

ITEM 11d

Somerset Rivers Authority Board Paper to note

Quarterly Key Project Update: River Parrett Dredging – Oath to Burrowbridge Pioneer Dredging

Purpose of the item

This paper summarises the current status of the Oath to Burrowbridge dredging project.

Background and context

The contract to undertake the works was let to WM Longreach and contracts were signed and exchanged on Wednesday 14 August 2019.

Over 21,500m³ of silt was removed from a 2.2km reach of the River Parrett between Beazley's Spillway and the River Tone confluence during autumn 2019, close to 10m³/metre run. This has resulted in increased conveyance capability in the river of up to 4m³/second or 345,000m³/day.

Due to a prolonged period of wet weather, with higher than average levels of rainfall causing deteriorating ground conditions, the contractor had to vacate the site before some of the planned works were completed. The contractor returned to site on 26 May 2020 and raised bank levels across a five-meter width of crest at identified low spots and replaced gates and fence lines removed during the works. Ground conditions were very dry at the time of these works and, as it was considered unviable to irrigate the bank throughout the summer, re-seeding and final adjustment of the bank crest was deferred until later in the year.

Current status

Site conditions are being monitored in preparation for re-instatement of the temporary spillway and fenceline in spring 2021. Once these works are complete, this will conclude all site works. Off-site water level monitoring is continuing to ensure that there are no adverse environmental impacts on environmentally sensitive areas affected by the dredging. Additional telemetry is being installed at up to five sites to inform the water level monitoring and assist future water level management. A project underspend of £150k is forecast at 31 March 2021. This underspend will be re-allocated to the River Sowy – KSD Enhancements Scheme.

Date: 8 February 2021

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