and involved.

**13.2 Operations**

Rob King is off poorly so IDS showed slides of works carried out. Kingsdown Estate Drove the management company have done some work on the watercourses.

CP feels should have been done earlier.

The staff are dealing with outstanding hazards on some structures. Photos displayed showing before and after of tree clearance work.

Stockland flap at tilting weir: Flagged by Justin that a section of channel had silted up. We are dealing with our section.

CP advised there is also a problem with a flap further up. He feels the EA have given up.

IDS advised we are trying to hold them to account.

Caroline Murray and Calm are trying to help on this one. She has raised it at an SRA Technical Group Meeting about both flaps where we asked them to commit to remedying it. We need to consider whether we apply for SRA funding to do the work ourselves.

**13.3 Engineering**

|  |   |                                 |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
|  | <p>Caroline showed her map of the board area and progress on projects complete, progress and pending.<br/> Caroline is happy to share the map. She then ran through slides of works completed.<br/> Starsand Clyce has failed. It was budgeted for this year but has now failed and needs full replacement. We had a budget for Fidler's End of £30k but this has now been funded through the peat project. We therefore have £30k project budget left to move to Starsand Clyce for a full replacement.<br/> <b>Resolution to move this funding across</b><br/> <b>Proposed: Colin Passmore</b><br/> <b>Seconded: Stuart Kingham</b><br/> <b>All in favour.</b><br/> SRA Programme: Sowy bank raising is completed and Calm are looking at outfalls on Monday.<br/> KSD banks going out to tender at the end of this week. We have had 4 interested contractors who Calm will be going back to this week.<br/> Feedback from stakeholders contains some remaining actions.<br/> CP asked about Port of Bristol.<br/> This will be covered by Development Control.<br/> <b>13.4 Development Control</b><br/> VM has asked the EA about the Bridgwater Barrier hoping for an update on secondary defence. They have said there is nothing to report, just showed VM where they are actively working.<br/> <b>Planning:</b> In terms of planning Development Control are looking at works in the following areas: west of Wembdon at Cockerhurst Farm (near the cemetery and outside the IDB area); Huntworth motorway services; south of Strawberry Farm along Bower Lane; a site just south of the Willow Man.<br/> There are lots of sites coming up, and we are looking at existing overland flood routes, surface water run-off, keeping a 9m easement on viewed rhynes, consideration of water voles, the need for access to the 9m as well as the 9m itself, and the motorway noise barriers effect on Rhynes and access.</p> <p>Bristol Port scoping opinion which is effectively a Steart 2. We are looking at the impact of the development on loss of storage in the area. Where will water be stored and where will it go. We have also fed back concerns with the outfall at Little Arch End/Northbrook.<br/> CP feels that this needs to come into this area. He is very concerned about the outfall at Northbrook. He feels it needs board involvement and consultation.<br/> VM explained that it is still just a scoping opinion and no planning has been granted yet.<br/> IDS confirmed that this project is still running in parallel with other things, but we need to keep an eye on it.<br/> VM then talked about Station Road, Ilminster which is just outside the IDB area. There is surface water flood risk. There has been flooding on a static caravan site. Proposals to mitigate the redevelopment safely include widening a bridge, and a main river channel as well as land raising. There are issues with surface water connection and we have raised an objection.<br/> A member left at 17.08</p> | <p><b>RESOLUTION<br/>06</b></p> |
|--|---|---------------------------------|

|                          |   |                                       |
|--------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
|                          | <p><b>Consents:</b> Fence consent, Hook Rhyne Moorlinch - we have consented the enclosure of the site but negotiated access at both ends along the viewed rhyne.</p> <p>Following on from the last enforcement at Brickyard Rhyne the fence has now been moved back. The bank is still a mess, but we have assurances that it will be resolved..</p> <p>WB thanked officers for getting this sorted.</p> <p>VM explained that she hasn't managed to get the landowner to remove one section of fence, but we will see how the next round of maintenance is impacted.</p> <p>CP asked about the bank at Pedwell.</p> <p>BB advised it has been levelled and moved elsewhere.</p> |                                       |
| 14. ADA & SWADA          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SWADA Spring meeting Weds 7<sup>th</sup> May, Junction 24</li> <li>• IDS noted we had been hoping for a visit afterwards to Bridgwater Barrier, but this is not possible so it will be a visit to Steart.</li> <li>• The Chair would like a report on work done by the IDB on the River Cary to submit to the ADA Gazette.</li> <li>• Alan Bradford feels the meeting should entail more action less talking.</li> </ul>   | <b>ACTION<br/>P/20250422 -<br/>06</b> |
| 15. Any Other Business   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JW advised that New House tidal flap bay is blocked with silt again. It has eroded the bank around sheet piles.</li> <li>• MWall will go to site.</li> <li>• JT wanted it noted that he had an issue, he wrote to the board and it was resolved within a day.</li> </ul>   | <b>ACTION<br/>P/20250422 -<br/>07</b> |
| 16. Date of Next Meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance and Works Tues 3 June.</li> <li>• Full Board Tues 17 June.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair apologised for going over time. The Meeting ended at 17.17</p>  |                                       |

**PARRETT BOARD – TABLE OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

| <b>Action Number:</b>  | <b>Action:</b>   | <b>Actionee:</b> |
|------------------------|--|------------------|
| <b>P/20250422 - 01</b> | Write to Mark Besley regarding cricket bat willows   | VM               |
| <b>P/20250422 - 02</b> | Send courtesy letter of thanks re Chedzoy Moor Drove   | MW               |
| <b>P/20250422 - 03</b> | Write more formally to EA regarding Sam Gamblins Corner/Broken structures  | IDS              |
| <b>P/20250422 - 04</b> | Speak to the EA again regarding removing the trees from the River Parrett and Tone   | IDS              |
| <b>P/20250422 - 05</b> | Progress Resolution of Board to investigate and report back on Wembdon Parish Council if maintenance on some of the watercourses within the Boards boundary can be added to the Boards maintenance contract for the area | IDS              |
| <b>P/20250422 - 06</b> | Report for ADA Gazette on River Cary works.  | IDS              |
| <b>P/20250422 - 06</b> | New House tidal flap bay is blocked again. MWall to go to site.  | MW               |