

DRAFT – FOR APPROVAL

YourVoice - Minutes of 22 April 2019 Meeting via MS Team

Present:

YourVoice members Bernice Law – Independent Chair Alistair Maltby – The Woodland Trust Tayo Adebawale – Independent Member Andrew White – Consumer Council for Water Bhupendra Mistry – Consumer Council for Water Adam Briggs – National Farmers Union Dave Thompson – Disability Partnership, Warrington Steve Cullen – Citizens Advice & Money Advice Deborah Murray – Groundwork, Manchester Mark Atherton – Director of Environment, Greater Manchester Combined Authority Claire Bunter – Environment Agency	United Utilities Gaynor Kenyon – Corporate Affairs Director James Bullock – Strategy, Policy & Regulation Director (part) Louise Beardmore – Customer Services & People Director Simon Chadwick – Water, Wastewater and Digital Services Director (part) Jo Harrison – Environmental Planning & Innovation Director Emma Dennett – Regulatory Contract Manager Ben Nadel – Regulation, Reform & Compliance Manager Shy Sharma – Customer Research Manager (part) Jamie Parker – Customer Research Manager (part) Ken Dillon – Research Partner
Apologies Richard Jarvis – Public Health England Allen Creedy – Federation of Small Businesses Keith Ashcroft – Environment Agency	

Item 1 – Introductions and apologies

Apologies were notes from Richard Jarvis, Allen Creedy & Keith Ashcroft.

Item 2 – Minutes and Actions from the previous meeting

The minutes were accepted and it was noted that all previous actions had been completed.

Item 3 – Quarterly Performance Review

Louise Beardmore presented the customer related performance measures for the previous period.

The impact of behavioural changes during COVID-19 lockdown on performance against the Per Capita Consumption target was described, and progress in rolling out the new water efficiency strategy reviewed. An enhanced metering programme is in development, based on installing 'shadow meters' externally to properties, with customers given the option of whether to receive metered bills backed by the 'lowest bill guarantee'

The following points were raised in discussion:

- Ofwat are to take the Per capita consumption measure out of annual incentive assessment and will 'true-up' at the end of the AMP once the full impact of COVID-19 is fully understood
- Internal work is ongoing, looking at tariff re-design aimed to encourage changes in water-efficiency behaviour. Dave Thompson suggested this should be discussed at the appropriate Affordability & Vulnerability panel meeting
- Members were invited to attend 'field activity', once it is underway, to understand the roll-out of shadow metering from a customer experience viewpoint

- Andy White drew attention to ethnographic customer research being carried out by CCW, based on installing a camera in customer's kitchens to record water use, conscious and unconscious. Andy will circulate the results once available.

Action – Louise Beardmore to include Tariff redesign at the next A & V meeting

Action – Louise Beardmore to invite members to field events relating to shadow metering

Action – Andy White to circulate the CCW 'Kitchen-sink' research once available

Simon Chadwick presented the network and operations performance measures covering wastewater and water for the previous period.

There is continued encouraging performance against the new Leakage target, and the issues involved and action being taken to address targets showing as 'Red' (including Water Quality Compliance, Reducing Water Quality Contacts, Reducing Interruptions to Supply, Internal Flooding and Sewer Blockages) were explained.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- Members requested that in future the word 'sewer' be inserted against any flooding measure descriptions where appropriate
- The subject of Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) and UU action to monitor and manage CSOs was highlighted as deserving of further detailed discussion, either at the Environment and Social Value subgroup meeting or at a full meeting of the YourVoice panel
- Members commented that the environmental performance data collected by UU could be valuable to other stakeholders, such as Local Authorities who aren't able to collect such data themselves. Further discussion concerning such opportunities would be welcome

Action – Simon Chadwick to review measures descriptions for the next meeting

Action – Jo Harrison and Alistair Maltby to set up special panel session on CSOs ASAP

Action – Simon Chadwick to contact Mark Atherton to discuss data-sharing opportunities with local authorities

Item 4 – YourVoice Sub-Group Reports

Alistair Maltby highlighted the key issues discussed at the Environmental and Social Capital Sub-Group meeting held on 14 April. This included:

- Discussion about climate change adaptation;
- The Panorama documentary on Sewer Overflows; and
- A presentation on the company's new approach to Asset Health in the context of health and wellbeing, which was very well received.

Tayo Adebawale talked about the activities relating to customer engagement that YourVoice had been involved in, absent a formal subgroup meeting, over the first quarter of the year. This had included:

- Responding to OFWAT's consultation on future customer preferences;
- Attending customer focus groups on climate change, debriefing sessions on Green Recovery, Asset Health, Drainage Water Management Plan and Water Resources Management Plan customer research.
- A key and welcomed aspect observed had been the emergence of the focus on 'future bill payers' to ensure that their preferences are properly accounted for
- Other stakeholders would greatly benefit from sharing in the customer research results that UU holds and the company should consider publishing its research more widely

Action – Louise Beardmore to look at creating a platform for sharing customer research

Dave Thompson also gave members an update on the recent Affordability and Vulnerability panel, noting the great amount of collaboration that has been generated across utility industries, by the work that UU has driven on Priority Services.

Item 5 – Customer Research Programme update

Ben Nadel outlined the emerging customer research planning framework, governing the approach to ‘business-as-usual’ day-to-day customer research, as well as incorporating the potential requirements in the run up to PR24 Price Review.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- Stakeholder organisations can be of use in engaging customers in vulnerable circumstances – DWP has recently worked with the MS Society, the Parkinson’s Association and the Stroke Association which could offer opportunities for UU to engage more effectively in future
- Similarly, members of the Vulnerability and Affordability panel such as Citizens Advice, Age UK, etc, can help with the balance of how best to engage
- Business customer engagement can be very difficult in capturing complexities, the example given being different needs across agricultural communities. Definition of segments, including ‘hard-to-reach’ customers need to be considered carefully
- Timing of individual projects to be reviewed separately in the next CESG meeting

Action – Ben Nadel to contact Dave Thompson to explore opportunities with stakeholder organisations in considering customers in vulnerable circumstances.

Action – Tayo Adebawale to consider when the next CESG session will be required.

Item 6 – Annual Performance Reporting – update on development of the report

Emma Dennett outlined the key elements and timetable for producing this year’s suite of annual performance reports. This included an early view of the new graphical ‘look and feel’ for the main report and Customer Summary.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- Care needs to be taken with the graphical approach, especially in the use of colour, size of font and text orientation in the new reporting graphics

Action – Emma Dennett to factor feedback into design brief.

Item 7 – AOB and future meetings.

- James Bullock gave a quick recap on the Green Recovery Package, focusing on the 4 proposals that were submitted, and the benefit sharing arrangements that supported the proposals. Announcement from OFWAT is expected in the middle of May detailing the projects it would support.
- Dave Thompson reminded the company of the opportunity to make a case for the Inclusive Company Awards

Action – James Bullock to write to YourVoice members with OFWAT’s response to show how UU proposals have landed.

***Action – Louise Beardmore to consider submission for the ICA
DONM – 21 July 2021***