PARRETT INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD
PART OF THE SOMERSET DRAINAGE BOARDS CONSORTIUM

BRADBURY HOUSE, 33-34 MARKET STREET
HIGHBRIDGE, SOMERSET, TA9 3BW
TEL: 01278 789906
FAX: 01278 792914
EMAIL: admin@somersetdbs.co.uk

MINUTES OF THE PARRETT FULL BOARD MEETING HELD AT BRADBURY HOUSE ON TUESDAY 23 JUNE 2026 AT 2.00PM

Attendance:			
Elected Members: Tony Bradford (C) Jon Rowe David Vigar James Winslade John Perrin Colin Passmore Will Barnard	**Appointed Members:** Anthony Betty Cllr Mike Caswell Donna Gowler Stuart Kingham Julian Taylor Cllr Alan Bradford Cllr Liz Leavy Cllr Mike Stanton	**Officers:** Mr I Sturdy Mrs M Hammond Mr R King Mr M Wall Mrs C Murray Mrs V Martin Mr P Brewin Mrs K Carleton	**Public:**
Approved Apologies:			
Rob House Mark Heywood Rebecca Horsington	Cllr Gwil Wren Cllr Hilary Bruce Cllr Norman Cavill	Mr G Oliver	
Non-Approved Apologies:			
	Cllr Lance Duddridge Cllr Dave Loveridge		

Agenda Item:		
1. Attendance & Apologies	The meeting opened at 13.59 The Chair noted the sad passing of Andrew Gilling Chair of the Axe Brue Board who had also served on the Parrett Board, and of Roger Barrington who was a staunch Parrett Board member since its founding. The Board heled a minutes silence to remember both. Apologies as per the attendance list.	
2. Items additional to the Agenda	Maggie Hammond (MH) will raise the matter of mileage rates for Board members. Iain Sturdy (IDS) raised an issue from Mr Porter (Northmoor) relating to historic maintenance. We are investigating and will refer to insurers The Chair raised a query from Mary Roberts at Moorlinch. Someone has set up tents and wants to create a borehole into a spring. IDS noted we will need to consider and investigate. Colin Passmore (CP) asked if the Porter complaint is a risk to the Board. IDS explained it is a well-constructed complaint. James Winslade (JW) advised they have moved the fence line. IDS advised he and JW will investigate and report back.	**ACTION P/20260623-01** **ACTION P/20260623-02**

3. Declarations of Interest.	To declare as they arise.	
4. Members of the public	None	
5. Minutes of the Parrett Full Board Meeting held:	**"that the minutes of the Full Board meeting held on 27 January 2026 are signed as a true and correct record of the meeting held".** **Proposed: Stuart Kingham** **Seconded: David Vigar** **All in favour**	**RESOLUTION 01**
6 Matters Arising	**Matters Arising and Review of Actions** D Loveridge not keen to be on Board KC to contact member services. P2 Stuart Kingham (SK) asked how court went. MH will cover in item 9 P2 CP asked about Dunster which is in a serious mess, the Council are not picking up. He and Matt Wall (MW) have been looking at it. MW advised Kenny Gordon is happy to do the work for the Council whilst on site doing our works. James Divall is aware. IDS noted it is an historic issue, we have offered services of our contractors. We will push again. Mike Stanton will chase up with James Divall/Neil Ogilvie. CP feels it now required hand work. IDS will also follow up. The Board discussed enforcing against the Council. P6 The Chair noted the Barrier is reported to be complete by Christmas. Phil Brewin (PB) noted during site visit they advised 2029 P7 Fordgate Sewage works. Julian Taylor (JT) reported that there were significant overflows of raw sewage in Jan and Feb into Park Brook. He suffered from an E.coli infection at this time. The water was tested and found to contain E.coli. he feels there are also serious implications for farming. JW noted they are releasing every other day. New development building is based on the function of this new facility. IDS noted it is a water quality issue and we will report to the EA. Wessex Water have said it is within normal limits. P9 The EA have said they have no intention to increase pumping at Northmoor due to insufficient power. IDS noted the report they refer to is 2 years old and was submitted to us as evidence for the minister. It only considers cost of hooking up to NG and standing charges to pump and was dismissed for this reason. We have looked deeper, ADA are working with Ofgem and the Defra. Pumps can also be fuelled in other ways/diesel generators. There is additional funding available for flood resilience and he expects additional pumping at key locations to be part of any proposal. CP noted pumping stations are needed rather than pumps. Alan Bradford (ABr) declared an interest in development at North Petherton/sewage works. The Chair declared no further discussion. **P/20260127-01** Follow up on Task & Finish resolution following ADA Chairs meeting. The Chair is attending a further meeting next Thurs. Action complete. The Chair feels there is nobody on T&F group with experience of flooding. He will take this up at the meeting. He feels it should be in the remit of the ADA Board and will highlight this and report back.	**ACTION P/20260623-03** **ACTION P/20260623-04** **ACTION P/20260623-05**

