

Minutes of the seventh meeting of the Customer Forum on 23 November 2017

Attendees: Peter Peacock (Chair)
Andrew Faulk
Mairi Macleod
Bob Wilson
Agnes Robson
Sue Walker
Rachel Bell
Tom May
Jo Dow
Stuart Housden

In attendance: Douglas Millican, Scottish Water
Simon Parsons, Scottish Water
Tom Harvie-Clark, Scottish Water
Molly Horsley, Scottish Water
Robert Stuart, Scottish Water
Gordon Reid, Scottish Water
Kerstin McEwan, Water Industry Commission for Scotland
Donna Very, Water Industry Commission for Scotland

Chairman's opening remarks

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked all for attending.

Apologies

No apologies.

Declaration of conflicts of interest in relation to the Agenda

No conflicts of interest were declared.

Minutes

The minutes were considered an accurate record of the meeting and were approved.

Actions

Actions were noted.

Oral update on recent activities

Ethical Business Regulation (EBR)

The Water Industry Commission for Scotland (WICS) are working on the EBR principles and working arrangements and will share with all stakeholders

First joint stakeholder meeting

The Chair updated Forum members on the joint stakeholder meeting that he had attended. The meeting was attended by members from WICS, SEPA, DWQR and Scottish Water and facilitated by Luis Correira from Oxera. This meeting enabled all at the table to share their perspectives on the key themes from WICS Initial Decision Papers.

Behavioural Insights

The Chair and the WICS CEO met with Pete Lunn, a Behavioural Insights expert at the Economic and Social Research Institute in Ireland to discuss how to link behavioural insights into the SRC process and to build a closer working relationship with his institute.

Research Workshop

Agnes Robson updated the Forum on the recent research workshop facilitated by Scottish Water. Scottish Water provided an update on Engage21: Customer Research, Research on Customer Priorities. This identified some further work that will be carried out in areas such as working with Community Councils, environmental issues with community impact, climate change and low pressure.

Apptivism

The Chair updated members on a recent apptivism presentation which is platform to engage people through social media. An experimental piece of work will be done by the Apptivism team to gauge what the public's perception is of Scottish Water.

OECD

The Chair attended the Network of Economic Regulators conference in Paris along with CEOs from WICS and Scottish Water and Jon Rathjen from Scottish Government. They presented on the Future of Regulation: Collaboration and Consumer-Centric Scotland's Strategic Review of Charges 2021-27 (SR21). A copy of the presentations has been circulated to members.

Water treatment works visit

Forum members visited Ayrshire for a visit to a water treatment works and a resilience scheme at Highlees. This visit was considered to be a very interesting insight into the work being done by Scottish Water.

Annual Performance review

Scottish Water presented their annual performance review 2016/17 to the Forum. The Forum agreed that they would reflect on the information provided and write formally to Scottish Water.

Shetland Islands

Mairi Macleod updated Forum members on a meeting she had held with the Director of Infrastructure and Planning at Shetland Islands Council to discuss the view of the Council of Scottish Water locally and any particular island based water issues. The Council had said that the service level had improved over the last few years and there were no significant issues. The Forum considered that it would be useful to establish contact with other councils to gain an insight of their interactions with Scottish Water.

Vulnerable Customers

Andrew Faulk and Mairi MacLeod provided an update on a conference they had attended on vulnerable customers. This conference was based on a collaborative piece of work by CAS, OFWAT, and OFCOM with the main focus on physical vulnerabilities.

Catchment management

Members of the Forum attended a meeting with Andy Dunbar, Scottish Water, to gain an understanding of the catchment management work that Scottish Water are doing and it was agreed to look at this work on a 6 monthly basis.

CAS work programme

CAS had updated the Chair on their future work programme to inform the Principles of Charging. The CFU will be invited to the next Forum meeting.

Meeting Schedule

Forum members noted the meeting scheduled and agreed that going forward meetings should take place on a monthly basis.

Briefing Note from John McLaren

The Forum noted the briefing note from John McLaren on business activity post 2007.

Initial Decision Papers

The Forum met with WICS on 22 November and had a very useful discussion on all 13 Initial Decision Papers from WICS. A note of these discussions will be circulated to Forum members.

What would success look like?

The Forum discussed what they thought success would look like for the SRC21-27 period. A working note will be drafted and circulated to Forum members.

Scottish Water

The Chair welcomed Scottish Water to the meeting.

Tom Harvie-Clark provided an overview of the Customer Research work following the workshop on 26 October. He updated the Forum on the progress being made on the actions following this meeting and identified the next steps. The Forum will reflect on customer impact and provide a formal note on this.

Strategy Paper – Waste Water Resilience and Sustainability

Robert Stuart provided the Forum with an outline of Scottish Water's strategic objectives for waste water services. He provided an update on the work that has been done to date on improving waste water services and the investment priorities required to ensure that there are less sewer flooding incidents.

Strategy Paper – Environmental Compliance

Scottish Water outlined the strategic objectives for environmental compliance and the requirement for future investment in this area to ensure that they become fully compliant with water framework directives. They outlined the significant improvements due to previous investment and the need to build on this work.

Financing Services

Scottish Water gave an update on the challenges it faces to keep customer prices stable. Scottish Water consider there to be significant pressures on the financials due to increasing demands and customer expectations.

AOB

Next meeting will be held at WICS offices on 13 December.