

MINUTES OF CUSTOMER CHALLENGE GROUP

Meeting held on Monday 31st October at 10:30
Usk Room, Linea

Attendees: Peter Davies (Chairman); Craig Anderson (Warm Wales); Daniel Davies (Welsh Water); Mike Davis (Welsh Water); Nigel Draper (Valleys to Coast Housing); Lee Gonzales (Consumer Council for Water); Danielle Ingleson (Welsh Water); Louise Jackson (Welsh Water); Delyth Jewell (Citizens Advice); Carly Jones (WEL representative); Rachel Lewis-Davies (NFU); Marc Lee (Legal & General); Duncan McCombie (McCombie & Daughters Ltd); Anna Riddick (Welsh Water); Alun Shurmer (Welsh Water); Dimitrios Xenias (Cardiff University)

In attendance: Joanne Murphy (Welsh Water); Rob Sheldon (Accent); Alex McCluckie (Djs); Naomi Kent (Blue Marble)

Apologies: Jean Francois Dulong (Welsh Local Government Association); Ruth Jenkins (Natural Resources Wales); Graham Jones (Federation of Small Businesses); Marc Lee (Legal & General); Victoria Lloyd (Age Cymru); Lia Moutselou (Consumer Council for Water); Steve Ormerod (Cardiff University & Chairman of IEAP); Russell Todd (WCVA)

1. **Welcome**

- Peter Davies welcomed all members to the meeting and introductions were made.
- Cathryn Ross would be joining the meeting at 3pm.
- The Group would not meet again until February but a Willingness to Pay conference call was to take place in November.

2. **DCWW Company Updates (Alun Shurmer and Mike Davis)**

Advertising Campaign

- The advertising campaign had run through the summer and now focussed on the “Stop the Block” campaign.
- A social media campaign will run alongside the advertisements. Members were encouraged to share and retweet as widely as possible.

Customer Satisfaction App

- A customer feedback app has been developed and will be rolled out to 350 frontline employees in January which will ask customers to complete a short questionnaire to provide feedback on their experience.
- A pilot scheme will start on 1st November.
- It was suggested that it would also be useful to obtain feedback at a later date as the customer’s perception could change upon reflection.
- It would also be useful to obtain feedback on the use of the app.

Customer Sentiment Map

- The map provides a visual platform for illustrating customer sentiment by bringing together complaints, compliments, rant & rave and social media.

- It provides opportunity to map geographic areas by business unit and time to identify trends
- It was suggested it would be useful to check if it is possible to split between household and business customers.

Board Strategy Days

- The Board held Strategy sessions over 3 days in September.
- Key actions are setting PR19 (2020-2025) plans in the context of the longer vision (Welsh Water 2050)
- Climate change is one of the risks that will develop over that timeframe.
- Board will be discussing visions for 2050 at its meeting in November.
- Welsh Water 2050 will be discussed further at CCG meetings.

3. **Phase 1**

Welsh Water Feedback

- Phase 1 research key findings have been captured in a log which will also be updated with future research.
- The log will be republished at key stages of the programme.
- Recognised it is important to give customers information in context and will be benchmarking comparative issues.
- Social responsibility - vulnerability will be brought into measures.
- Glas Members will be involved in the research process.
- Social tariffs – it was noted that there are likely to be changes in demographics in future.

4. **Warm Wales Together Stronger Conference**

- The 'Together Stronger' conference is taking place on 7th December at the Swalec Stadium.
- All local authorities in Wales will be invited
- Peter Davies will chair the event.
- Invites to the CCG will be sent out.

5. **Phase 2**

- 4 projects from the longlist have been identified to continue immediately (Environment – DJS; Water Resources – Accent; Deep Dives – Blue Marble; Customer Services – Blue Marble).
- Postponed items will be reviewed in the coming months.

DJS - Environment

- Research completed in PR14 will be reviewed to see if views have changed.
- Non-household customers have been included.
- Participant profiles – family groups, disabled members etc haven't been considered. CCG members felt it was important to also consider vulnerability – one option is tenure (renting or owner).
- Important to get a good mix of customers within timescales and budget
- Be useful to find out how the Bevan Foundation collect data.
- A lot of SMEs are run from homes – screening will need to be carried out to ensure SMEs have a separate water bill.
- Sectors will be split broadly and can also be split by water dependant businesses and non-dependant.

Accent – Water Resources

- Both qualitative and quantitative research was undertaken.

- The core objectives were to understand customer attitudes to water resilience and perceptions of water efficiency.
- The qualitative approach involved focus groups, telephone interviews and in home interviews.
- The quantitative approach involve a questionnaire design based survey using 2 discrete choice experiments to obtain WTP values linked to the hosepipe ban from stage 1.
- All research will be completed by the end of February.
- Agreed the equivalent of 'topic guide elements' list (slide 5) should be provided in the Environment document.

Blue Marble – Customer Service

- The objective of the project was to explore expectations of customer service standards to develop service propositions.
- It is a challenge for DCWW to engage with vulnerable customers.
- DCWW tried in PR14 to engage with other organisations with limited success/impact and it is recognised that this takes time.
- L&G have similar issues with hard to reach customers.
- The approach take was in 3 stages starting with the development of a customer service framework and ending with detailed scenario testing at focus groups.

Blue Marble – Deep Dives

- The project objective was to provide insight from customers who are/have been poorly served working with communities, stakeholders and individuals.
- The research needs to be constructive as there is a risk of negativity.
- For indebted customers CAB advisers could be asked if they can provide anonymised case studies which could be used.

Agreed, at all future meetings, the 6 promises should be included on the agenda.

6. Discussion with Cathryn Ross

- Role of CCG is important and is part of the regulatory approach
- Outcomes come from customer engagement which is crucial to legitimacy.
- Ofwat were overwhelmed by the success of PR14 as a concept.
- How can the process be improved?
 - the price review had taken too long so the delivery of the review was compressed.
 - Ofwat have now learnt the value of frontloading the process.
 - Ofwat were intervening in plans at a late stage. This time they are trying to be a lot clearer in what is required e.g. cost of capital.
- CCG Chair meetings are now held every quarter as a result of feedback received.
- DCWW colleagues left the room and a private meeting between Cathryn Ross and the CCG members followed.