	P/20260127-02 Email follow up with James Divall/Neil Ogilvie re attenuation ponds/maintenance at Morrisons/Dunster Carry Forward. See above action. **P/20260127-03** Check EA letter received by David Vigar. IDS updated that we have responded to the consultation. **P/20260127-04** Share response to EA consultation with Chairs. Complete. The response was thorough, used EA language and quantified findings, but is ultimately unlikely to have any material effect on withdrawal. Funding has been approved from the SRA to pick up some of their work. Caroline Murray (CM) is working on this to identify the most important watercourses and will then work with the EA on constraints and access routes/PFCA's. IDS cautioned we are small and have limited capacity. The Chair asked about the timeframe. CM/IDS advised the aim is this season. We now have information, CM is meeting the EA on Thurs. We will tie it in with our existing programme of works and CM will share the list of what not being maintained **P/20260127-05** Submit expression of interest for additional SRA funding. Complete. **P/20260127-06** Check status of maintenance at Henley. MW advised 95 % complete, 1 rhyne still to do due to high water level. **P/20260127-07** Look at viability of experimental flailing following WID to negate build-up of silt. CM will look at this year to see the accumulation of silt. In the process of reviewing post dredge survey. The Chair noted that we know reeds hold silt. IDS noted we don't plan to commission a new study but will survey in October as part of routine work. This will back it up. David Vigar (DV) also noted the silt is filling inside the flood banks either side of the channel. He feels this could also happen at the Sowy. IDS noted catchment flood water benefits land. The concentration of marine sediment is different to periodic fluvial flood. **P/20260127-08** Investigate at North Petherton sewage works as more water than normal. See above **P/20260127-09** Ask the EA to clear the outfalls/flaps at Fordgate. Rob is on the case regularly, as is JW. We have also bought equipment to clear tidal flaps where the EA don't and also guard penstock upstream which can be closed if the flap fails and allows us to flush. JW noted that Justin is maintaining it for the EA. The Chair asked if we are or should be charging the EA. IDS noted it does benefit the ratepayers. A door should alleviate the issue. CM has this in hand for the end of summer. **P/20260127-10** Meet with EA to discuss/review trigger points. The meeting took place, although the matter does not feel entirely resolved. **P/20260127-11** write to invite ADA/Minister to visit. This has happened in no small part due to the efforts of senior Board members. Mike Stanton (MS) mentioned the timescale, 2 years is not really enough for significant progress and will push for extension. IDS noted the money is held by the LA, they are dependent on partner knowledge to identify, deliver and maintain works. The MOU has a clause allowing the duration of the grant	

