

## **Met Office Board**

### **Summary**

**29<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

**Held virtually and in person Exeter HQ, Met Office**

- Rob Woodward (Chair) welcomed attendees and confirmed the meeting was quorate. Lynn Mawdsley was welcomed as new Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) and Simon Thompson as Chair Elect.
- Minutes of the meeting held on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024 were approved as a true record of the meeting.
- Penny Endersby (Chief Executive) presented her report to the Board, noting:
  - The supercomputer implementation had progressed and the new supercomputer was available for testing.
  - Improvement in the people survey with better scores for development and line management.
  - An update to the work undertaken in relation to Storm Bert.
  - A good business continuity exercise undertaken with Microsoft.
  - Celebration of the start of the readiness platform with GPU chips which allowed early consideration of requirements for the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation of the supercomputer.
  - An update on the strategy refresh – there was an emerging theme on pace and innovation.
- Adam Jackson (DSIT representative) outlined the focus of DSIT's remit under the new Government. This was to improve people's lives by maximising the potential of science, including accelerating innovation, ensuring technology is safely deployed for good purposes and that a modern digital government delivers services that benefit citizens.
- Nick Jobling (Chief Financial Officer) introduced the finance report. This represented the forecast from the end of September. Trading was going well and in line with forecasts for the year to date. Headcount was not expected to increase much before the end of the year. 'Generation 1b' of the new supercomputer would be implemented in the next financial year (in very late spring). Service fees will not be paid this year and this has been factored into next year's spending review.
- Charles Ewen (Chief Data and Information Officer) presented the Supercomputer update, highlighting that Gen 1a had now successfully passed SIAT (Systems Integration & Acceptance Testing). This provided assurance the machine met the original specification for stability and scale (unlike many other HPC (High Performance Computing) centres). This was a fantastic internal effort, backed by innovation and creativity, making sure that the Met Office were capable of delivering benefit prior to availability of the full solution.
- Charles Ewen presented the Cyber Security report. He was currently the Senior Information Risk Owner so accountable for Cyber Security within the Met Office. Cyber Security was currently the highest rated risk within the Met Office, even though there had been significant improvement in cyber preparedness over the last several years. It was noted that there was a growing level of maturity and while progress had been made there were still many improvements that could be made. Discussions were had around outsider threats and how the Met Office would handle this should access be gained.
- Nick Jobling presented the business case for the Microsoft Enterprise Renewal Agreement – this had been brought to the Board for approval as it currently exceeds the Chief Executives delegation powers. This case was for the renewal of the Microsoft 365 desktop application. The Board approved the business case.
- Steve Calder (Director of Government and Industry Relations) presented the Public Weather Service Customer Group (PWSCG) report. It was noted the main focus of the Chair of the PWSCG was on the forecast accuracy of the Met Office data. Forecast accuracy is assessed through three lenses, actual accuracy, comparative accuracy and perceptions of accuracy. Precipitation accuracy had improved greatly since July. A second area of focus was communications and brand building, promoting technology and science innovation and showing value for money as highlighted by the London Economics report. The Met Office was enhancing communication and engagement activities.

- Duncan Potts (Chair of PWSCG) gave a presentation thanking the Board for the invitation to the meeting and noted the PWS priorities which focused on outcomes and supplier agreements, mitigation of supercomputer delays and the evolving membership of the PWSCG. Accuracy is the highest priority, followed by improving communications with direct channels, particularly with first responders.
- Tammy Lillie (Chief People Officer) presented the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) six monthly update to the Board. The team have been hugely encouraged by the work and progress that has been made over the year. The Met Office has achieved ongoing accreditation from the National Centre of Diversity as well as being benchmarked at number 29 in the top 100 employers for ED&I. There has been further improvement in diversity within recruitment. It was noted that there has been further work on the staff networks review and progress in outreach and early careers.
- The Board noted the following
  - Additional pay proposal
  - Update on the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
  - Register of Interests