

**Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board**

**Extraordinary Finance Committee Meeting**

**2pm Tuesday 31 August 2021 at George Webb Finn's offices**  
**43 Park Road, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1DY**

**Attendees:** Stuart Mair (Chairman of the Board)  
James Mair (Chairman of the Finance Committee)  
Alderman Duncan Dewar-Whalley  
John Lewis  
Gareth Fulton  
Stephen Batt (guest)

**Apologies for absence**

None

**Purpose of the Meeting**

Following a meeting of the Upper Board at 2pm on Tuesday 24 August 2021, the Chairman of the Board received a telephone call from Oliver Pantrey (the Clerk) advising that the Upper Board had put forward a proposal that the Upper Board severs the Joint Services Agreement with the Lower Board on 31 March 2022. The proposal was agreed by a majority and the Chairman of the Board was informed by the Clerk that the Chairman of the Upper Board would be writing to the Chairman of the Board to inform him of the Upper Board's decision.

The Chairman of the Board asked the Clerk if it was his intention to remain an employee of the Upper Board or would he consider resigning his position and acting as Clerk to the Lower Board, to which the Clerk responded by saying that his loyalty was with the Upper Board and he would not consider employment by the Lower Board.

Following this, the Chairman of the Board spoke with Innes Thomson of ADA who advised that he would put the Chairman of the Board in contact with the Clerk of the North Kent Marshes Drainage Board and plan for the separation and open discussions with the Clerk of the North Kent Marshes to consider amalgamation.

The Chairman of the Board was contacted by the Clerk of the North Kent Marshes and a meeting to discuss the next steps was arranged for 10am on Monday 6 September 2021 with the Clerk and members of the Finance Committee.

In light of this, the Chairman of the Board called an extraordinary meeting of the Finance Committee to discuss and agree what steps the Finance Committee should take in securing its ability to deliver its duties as a Drainage Board and managing the Lower Board's employment requirements going forward. Mr Batt was invited to attend as a guest with no rights to vote, in order to provide historical information that could be useful to Board Members.

Matters were discussed between the Board Members present as to what employment positions were essential by the Lower Board in order to meet its duties as a Drainage Board and the following employment positions were identified:-

- Clerk
- Biodiversity Officer

- Works Manager
- Trainee Works Manager and Outside Machinery Operator
- Office Manager
- Accounts Clerk

Currently the Lower Board employs directly the outside staff, which includes Keith Miles (Lead Tractor Driver), Shaun Mason (Lead Excavator Operator), Shane Miles (Tractor Driver and Small Tools Operator) and William Smith (Small Tools Operator) but currently shadowing the Clerk on a soft start basis.

After discussions with members of the Board, subject to receipt of the letter from the Chairman of the Upper Board informing the Chairman of the Board that the Upper Board were severing the Joint Services Agreement as outlined verbally by the Clerk, the following proposals were put forward:-

- Proposed by the Chairman of the Board for Alderman Duncan Dewar-Whalley to approach Lisa Rowland and offer her an employment contract by the Lower Board on the same terms of her previous employment by the Upper Board and to start as soon as possible. This was seconded by the Chairman of the Finance Committee and all Board members present were in agreement.
- Proposed by the Chairman of the Board for Alderman Duncan Dewar-Whalley to meet with William Smith to enquire if he will remain as an employee of the Lower Board and consider becoming a Trainee Works Manager and Machinery Operator. This was seconded by the Chairman of the Finance Committee and all Board members present were in agreement.
- Proposed by the Chairman of the Board for the Chairman of the Board and Alderman Duncan Dewar-Whalley to investigate employment opportunities for the role of a Works Manager to be employed by the Lower Board. This was seconded by John Lewis and all Board members present were in agreement.
- Proposed by the Chairman of the Board for the Chairman of the Board to take legal employment advice from Bassetts Solicitors on employment in respect of existing staff and replacement staff, including if there was a need to advertise any of the job roles internally or externally. This was seconded by the Chairman of the Finance Committee and all Board members present were in agreement.

### **Any Other Business**

None

Meeting closed at 3.15pm