	to be extended. We need to help draw up a plan and submit to Defra asking for 3-5 years. Will Barnard (WB) feels even 3-5 is ambitious. IDS agrees there is a risk some may go to oven ready projects which would normally qualify for funding anyway and not from these national resources – this is a risk. MS felt another concern is that the EA have asked for £15 mill of this fund for the Barrier. The Chair noted work has to be cost benefitted. He feels the Axe & Brue have an urgent need. IDS noted that spending public money needs to go where it is most worthwhile. In Somerset this doesn't always meet the criteria for central funding. These works must exceed unity and do the most beneficial works first. The Chair feels we must find a way to use the money in the time allocated. SC have been given the money and they must drive the programme and we will help. MS warned about pushing too hard and sending money to other projects. The IDN needs to be the delivery partner and should press for more time. The Chair feels we need to demonstrate that we can act quickly. IDS noted that this is the conundrum: we need to ensure it is spent where worthwhile. As an example CM/IDS/Chair/PB are hoping to address a pinch point at the Parrett/Tone confluence this year. He would love if this was the first piece of work done with this funding. ABr asked about the interest being accumulated which must be managed in the correct way and any interest ringfenced. CP noted the idea to encourage officers to work on the Axe Brue and suggested this was pushed. The Chair agreed and feels it should be top of the list. IDS noted the SRA have funded a modelling exercise to identify needs on the Brue. CM spoke to their Board who have resolved that officers develop a project plan to increase conveyance which would extend upstream to Westhay. We are also working on that front for that Board. Mike Caswell (MC) noted that SC have been given the money so it is up to them to arrange any meeting. MS confirmed they have not delegated it to the SRA at this point.	
7 Health & Safety Update	IDS introduced Ben Bloska (BB), H&S Co-ordinator. BB asked members to take his report as read. SK noted the drill kick back incident and toolbox talk and asked if these are regular. BB explained these talks these take place at most team meetings. Hemlock is next, then Dynamic risk assessment. The Chair thanked BB.	
8 CEO Updates	IDS asked members to take his report as read as much of its content has already been covered. Leadership Transition is ongoing. Applications have been received and interest expressed. The closing date is tomorrow but can be extended if needed. Operational performance and resilience is on track and will be covered under the Operations & Engineering Report. The financial year end has gone well, and the Internal Auditor awarded us substantial assurance.	
9. Finance Report	9.1 All Bank Statements are reconciled to 31/05/2026 with no concerns. The following items were discussed by F&W who have made 4 recommendations. CP as F&W Chair advised the committee have scrutinised and recommend to approve as below:	

	9.2 That the Parrett Full Board approves the accounts as presented as recommended by the Finance & Works Committee **Proposed: Anthony Betty** **Seconded: Mike Caswell** **All in favour** **9.3 That the Parrett Full Board requests the R.F.O. to review the reserve policy and report back to the November Full Board Committee** **Proposed: Stuart Kingham** **Seconded: James Winslade** **All in favour** **9.4 That the Parrett Full Board answers yes to all questions in Section 1 of the AGAR as recommended by the Finance & Works Committee and approves its signature by the Chairman and Clerk.** **Proposed: Mike Caswell** **Seconded: James Winslade** **All in favour** **9.5 That the Parrett Full Board approves Section 2 of the AGAR as recommended by the Finance & Works Committee and approves its signature by the Chairman.** **Proposed: Mike Caswell** **Seconded: James Winslade** **All in favour** CP thanked MH for her efficient work. The Chair echoed this and also thanked CP for chairing the committee. 9.6 Outstanding drainage rates: £83, 341.86. First reminder is still to go out so no concerns at this stage. 9.7 MH advised that £6,157.69 of this is from previous years. Of the 9 scheduled for court, 8 have paid, 1 has queries. 9.8 F&W Engineering Budget: CM advised they are running to budget on projects and there are no financial resolutions to make.	**RESOLUTION 02** **RESOLUTION 03** **RESOLUTION 04** **RESOLUTION 05**
10. Environment Report	10.1 Paper regarding Vicars Rhyne: Donna Gowler (DG) declared an interest as this is NE land. No questions, JW and JT are happy with the proposal as local representatives. **Approve the realignment of a short section of Vicars Rhyne (viewed rhyne) on Northmoor back to its historic route. Take into view a 144m section of rhyne and take out of view a 480m section of rhyne.** **Proposed: Julian Taylor** **Seconded: James Winslade** **All in favour** 10.2 Phil Brewin (PB) asked the members to take his main report as read. The team working on EA Barrier project work on secondary defences have asked us to consider and change specifications to make more water vole friendly which we are doing along with the contractor. There will be minimal impact on these systems. PB asked the Board to allow him and MW to work with the Environment Committee to progress and possibly make works less vigorous in this area. There is a risk to board	**RESOLUTION 06**

