

**A MEETING OF THE ALCONBURY AND ELLINGTON INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD WAS HELD AT BROOKFIELD FARM, GREAT STUKELEY AND VIRTUALLY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 07 SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 9 AM.**

**Elected Members**

- M G Baker
- K Baker
- A Lensen
- \* B Lumbers
- \* H Raby
- \* E Ruston
- \* J Sewell
- \* G Warrener
- Vacant Position
- Vacant Position
- Vacant Position
- Vacant Position
- Vacant Position

**Appointed Members**

- Huntingdonshire DC**
- S Cawley
- \* I Gardener
- Vacant Position
- Vacant Position
- Vacant Position
- Vacant Position
- Vacant Position
- Vacant Position
- Vacant Position
- Vacant Position
- Vacant Position
- Vacant Position

\* Present (24%)

Harry Raby in the Chair

**Officers in attendance:**

Phil Camamile (Chief Executive) and Alice Smith (Executive Assistant)

**Also in attendance:**

Doug McMurdo, Bedford Group of IDBs JMC Chair

<b>ID</b>	<b>Alconbury and Ellington IDB, Minute</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>37/22</b>	<b>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS</b>	
<b>37/22/01</b>	Harry Raby welcomed all those present to the meeting and advised members that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss the proposed amalgamation and answer any questions which had arisen following the joint meeting of all members of the Bedford Group of IDBs held on 07 July 2022.	
<b>37/22/02</b>	The Chair introduced Doug McMurdo, Bedford Group of IDBs JMC Chair and thanked him for attending the meeting to discuss the proposed amalgamation.	
<b>38/22</b>	<b>TO RECEIVE THE NOTES OF THE MEETING OF ALL 3 MEMBER BOARDS HELD ON 07 JULY 2022</b>	
<b>38/22/01</b>	The notes of the meeting of all 3 Member Boards held on 07 July 2022 to discuss the proposed amalgamation were considered in detail, noted and received (a copy of which is filed in the Report Book). There were no matters arising.	

**39/22 PROPOSED AMALGAMATION OF THE BEDFORDSHIRE & RIVER IVEL IDB, BUCKINGHAM & RIVER OUZEL IDB AND THE ALCONBURY & ELLINGTON IDB**

**39/22/01** Doug McMurdo presented the proposed amalgamation of the 3 Member Boards in the Bedford Group of IDBs. He advised members that the process of amalgamation was lengthy and would require the Defra Secretary of State to sign it off, which could take at least 2 years to do. It was therefore important to obtain approval from all 3 Member Boards before any further action was taken. Members were reminded that the joint meeting held on 7 July 2022 had been scheduled at the request of all 3 Boards at their November 2021 meetings.

**40/22 QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

**40/22/01** Members questioned how many places there would be on the new Board and Phil Camamile advised that the Pro's and Con's paper had proposed 25 members, 3 of which would be directly elected from the Alconbury & Ellington district and 1 of which would be appointed by Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC). However, all councils within the 3 existing IDB districts had since been consulted to understand their required number of members, as had been recommended in the Group's Pro's and Con's of Amalgamation paper. Further to final consultation with the councils, a definitive number would be agreed, and a decision taken at the upcoming round of Board meetings in November 2022. Phil Camamile advised members that at present the new amalgamated Board would likely have 29 members in total but also confirmed that HDC had not yet formally responded to the proposals. RESOLVED that this be noted.

**40/22/02** Members reiterated the importance of local knowledge and highlighted the loss in local knowledge was a worry. Doug McMurdo agreed that this was a serious obstacle to amalgamation and if all 3 Boards agreed to amalgamate, the Boards would need to replace the 3 existing IDBs with 3 Works Committees. These groups could also include many drainage ratepayers, community groups and organisations who were not currently Board members. This way, members could continue to meet in their areas and discuss drainage issues, without having the personal liability of being a member of a corporate body. This would also liberate members from having to be responsible for financial, governance, HR, legal and administrative matters, leaving them free to focus on drainage and water level management issues within their catchment areas. RESOLVED that this be noted.

**40/22/03** Geoff Warrener highlighted the work Alconbury Flood Group were currently undertaking and questioned if they would be able to contribute to the new Works Committee if the Board was to amalgamate. Phil Camamile advised that members from the Alconbury Flood Group would be able to join the new Alconbury & Ellington Works Committee and confirmed that they would be able to add much needed local knowledge. It was hoped that with fewer restrictions on who could be appointed, the Alconbury & Ellington Works Committee could also include parish councillors, local flood groups, community groups, etc, and in turn would allow for greater local knowledge to be contributed, greater representation and greater participation. RESOLVED that this be noted.

**40/22/04** Cllr Ian Gardener advised members that he was the Chair for Huntingdonshire District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Panel who were currently conducting a

review of IDBs within their District. He informed members that they were looking at and considering the differing and complex governance arrangements that were in place and the discrepancies that existed, with the varying numbers of appointed representatives required etc. Ian confirmed he would liaise with the Executive Assistant on any updates as they arose and advised members that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel may welcome a talk from the IDB to discuss the proposed amalgamation before the IDB made a decision at its next meeting on 22 November 2022. The Chair welcomed this invitation. RESOLVED that this be noted.

**40/22/05** Members accepted that governance was below par and noted that there would likely be cost, and efficiency savings associated with such an amalgamation.

**41/22 SUMMARY AND POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS**

**41/22/01** It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to recommend to the Board that they agree in principle to the proposed amalgamation.

**41/22/02** It was agreed and thereby RESOLVED to make a decision at the next Board meeting on 22 November 2022.