Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

The Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board (UMIDB) is committed to promoting and embedding the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of its work. We aim to ensure that everyone who encounters the Board—whether as an employee, member, contractor, stakeholder, or member of the public—is treated fairly, with dignity, and respect.

Legal Framework

This policy is underpinned by the Equality Act 2010, which protects individuals from discrimination and sets out the responsibilities of public bodies under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). UMIDB recognises its legal obligations to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Include provision for equitable approaches to reach common or agreed goals and legislative requirements
- Foster good relations between people from different backgrounds.

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins)
- Religion or belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Our Commitments
UMIDB will:

- Provide a safe, inclusive and accessible working environment for all staff and Board members.
- Actively promote a culture of respect and inclusion across the organisation.
- Ensure fair and inclusive recruitment, development and promotion practices.
- Identify and remove barriers to participation in our services and decision-making processes.
- Regularly assess and monitor our policies, practices and service delivery to ensure they are inclusive and non-discriminatory.

- Respond promptly, fairly and effectively to any concerns or complaints related to discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
- Ensure all staff, contractors and members receive appropriate training on equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Ensure the provision of equitable opportunity and circumstance is made to members and staff to complete their legislative duties and agreed targets.

Accountability

Responsibility for implementing this policy lies with the Clerk and the Board. However, all employees, members, and those working on behalf of UMIDB are expected to uphold the principles of this policy and contribute to a positive and inclusive organisational culture.

Monitoring and Review

UMIDB will regularly monitor and review this policy, its implementation, and its effectiveness. This policy will be updated at least every three years, or sooner if required by changes in legislation or practice.

Delivery Procedures

Policy Integration

EDI principles will be integrated into recruitment, procurement, and service delivery. All job descriptions and tender opportunities will reflect our commitment to inclusion.

Training and Awareness

All staff and Board members will receive training on equality and diversity. Induction programmes will include an EDI module.

Monitoring

Anonymous data on diversity may be collected, reviewed, and used to address underrepresentation. Policies will be subject to equality impact assessment at least every two years.

Reporting and Review

The Clerk will produce an EDI report for the Board as requested.

The policy will be reviewed annually or as legislation requires.

Amendments

EDI Risk Assessment Framework for UMIDB

1. Governance and Leadership
- **Risk**: Absence of formal EDI policies may lead to unintentional exclusion or discrimination.
- **Mitigation**: Develop and implement a comprehensive EDI policy endorsed by the Board. Ensure leadership commitment to EDI principles.

2. Recruitment and Staffing
- **Risk**: Potential biases in hiring practices could result in a non-diverse workforce.
- **Mitigation**: Adopt inclusive recruitment strategies, provide bias training for hiring managers, and monitor diversity metrics.

3. Community Engagement
- **Risk**: Lack of diverse community input may overlook the needs of underrepresented groups.
- **Mitigation**: Engage with a broad spectrum of community stakeholders, including marginalized groups, to inform decision-making.

4. Service Delivery
- **Risk**: Services may not be accessible or equitable for all community members.
- **Mitigation**: Conduct regular assessments to ensure services meet the diverse needs of the population, and make adjustments as necessary.

5. Training and Development
- **Risk**: Staff may lack awareness or understanding of EDI principles.
- **Mitigation**: Implement ongoing EDI training programs for all employees and board members.

6. Policy and Procedure Review
- **Risk**: Existing policies may inadvertently perpetuate inequalities.
- **Mitigation**: Regularly review and update policies to align with EDI best practices and legal requirements.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation
- **Risk**: Without proper monitoring, EDI initiatives may lack effectiveness.
- **Mitigation**: Establish clear metrics and evaluation processes to assess the impact of EDI efforts and inform continuous improvement.

UMIDB EDI Checklist

1. Governance and Leadership

Task	Responsible	Due Date	Status	Notes
Review and update EDI Policy	Clerk	Q1	☐	Ensure legal compliance and relevance
Ensure EDI is a standing agenda item in board meetings	Chairperson	Ongoing	☐	Include updates, incidents, or training needs
Report on EDI performance	Clerk	Q4	☐	Periodic review as requested

2. Workforce and Recruitment

Task	Responsible	Due Date	Status	Notes
Analyse workforce diversity data	Clerk	Q1	☐	By age, gender, ethnicity, disability, etc.
Conduct anonymous employee inclusion survey	RFO	Q2	☐	Use results to identify concerns or barriers
Review recruitment processes for bias	Clerk/Chair	Q3	☐	Update job ads, interview panels, etc.
Provide recruitment bias training	External	Q2	☐	For all involved in hiring

3. Staff Development and Culture

Task	Responsible	Due Date	Status	Notes
Deliver regular EDI training to all staff	External	Q2	☐	Include unconscious bias and inclusive language
Provide development opportunities to underrepresented staff	Clerk/Chair	Ongoing	☐	Review promotion and training accessibility
Review internal grievance/complaints related to EDI	Clerk	Q3	☐	Identify patterns or concerns

4. Service Delivery and Accessibility

Task	Responsible	Due Date	Status	Notes
Review accessibility of services (physical and digital)	Clerk	Q2	☐	Include signage, website, and documentation
Engage diverse community groups where needed or requested	Clerk/Chair	Q2	☐	Hold consultations or feedback events

Task	Responsible	Due Date	Status	Notes
Translate key documents or provide alternative formats	Clerk	Q3	☐	Based on community needs assessment

5. Data, Reporting and Accountability

Task	Responsible	Due Date	Status	Notes
Collect and analyse EDI-related complaints or incidents	RFO/Clerk	Q3	☐	Use for risk analysis
Set annual EDI improvement objectives	Board	Q1	☐	Based on prior year outcomes
Publish EDI report on website	Clerk	Q4	☐	Show transparency and progress

6. Policy and Legal Compliance

Task	Responsible	Due Date	Status	Notes
Review compliance with Equality Act 2010 and other regulations	Clerk	Q3	☐	Ensure all activities align with law
Audit all internal policies for EDI considerations	Clerk/Chair	Q4	☐	Pay, recruitment, parental leave, etc.

Annual Review Summary
- What went well?
- What needs improvement?
- What are the EDI objectives for next year?