

**MINUTES OF PARRETT FINANCE & WORKS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING  
03 JUNE 2025 AT 14.00 AT BRADBURY HOUSE, HIGHBRIDGE**

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

<b>Agenda Item:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	
1. Attendance and Apologies	The meeting started at 14.04.  Attendance & apologies as above	
2. Items Additional to the Agenda	None, but Item 9 (KSD Banks) will be moved to Item 4.	
3. Declarations of Interest	Tony Bradford (TB) declared an interest in the KSD banks.	
4. KSD Bank Project	<p>Iain Sturdy (IDS) explained that an outcome was needed from this meeting for the in-principle support of the tender to be awarded to the selected contractor in time for the SRA Full Board Meeting on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June, and for the Parrett Full Board meeting to ratify the F&amp;W Committee position.</p> <p>Caroline Murray (CM) from Calm Engineering shared the Project Completion Plan explained that they have been awarded £100k of SRA funding to this point. They have identified a different method for raising the banks following geotechnical investigations. The banks are wide and a volume analysis shows that there is enough material to raise the banks by 4m to settle to 3.85m.</p> <p>There are some consents outstanding, in particular an EA permit, however the consultation was completed on 31/05 so this is imminent. In terms of waste regulations and the materials management plan, this is due in the next week or so. Planning is not required, but a certificate of lawfulness is required so the plan can proceed on this basis. There are no outstanding risks or constraints.</p> <p>The tender went to 5 contractors for an expression of interest. One turned it down due to lack of resource and one tendered too late in the</p>	

	<p>process. 3 contractors returned tenders. There was a £300k difference with WM Plant being the most competitive.</p> <p>Tender criteria is based on 60% price, 20% compliance and 30% previous experience. Following a scoring process, Caroline is recommending WM Plant be appointed to carry out the works.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mike Stanton (MS) entered the meeting at 14.16</p> <p>IDS advised that he is very pleased with the tender process, and would like to committee to recommend the tender to the Board on 17/06. The Chair agreed and noted it was very thorough. The SRA will be advised at their meeting on 06/06. The Chair updated MS on the tender.</p> <p>Stuart Kingham (SK) asked about WM Plant’s experience. CM advised they had experience on the WID with Van Oord carrying out shoulder works on the banks, and also an EA reservoir. IDS stated they had also worked on the Cary banks and at Burrowbridge, so their experience was as good as any. CM also noted that they own all their own plant so their day rates are more competitive.</p> <p>The committee members discussed the spread of prices. The board is not constitutionally bound to accept the lowest quote, but apply the quality cost model. In terms of contingencies, the project has an optimism bias built in with weightings on identified risks. Tony Bradford (TB) noted that the board have been happy with previous works carried out by WM Plant.</p> <p>Mike Stanton expressed that he felt the process had been a tremendous piece of work.</p> <p>There was discussion around whether the EA were happy with the expected level of subsidence of material. It was explained that our design expects some subsidence. It will be a wide rural bank and will need maintenance.</p> <p><b>To recommend to the Parrett Full Board to award the tender to WM Plant</b>  <b>Proposed: Stuart Kingham</b>  <b>Seconded: Mike Stanton</b>  <b>All in favour</b></p> <p>MS and IDS will update the SRA Board on Friday. MS felt there would be a question on any surplus money. IDS confirmed this would be returned on completion. TB thanked CM and Calm for an excellent piece of work.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">TB left the meeting at 14.30</p>	<b>RESOLUTION 01</b>
5. Previous Meeting Minutes	<p><b><i>‘That the minutes were a true and accurate record of the meeting on January 2025’</i></b>  <b>Proposed: Anthony Betty (AB)</b>  <b>Seconded: Mike Caswell (MC)</b>  <b>All in favour</b></p>	<b>RESOLUTION 02</b>
6. Matters Arising	<p><b>P/20250104-01</b> SK raised the matter of a broken structure in the Brue – to identify to IDS after the meeting.</p>	<b>ACTION ONGOING</b>

