

Met Office Board

Summary

29 July 2021

Meeting held remotely using Microsoft Teams

- There were no apologies.
- It was confirmed the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 May 2021 had been approved as a true record of the meeting.
- Rob Woodward (Chair) thanked Simon Brown (Services Director) for his team's presentation the previous evening, outlining the role of Operational Meteorologists and the value they added to customers.
- Penny Endersby (Chief Executive) reported back on the Board Strategy Day which had taken place on 18 June and the actions being taken forward. These included developing the Microsoft relationship and progressing the Impacts and Benefits Strategy.
- Penny Endersby (Chief Executive) presented her report and the Board noted a number of points, including the supercomputer delivery programme and potential issues stemming from the worldwide shortage of semiconductors; the preparations for a multi-year spending review; work done in readiness for staff to return to the office and potential approaches to hybrid working going forward. She also provided an update on Lord Agnew's (Cabinet Office Minister) visit to the Met Office.
- The Board discussed cyber security. In particular, they noted the intention to move from following CE cyber plus certification towards the NIST (National Institute of Standards and Technology) regime instead, which took a more risk-based approach.
- Following discussion the previous meeting, the Board noted the first report on accuracy of recent weather forecasting.
- An update on preparations and arrangements for COP26 was provided.
- James Partington (NED, BEIS representative) briefed the Board on activities at BEIS, including the preparations for the spending review. He noted BEIS were aligning their equality objectives with the PSED (Public Sector Equality Duty) requirements. EU research programmes were also discussed.
- Rob Woodward welcomed Clare Barclay (UK CEO, Microsoft) and three of her colleagues to the meeting. Clare Barclay provided some background on Microsoft's mission and their ambitions in data services. The meeting discussed the potential opportunities for both organisations and areas of partnership that might develop.
- Nick Jobling (Chief Financial Officer) presented the Finance Report. The Board discussed the risks around the resourcing gaps, especially those relating to constraints on pay for specialist roles.
- The Board discussed the Met Office business model. This helped the Board understand the degrees of freedom, benefits and potential constraints stemming from the Met Office's current status as a Trading Fund.
- RW welcomed Oliver Bratton (OB), Director Network Strategy & Operations, Network Rail, to the meeting. Oliver Bratton explained the impact the weather could have on rail services and went on to discuss the work currently being undertaken with the Met Office to understand the impact of heavy rainfall on services and infrastructure.
- The Board approved the business case to submit a new bid to provide services to Qinetiq, who supported the MOD.
- Sarah Jackson (Head of International Strategy) made a presentation to the Board on international strategy. The Board discussed the wide range of areas where the Met Office has international involvement and influence, from global organisations like the World Meteorological Organisation, to European collaboration on satellites (EUMETSAT) and the role of European Centre for Medium range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF). The

Board discussed technological developments in the international arena and how the Met Office should articulate its international strategy.

- Tammy Lillie (People Director) presented the half yearly People Report. The Board discussed staff absences, mental health and wellbeing as well as the support available to staff, particularly during the challenges of COVID.
- Catherine Quinn (Chair, Remuneration Committee) updated the meeting on the Committee meeting the previous day.
- Arrangements for the 2021 Board Effectiveness review were discussed. It would be conducted by an external company, Independent Audit.
- The next meeting was scheduled for 1 October 2021.