

UMIDB
UPPER MEDWAY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD



REDACTED MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING of the BOARD
held via **Zoom Conference Call**
on **Thursday 23 December 2021 at 2pm.**

Members of the Board Present

H Rogers - Chairman

Cllr P Dixon
Cllr M Gillman
D Goff
S Highwood
Cllr D King
Cllr S McGregor
Cllr J Perry
C Wheeler

In attendance

O Pantrey – Clerk

The Clerk requested that two items be added to any other business regarding conservation studies and covid.

All **AGREED** that these could be added to the agenda.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Cllr M Davis and O Baldock.

2. ITEMS OF INTEREST DECLARATION

None of the Members present declared a pecuniary and/or non-pecuniary interest in any of the items to be discussed on the Agenda.

3. MINUTES

The Chairman requested any alterations to the minutes. He then requested that these were approved as correct.

It was **AGREED** by all Members present that the minutes of the meetings held on 16 November 2021 were correctly recorded and should be considered as approved.

4. POTENTIAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR VACANT POSITIONS – PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

A conversation was held regarding the request from previously employed staff to return to the employment of the UMIDB. The reasons for their decision to leave their current employment after such a short period were also discussed.

The Chairman said that it would be best that the members voted upon reinstatement of the previous staff members as two separate votes to ensure members were sure about the need and financing of both of them.

On proposal from the Chair, it was **AGREED** to offer the person the position of Finance Officer in the event of resignation from their current employment.

On proposal from the Chair, it was **AGREED** to offer the person the position of Works Supervisor in the event of resignation from their current employment.

The Chairman thanked the members for the robust nature of the discussion.

The Clerk said it was vital we were able to discuss the pros and cons of this situation seeing as the Board was ready to work with the WLMA and that this was both an unexpected, and dramatic, 11th hour change.

Action: Chairman to inform persons of the Board's decision

Action: Chairman to inform Chair of previous employer of the Board's decision.

5. FUTURE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE REGION – PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

The Clerk said that now the Board had decided to fill the vacant positions instead of outsourcing it was vital the Board took responsibility for the fallout and safeguarded the previous employer of the persons, even if only in the short term.

The Chairman reiterated the options given to the members by the Clerk about the future relationship. A discussion then took place regarding the moral, legal, and long-term responsibilities of the Board towards the situation in all 3 districts.

A further discussion took place regarding the pressures this might put on the Board and the officers who would have to administer the decision. Particular reference was made to the expertise and knowledge in relation to pumping stations.

The Clerk said that by having the agreement as a contract it limited the liability of the Board and the use of its staff where required so that there was no undue pressure placed on the staff, but so it was still possible to carry out the duties in all three regions. He said he felt this represented the best approach for the three Boards in the long-term.

On proposal from the Chair, it was **AGREED** that the UMIDB Chairman and Vice-Chairman would discuss the opportunity for a Public Sector Cooperative Agreement subject to the will of the other authority.

The Clerk thanked the members and said this was vital in the safeguarding of the ongoing operation of the region and aspiring to more collaborative work into the future.

Action: Chairman and Vice-Chairman to discuss the future opportunities with their opposites.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Conservation Improvement Study

The Clerk informed members that he had now received 3 quotes for the work relating to the conservation and biodiversity study discussed at the November meeting. He said that while the money was provisionally set aside, he wanted to take the quotes to the Board's Conservation representative in the new year to discuss before a final confirmation with the Chairman. He requested this was devolved to S Highwood and the Chairmen for resolution.

All **AGREED** that the Clerk should proceed as proposed.

Action: Clerk to send quotes to S Highwood before meeting with the Chairmen in January.

Covid Case in Ground Team

The Clerk said that he regretted to report a member of the ground team had come down with Covid and had spent several days in hospital as a result. The Clerk confirmed no other cases were present in either Board, but they would of course remain vigilant, and that it did not appear that it was contracted through the Board or its operations. He said it was expected the employee would return in the middle of January.

The Chairman said that he wished the ground team member a speedy recovery and that he hoped there would be no lasting effects. This was echoed by all members present.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Board meeting was confirmed for Tuesday 22 March 2022 at 10am.

8. PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

Items 4 and 5 of this meeting were considered private and confidential at the time.

9. CLOSURE

The Chairman thanked Members for their attendance and said that this sort of robust discussion showed the Board was able to take tough decisions and thoroughly dissect them to create an appropriate resolution, to which he was grateful.

He closed the meeting by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.