	reputationally and legally and PB suggests developing an operational manual to keep the Board and staff on the right side of the law. CP noted there are lots of reeds, can't leave it too much as they impact farming. PB would like to make work more like that done at Steart where there are voles and would like to standardise the working methods. The Chair asked PB to bring a paper back to the Board. He feels it protects us against criticism. The committee will work on this. All agreed. 10.3 WLMP's are out of date. PB is in discussion with ADA to update these on broader duties rather than just protected sites. Progress is being made to improve information management: Mapping, telemetry and apps feed into this and will form the basis of a plan going forward. The Board to develop a policy on what the plans should achieve. Will Barnard (WB) noted this would be very useful for FWAG. The Chair observed that the last plans were done individually. PB noted some were not previously done and he would like to update the gauge board network. The Chair asked if a subcommittee is needed. PB noted it is a big piece of work with the starting point being the policy and strategy of the Boards which makes it clearer to develop plans on this basis. 10.4 EA Consultation: we have pointed out stressed areas in dry weather as well as poorly maintained watercourses which prevent the flow. 10.5 Invasive Species: Biosecurity Policy will go to the Policy review committee for adoption. PB gave an example of pennywort on the Penzoy which needs a more complex approach which is consistent and persistent. The new contractor will help with the spraying programme. It has been eliminated at Park Brook, but we need to keep going. Reducing the spread reduces costs overall. Awareness is key. CM added that the EA will maintain the Penzoy this year. 10.6 Beavers have appeared at Westonzoyland and been reported at the KSD. PB showed photos of evidence/burrows which have H&S implications for operators/machinery. We are concerned about this. There is a policy for reintroducing them. PB is licenced to deal and will train staff and contractors. We can manage Beavers but it must be under licence. The focus in the Netherlands is on safety.	
11. Operations & Engineering Report	**Maintenance:** Matt Wall (MW) asked members to take his report as read. He showed a slide on the maintenance contract cycle. Contracts are coming up for renewal. There is ongoing consultation with ADA on upcoming changes to Procurement Regulations. We are proposing to roll contracts for one year to bring them in line with those previously rolled for 2 years. We can then look at the whole board area and possibly stagger or tender the whole area. MW will approach contractors about this. **Officer recommendation that the existing Parrett Maintenance & Operational Support Contracts be extended for a period of one year only. This will ensure continuity of delivery of maintenance work whilst new procurement procedures are prepared** **Proposed: Mike Caswell** **Seconded: David Vigar** **All in favour** **Red diesel costs volatility:** we have met with contractors to address this and are suggesting a fuel price escalator. MW is working on a draft	**RESOLUTION 07**