	<p><b>P/20240604-03</b> Maggie Hammond (MH) has been contacted by Tradition UK money brokers. They currently act for other IDB's and sent information regarding investments which achieved over 4% interest. MH felt it may be useful to have some small amounts in higher interest accounts for the short term. After the annual accounts are completed she will contact Tradition, and some of the IDB's who have used them previously.</p> <p><b>P/20240604-01</b> The Chair queried the discussion from the previous meeting about phosphate sinks and asked if the situation has changed. MS confirmed it has not, and that funding needs to be used up before there is any policy change. IDS noted that the Board focus is water level management, and we should avoid being drawn into farming issues. Phil Brewin will be reporting to the next Full Board meeting. We have some data but not much as the monitoring has been selective and other projects such as Nature Recovery and Peat have overtaken events. The Chair felt it may become an issue for the boards of deepwater areas are used as a phosphate sink. We can currently maintain these areas. IDS felt that this was a contractor discussion in terms of machinery used.</p>	
<p>7. Finance Report (RFO)</p>	<p>7.1 MH advised that the bank was reconciled to 30/04/25 and all is as expected with no issues to report.</p> <p>7.2 Finance Report MH discussed the Consortium accounts which will be ratified at a Management Meeting next week, and show a surplus share for the Parrett Board of £144k.</p> <p>7.2.1 She then discussed the Parrett Board accounts. The income exceeds the budget by £348k. Reasons for this include rechargeable income from motorway channel maintenance and bridge repairs, SRA income which also shows in expenditure, a Defra grant, and a Natural England grant for eel passes. These are grants received after budget setting. Entries also have corresponding expenditure figures. A new 95-day notice account is giving a return of 3.44 % instead of the 1.1% previously. We have also received some compensation from the NFU for overcharging on vehicle insurance and the board has £12k share of Consortium income budget.</p> <p>Members asked about the efficacy of court proceedings for unpaid rates. These have helped bring money in, and send a message for the future. Some non-payers have cited lack of EA maintenance as their reasoning for part-payment.</p> <p>7.2.2 Expenditure has exceeded budget by £203k. Total over budget is £94k.</p> <p>There was discussion around costly padlocks and the current type being easy to cut. MH will mention to Rob King.</p> <p>There was recognition of works being completed with Peat Project funding before financial year end.</p> <p>7.2.3 Balance Sheet confirms reserves of nearly £1.5 million, some of which is ringfenced, with free reserves standing at £825k. Depending on risks, the board may wish to review reserves.</p>	<p><b>ACTION</b> <b>P/20250603-01</b></p>

	<p>The Chair felt that inflation in agriculture has become an increased risk and should be considered alongside reserves.</p> <p><b>7.2.4 Internal Auditors Report:</b> MH provided an update on the report supplied at the meeting which showed reasonable assurance of compliance. The areas requiring action were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Risk Register needs to be reviewed regularly. This will be discussed at the June Board meeting, but has not been in the last financial year.</li> <li>• Policies need updating.</li> </ul> <p>IDS noted that a number of the policies are being reviewed by ADA for their partners but this is not progressing, we may have to review these ourselves. The finding is that they haven't been reviewed, but this does not mean that they are insufficient or out of date.</p> <p>MC asked about Board members/officers working together to review policies, and offered to assist with this.</p> <p><b>7.2.5 AGAR Report:</b> MH went through the Section 1 of the AGAR Governance Statement with members, and detailed the 8 questions explaining how we meet the criteria for each.</p> <p>Q7 asks if appropriate action has been taken on matters raised in the previous audit.</p> <p>The Board and officers discussed whether discussion, review and management of risk throughout the year is enough to respond yes.</p> <p>The Board and officers discussed whether the plan produced to review policies is enough to respond yes, and if there is a deadline for actions.</p> <p>MH then went through Section 2 of the AGAR and clarified all figures to the committee.</p> <p><b>RESOLUTIONS:</b></p> <p><i><b>The Parrett Finance &amp; Works Committee recommends approval of the accounts as presented to the Full Board.</b></i>  <b>Proposed: Stuart Kingham</b>  <b>Seconded: Mike Caswell</b>  <b>All in Favour</b></p> <p><i><b>The Parrett Finance &amp; Works Committee recommends the questions in Section 1 of the AGAR are all answered as Yes to the Full Board.</b></i>  <b>Proposed: James Winslade</b>  <b>Seconded: Anthony Betty</b>  <b>All in Favour</b></p> <p><i><b>The Parrett Finance &amp; Works Committee recommends approval of Section 2 of the AGAR to the Full Board.</b></i>  <b>Proposed: Stuart Kingham</b>  <b>Seconded: Mike Caswell</b>  <b>All in Favour</b></p>	<p><b>RESOLUTION 03</b></p> <p><b>RESOLUTION 04</b></p> <p><b>RESOLUTION 05</b></p>
<p>8. Working from the highway</p>	<p>8.1 Following an incident involving a contractor whilst working from a highway, concerns have been raised and investigated.</p> <p>We work in accordance with Chapter 8 regulations on temporary mobile works. We have taken advice from the two local authorities to confirm what is acceptable.</p>	

