

Opening the Meeting

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies.

Chair's Comments

The Board approved the proposal for a director to re-join the PDP subcommittee.

Conflicts of Interest

The Chair reported that he had been appointed to the Oxford Diocese Board of Finance, effective 1st January 2022.

Minutes of 29 September

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 September were approved as an accurate record, subject to minor amendments.

Action log

The Board noted that there were no outstanding actions, however there were a number of items due in November.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Report

The CEO referred the Board to the CEO report which had been circulated, and drew attention to budget setting, events attended, debt commissioning and internal surveys.

The Board requested further information to be provided on debt advice contracts in relation to likely demand, capacity, and total expenditure. The Board further noted the update and asked a question on customer contact traffic. The CEO reported that there had been uplift in customer contact traffic for pensions guidance, following changes to the website.

Update on Departmental Review action plan

The CEO reported that critical success measures had been shared with DWP and the final milestones would be shared with the Board when agreed. The Board were advised that the ARAC would monitor progress on the milestones, when agreed.

Places for Growth (PfG)

The Board received an update on the PfG project and noted that further analysis would be undertaken at a workshop to be held with DWP on 15 November. It was agreed that an update would be made at a Special Board meeting and this would include the outcome of DWP meeting on 15 November, risk implications and advice obtained.

Management Information (MI) Pack including Accounts and Quality Accountability Review (QAR)

The MI Pack was presented inclusive of accounts and the QAR for October. It provided a synopsis of the DWP expectations regarding Period 6 forecast. The Board noted that the forecast for the full year spend was required to be within 1% of the Period 6 forecast for MaPS.

The Board approved the MI including the accounting position and endorsed the CFO's proposal towards reforecasting.

BUSINESS CASE Recruitment Contract Variation

The Board received the business case for the variation of the recruitment contract with Reed, and sought clarity on why two agencies were involved. It was clarified that one of the agencies was a specialist agency.

The Board approved the business case for the variation of the contract Reed.

BUSINESS CASE: Covid Digital Tools Beta - Debt

The Board agreed this was an important phase and noted that there were mechanisms to ensure conformity with all providers. The Executive confirmed to the Board that the tools would be made available to other providers. For the digital self-serve journey element, there was ambition for this also to be extended to other providers, should sufficient funding be made available.

The Board approved the business case.

Risk management Approach (RMA) Annual Review

The Board received the Risk Management Approach (RMA) as part of its annual review cycle, which had been reviewed by ARAC. The Board noted that the RMA had been shared with other Government departments as a template, and had been adopted as a model of best practice.

The Board approved the RMA.

Quality Assurance Framework

The Board received the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF), outlining the approach for managing and assuring quality across MaPS service lines. ARAC had reviewed the QAF and suggested changes that had been incorporated. The next stage was developing the operational model for the delivery which would be coming to Board in February.

The Board made comments on detriment, thematic reviews, and harmonisation of frameworks. Subject to these amendments, the QAF was agreed.

Devolved Administrations Chair's update from meeting of 29 September

The Board noted the update from the Devolved Administrations meeting of 29 September. The Board was advised that there were still some delays in launching the delivery plans due to the complexity of obtaining support.

ARAC Chair's update from meeting of 12 October

The Board noted the update from the ARAC meeting on 12 October. Internal Audit had recently completed two audits and one advisory audit. The Board noted that the risk management structure was now in place. A number of risks had reduced in score as a result.

FinCom Chair's update from meeting of 2 October

The Board noted the update from the FinCom meeting on 2 October. In particular, the Terms of Reference had been reviewed and updated to allow the CFO greater flexibility for budget reprioritisation within the overall budget envelope.

PDP Subcommittee update from meeting of 13 October

The Board received an update from the PDP Subcommittee meeting. The Board noted that the programme for delivery was on track.

NomCo Chair's update from meeting of 19 October

The Board noted the update.

RemPCo Chair's update from meeting of 19 October

The Board noted the update.

Board Meetings

The Board had previously agreed to implement the recommendation from the Departmental Review to reduce its number of Board meetings from 10 per year to 8 per year. The Board decided to re-purpose the January 2022 meeting, move the July 2022 meeting, and not hold formal Board meetings in January and June.

Forward Plan

The Board noted the forward plan.

With no other business, the meeting closed at 15.08hrs

