

UPPER MEDWAY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD



**MINUTES OF A MEETING of the Finance Committee held at
Upper North Hall, Bullen Court
on Tuesday 20 May 2025 at 10am.**

Members of the Committee Present

Mr H Rogers - Chairman

Mr D Goff

Cllr Summersgill

Mr C Wheeler

In attendance

O Pantrey - Clerk

L Carey – RFO

J Schuiling – Works Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- Mr S Highwood

2. ITEMS OF INTEREST DECLARATION

There were no items of interest declared.

3. MINUTES

RECEIVED a copy of the Minutes of Finance Committee on 11 December 2024.

It was **AGREED** by all Members present that the Minutes of 11 December 2024 were correctly recorded and should be considered as approved.

4. ACTION LIST & MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

RECEIVED the Action List of the meeting held on 11 December 2024.

The Clerk confirmed that most actions were complete. The ongoing issue related to the January 2025 action was noted for continued monitoring.

Members agreed to maintain contact with Sally Harvey (EA Area Director) despite noted improvements in communication.

Action: Clerk to arrange meeting with Sally Harvey

5. INTERNAL AUDIT

The Clerk summarised the findings of the internal audit from Mid Kent Auditors. It was noted that the Board received a full 'Satisfactory' rating for the first time since his tenure began.

Members wanted to thank the RFO for her efforts to get this audit through.

It was noted that minor wording changes in documents, handling of petty cash, and procedural alignment had all been resolved.

The committee agreed to include the audit recommendations within the Minutes for tracking purposes.

Action: Add internal auditor recommendations, and status, into Board meeting.

6. END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS – YEAR ENDING MARCH 2025

RECEIVED a copy of the End of Year accounts for March 2025.

It was noted that rates and communications had been positively received and that the upgraded IT system enabled more efficient access.

Discussion was held regarding the outstanding debt from Mr. Spratt. It was agreed that officers would contact the landowner to clarify liability before any write-off is confirmed.

Action: RFO to contact landowner and determine liability for the rates on the tenanted land at Haxted.

7. AGAR

RECEIVED the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

The AGAR was confirmed to be fully compliant, with all entries marked as 'Yes'. The report will be submitted to the full Board on the 17th June 2025, to be signed by both the Chairman and Clerk and minuted at such meeting.

The Committee **AGREED** to submit the AGAR to the Board ahead of submission to the external auditor by the 30 June 2025 deadline.

Action: Get Board approval of AGAR at June meeting

8. FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

RECEIVED the updated Financial Risk Assessment. The Clerk confirmed the inclusion of auditor comments and safety provisions.

Discussion focused on high-risk (red) areas such as cyber security, staffing, income protection, and audit compliance.

The Committee reviewed residual risks and mitigation measures and **AGREED** to submit the updated Financial Risk Assessment to the Board for approval.

Action: Get Board approval of the updated financial risk assessment

9. FINANCIAL POSITION

RECEIVED current financial figures and bank balances.

The Clerk confirmed a positive position above projections due to strong surface water development contributions and interest income.

Concerns were noted around public perception of high reserve holdings. The Board will continue to manage this through careful reinvestment.

10. INSURANCE REPORT

RECEIVED the annual insurance provision comparison.

It was noted that an increase in public liability cost followed a bridge damage incident. Dashcams have since been installed.

The Committee accepted the report.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

FIVE-YEAR PLAN

RECEIVED the Five-Year Plan for review.

The Committee **AGREED** to recommend the Five-Year Plan to the Board for formal adoption.

GROUND STAFFING PROPOSAL

The Clerk proposed that a sixth member of the ground team be hired to sustain field performance and relieve existing capacity pressures.

The position would be funded for five years from reserves (approx. £240,000) without impacting the levy.

The Committee **AGREED** to recommend this proposal to the Board.

C Wheeler stated that he would like to stand down from the Finance Committee as of this meeting, leaving a vacancy to be filled in the future.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Wheeler for all his hard work during his years on the Committee, as did all members present.

12. PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

There were two P&C discussions regarding the departure of an officer and the remuneration of another.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Finance Committee/Estimates meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 11 November 2025.

14. CLOSE

There being no further business, the Chairman of Finance thanked Members for their attendance, thanked the staff for all their work, and declared the meeting closed.