

Minutes of the meeting of the Dee Valley Water Customer Challenge Group

Ramada Hotel, Wrexham, Wales

24th May 2017

Present:

<i>Chair</i>	Clare Evans
<i>Customer Council for Wales</i>	Angela Davies Jones
<i>Independent Member</i>	Paul Roberts
<i>Independent Member</i>	David Oxley

In attendance:

<i>Dee Valley/Severn Trent</i>	Shane Anderson (Head of Economic Regulation), Katherine Bird (PMO PR19 Lead), Heather Thompson (Outcomes Manager), Kirsten Shilling (Strategy & Regulation Team Manager)
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Apologies for absence:

Councillor Bob Dutton (no longer a member), Councillor Martyn Delaney, Kerryll Prosser (Churton Parish Council), Moira Reynolds (Natural Resources Wales), Clare Harrison (Chester Voluntary Action), Lia Moutselou (CC Water), Natalie Hall (Natural Resources Wales – on behalf of Moira Reynolds)

These minutes are a redacted version that were taken at the meeting

1. Welcome

- The Chair welcomed attendees to the CCG meeting including new attendees from Severn Trent joining for the forum for the first time and summarised the format of previous meetings in relation to the company.
- It was discussed how the Customer Challenge Group (CCG) would run moving forwards with the merging of Dee Valley Water (DVW) and Severn Trent (SVT).
- The existing Terms of Reference were reviewed and AGREED.

2. The Strategic Framework

- A review of the Severn Trent strategic framework was given.
- The approach to the alignment of licences was discussed.

- Members discussed how to improve customer communication regarding the acquisition of the company's customers. No letters were sent to Household customers although letters were sent to Non Household relating to choice.

3. Annual Performance Report (APR)

- The APR 2016/17 will be published in July.
- The Chair noted it would be beneficial to have further understanding of in AMP performance in relation to Wrexham and Chester.
- A member CHALLENGED that fresh thinking is required and input from the CCG in relation to the approach to hard to reach customer groups.
- The Chair noted that the purpose of the CCG is to challenge impact on the customer in regards to bills and that it would be beneficial to see the audit outputs at a following meeting.

4. PR19

- An overview of the building blocks of regulation we provided and also noted Ofwat's approach to PR19.
- An overview of the current PR19 plan was provided

5. The Big Challenges

- The strategic challenges facing PR19 were discussed.
- Members commented on ensuring that the challenges facing Severn Trent and Dee Valley region will be different and we need to ensure the differences are explained.
- It was noted that the English CCG have a 'Water Forum' webpage. The company to consider website updates to link in with the above.

6. Sub Groups

- Sub groups have been set up to support the English CCG. The same sub groups will be used to support the Welsh CCG if required.
- The CCG also discussed the need to include retail engagement for Non Household.
- The CCG discussed Vulnerability and how do we understand what this looks like and what support can be offered in line with what the company are already doing on this front.
- It was noted by members that the company are well regarded in the community for offering support by being responsive to customers.
- A member CHALLENGED a further thought would be to consider what 'best in class' would look like in terms of Vulnerability.

7. Customer Research

- The approach to customer research was discussed and how the company WTP research would be undertaken.
- Members provided suggestions how to engage with customers and harder to reach customers across the community.
- It was noted 26th May is when the final CCW report of Willingness to Pay & Triangulation will be published and this will be shared after the election.
- CHALLENGE - Need to consider hard to reach customers and digital channels; reacting through technology.

- CHALLENGE - The need to consider different customer views across different areas and age groups
- CHALLENGE - Important to consider Welsh language in relation to research
- CHALLENGE - emphasis on the importance of education for issues such as what items can and cannot be flushed down toilets.

9. AOB

- It was agreed that the next meetings would be 27th June in Wrexham and 20th July, location to be confirmed. Proposed agenda was discussed.
- CHALLENGE - consider good customer perception of the company in the business plan, including: Dual language, Easy to understand bills, Responsive- customer call handling, Local telephone numbers – perception.

Challenges

- CHALLENGE - Fresh thinking is required and input from the CCG in relation to the approach to hard to reach customer groups.
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