	<p>8.2 There will probably be a change to our safe system of work involving preparation and signage as well as some requirement for additional labour. This will not be carried out by IDB staff, it will be for the contractor to provide and may incur additional cost for the Boards.</p> <p>IDB staff will be there to check contractors are complying.</p> <p>8.3 There was discussion around the responsibility of contractors to show compliance when working on the highway. We need to ensure contractors meet all requirements and signage is sufficient.</p>	
9. EA Main River Maintenance Programme	<p>9.1 IDS confirmed that we have received a list from the EA of what will be maintained this year, but this did not include all watercourses. He has gone back to the EA and requested mapping of what will/won't be done by Full Board meetings.</p> <p>We have previously carried out works under PSCA's using money from the Flood Recovery Fund, but this is not available this year. Financially this means if the IDB want to carry out work on any areas not being maintained by the EA, it may have to come from reserves or a rate increase.</p> <p>9.2 There was discussion around EA red tape and guidance from them on riparian maintenance.</p> <p>9.3 There was recognition that the IDB are already struggling to move water to where it is needed. This is raised with the EA as and when an issue arises, but this is reactive. We need to continue to try and cooperate.</p> <p>9.4 JW raised high level of development around North Petherton in the context of reduced EA maintenance, and feels attenuation ponds are not effective. IDS noted this is a theme across boards. Attenuation ponds are effective to a degree, but depend on volume in different areas. It is felt that developers need to invest downstream.</p> <p>9.5 These issues are being raised with the committee for awareness. Environmentally sensitive areas are suffering from a lack of water. MS stated that if the EA apply for a grant, they may be able to provide some funding but somebody needs to take the initiative. The Board may wish to contribute or carry out main river works but it needs to be within our capability/capacity. There is an appetite on the Board to do more.</p>	
10. Any Other Business	<p>Stear 2 and Peat Projects were discussed in terms of any impact on the boards network in the event of raised water levels.</p> <p>Regarding Steart, members were concerned about whether it will be fresh or salt water marsh or both, the impact on board network water levels, possible increased pollution, the impact on Stolford and ongoing long-term maintenance particularly for the Boards.</p> <p>IDS noted that this needs to be discussed with Kier and Bristol Ports to understand the project and engage with them, first in a meeting on 12/06/25 and then perhaps on site to clarify areas of concern.</p>	
11. Date of Next Meeting	<p>Full Board – Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 14.00</p> <p>Finance &amp; Works Committee - Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2025 at 14.00</p> <p>The meeting closed at 16.01</p>	

ANNEX A TO

PARRETT F&W COMMITTEE MINUTES  
DATED 03 JUNE 2025

PARRETT F&W MEETING – TABLE OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Action Number:	Action:	Actionee:
P/20250104-01	IDS to check details of damaged structure on Mark Moor	Clerk
P/20250603-01	Discuss padlock costs and type with Ops Manager	MH