	paper as this is an ongoing issue. We may not need to trigger it and could just stick to CPI, but would propose a subcommittee to review it over the next couple of weeks and go to contractors with a proposal. The subcommittee would need delegated authority. SK & MC volunteered and will keep CP in the loop. **To appoint Stuart Kingham and Mike Caswell to the Fuel Subcommittee** **Proposed: Anthony Betty** **Seconded: Will Barnard** **All in favour** **Operations:** Rob King (RK) went through slides showing repairs on unsafe structures and advised that works are 81% complete on structures deemed unsafe. Thorney Pump has been replaced using ringfenced pumps. The replacement pump is almost brand new and is being stored at Long Sutton as a Consortium asset. There has been an increase in littering/fly tipping. Staff are working with the Council to get it removed. Justin Lockyer has been promoted to Area Supervisor, leaving a vacancy for a Deputy to replace him. IDS noted that we have not lost a member of staff so would need to recruit as a vacancy opens up due to succession. They will be a consortium employee. **To recruit a Deputy Area Supervisor as the opportunity arises.** **Proposed: Colin Passmore** **Seconded: Will Barnard** **All in favour** WB asked if H&S repairs are a one-off exercise. IDS advised that we have brought structures up to scratch, but regular inspection will identify ongoing repairs. RK advised each penning now includes a structural survey and he will run a defect list. SK asked if fly tipping is an issue in any particular area and if a camera would help. RK advised we have previously tried in NS with no success, but could try again. **Engineering:** Caroline Murray (CM) updated on projects across the Boards. 13 Board and 7 SRA projects are completed. She asked members to take her reports as read and highlighted a map showing the spread of completed projects. **Update on KSD banks**: CM has been back in touch with WM Plant regarding defects correction in August. There is a small amount of damage from Jan/Feb flooding. They will go back and replace topsoil and replace fence. **WID**: we are extending the programme to the Tone being looked at. Surveys are taking place. **Main river maintenance**: following the initial EA meeting CM/MW/PB have identified the most crucial and highlighted them. The EA confirmed they are doing Bimpits, Langacre, Long Sutton main drain, Misbrook Rhyne, Penzoy, Penzoy in Southlake and parts of Hinton Meads Brook.	**RESOLUTION 08** **RESOLUTION 09**

	We can look at those remaining using SRA funding. CM feels those watercourses bid for but not funded would be next on their list. The Chair worried about the EA being seconded to spend the central money. John Perrin (JP) noted the EA own Wickmoor Rhyne, they are doing the bit they own. CM has queried this. The KSD upstream at Greylake has some bank slumps and there are cracks at the edge. CM will return to survey and give data to the EA as a risk. This is money for GIA shortfall not SRA. MS feels the issue should be raised at the meeting on July 2nd to clarify what the EA need and how much could they do it for. The Chair feels we need to ascertain the appetite of the EA. PB noted Wick Moor Rhyne is an important part of the system and would be an obvious addition to the IDB programme. JP noted it is running 10cm above summer pen so is critical. CP noted Misbrook and Middlemoor were looked at 2 years ago and still nothing done. He feels this is also crucial as well as the H&S aspect of ground around unmaintained banks. MS asked about KSD banks settling. CM advised they are fine. IDS explained this was built into the design. Mike Caswell left 16.14 **Development Control:** Virginie Martin (VM) made the Board aware that most sites are currently working on are outside the IDB area but risk running off into it. North Petherton, motorway services. We are asking for volume attenuation not just run off attenuation. JT and the Chair thanked Virginie	
12. Any Other Business.	MH explained that the HMRC mileage rate has been increased and updated for staff, and suggested this be applicable to Board members. **To increase the mileage rate for members to the HMRC rate** **Proposed: Anthony Betty** **Seconded: James Winslade** **All in favour**	**RESOLUTION 10**
13. Date of Next Meeting.	Dates of Next Meetings: Environment Committee Tuesday 8 September 14.00-16.00 Finance & Works Tuesday 20 October 14.00 Full Board Meeting Tuesday 3 November 14.00 The Chair thanked members for their attendance Meeting ended at 16.20	

Annex:

A. Parrett Board – Table of Outstanding Actions

CHAIR..... DATE ……

ANNEX A TO
PARRETT BOARD MINUTES
DATED 23 JUNE 2026

PARRETT BOARD – TABLE OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Action Number:	Action:	Actionee:
P/20260623-01	Consider and investigate borehole at Moorlinch	IDS
P/20260623-02	To investigate and report back on Porter complaint	IDS/JW
P/20260623-03	Contact SC Member Services re appointed members	KC
P/20260623-04	Press SC re Morrisons/Dunster and discuss aligning works	IDS/MW
P/20260623-05	Report water quality issue at Fordgate to the EA	IDS