

MINUTES OF 6th MEETING OF THE WESSEX WATER PARTNERSHIP

Meeting held at Wessex Water, Claverton Down, Bath
Wednesday 22 March 2017

Present Dan Rogerson – Chair (DR)
Jeremy Bailey - Environment Agency (JB)
Michael Barnes – CCWater (MB)
Gillian Camm - Non-Executive Director Wessex
Water (GC)
Sarah Cardy - Citizens Advice Wiltshire (SC)
Jeremy Hawkins – Independent report writer (JH)
David Hawkes – Advice UK (DHa)
David Heath - CCWater (DHe)
Ian Walker – Bath University (IW)

Wessex Water observers:
Sue Lindsay (SL)
Phil Wickens (PW)
Katherine Mining (KM)
Andy Pymmer (AP) *[item 4]*
Harriet Penrose (HP) *[item 4]*
Matt Wheeldon (MW) *[item 3]*
Dan Green (SG) *[item 3]*
Aimee Shaw (AS) *[item 3]*
Julian Welbank (JW) *[item 3-5]*
Ruth Barden (RB) *[item 4&5]*

Apologies:
Matt Vaughan-Wilson - Money Advice Trust
(MVW)
Richard Cresswell – Catchment Panel Chair (RC)
Martin Green - Age UK South Gloucestershire (MG)
Nicola Morris – Student Representative Bath
University (NM)

Key points and actions from the meeting

1. Welcome

Immediately prior to private session, no minutes taken.

2. Private session – members only

Private session, no minutes taken.

3. Discussion on areas of focus

No formal minutes taken. KM agreed to take notes for JH that will be sent separately and not published as part of the minutes of the meeting. WW staff attended to answer specific questions on their subject areas.

4. Minutes and actions from previous meeting including declaration of interest

No changes to minutes. Minutes were signed by DR on behalf of the attendees.

The following updates to actions from the previous meeting were provided:

- “Chair to raise the issue of water quality failures due to customers’ taps and how manufacturers can sell non-compliant taps and fittings at the next CCG chair’s meeting. Chair to also liaise with Richard Hargrave at Wessex Water who sits on the WRAS committee.” – DR has discussed this with RH to get an idea of what is going on nationally – DR to circulate results of this discussion, as work is ongoing. It was mentioned that everyone should notify Wessex when installing equipment but often they do not. DR
- “Chair to take up issues discussed at January meeting surrounding the Information Assurance Plan with Ofwat.” – DR has contacted Ofwat and is waiting for a discussion. DR
- “PW to share income deciles in absolute values, and show bill by bottom decile for each provider.” – PW said that the Office for National Statistics has recently published information on income deciles and agreed to share it with the group after today’s meeting. PW
- Standing item for declarations of interest has been added to the agenda.
- At the last meeting, comments were invited on the Stage 2 survey. Agreed to form a customer research sub-group for liaison on the customer research programme – see agenda item 6.
- PW provided updates to the SDS-related actions in the meeting papers, but added that the SDS has been revised since the last WWP meeting and the tone has changed slightly. Final version to be sent to the WWP. PW
- “AP to explore further opportunities for our employees who wish to make wider contributions to society in the voluntary sector e.g. Age UK scheme whereby employees make a call from their desk to someone who is lonely.” – WW has a volunteering policy. SL has also contacted MG for further ideas and is awaiting response. MG
- SL reported that all trust fund payments have been made to charitable organisations on the WWP.
- The discussion from the private session was sent through to SL.

No other actions discussed.

Apologies were noted from MVW (whose attempted dial-in didn’t work), RC, MG and NM.

Members were asked, and there were no declarations of interest to record.

It was agreed that SL would send on to DR/JH the notes taken by KM during the Areas of Focus discussion. SL

5. Environmental programme for PR19

RB presented a set of slides shown previously to the EA and Natural England.

DHe raised that he thought there would be changes to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) post Brexit that may lead to rapid changes in agricultural practice. He asked if we can factor this into our plans e.g. if farms on the Somerset Levels were to close. RB said that this was an advantage of having a flexible approach as our funding mechanisms may help these farms to survive.

DR asked about the costings of innovative approaches. RB responded that we may consider where catchment management approaches can offset capital solutions – we want to deliver as much through catchment management as possible. Some catchments haven't had much work done in them yet – this work is needed to understand effectiveness of catchment approaches; where these are not delivering, we can use asset-based solutions.

JW added that we want to get to the position that in the NEP we have a mixture of solutions.

JW thanked JB for his help in the meetings held so far with the EA.

6. Update on customer engagement

With regards to the pilot WTP work, JB raised that when presenting a list of options, we should present each in a consistent way i.e. text, picture or both, but not a mixture across the different options. Using a mixture of text and pictures may bias one of the options. HP to follow up with Accent.

HP

For the resilience research, DR asked whether the 4 areas covered were selected through internal discussion, or by other means. HP responded that these areas were selected to cover service delivery areas, although offered to include anything that the partnership felt was missing.

DR suggested the possibility of considering resilience of the operation of the business, but HP responded that the aim was to keep a customer focus and PW added that we can build this in by linking the business resilience for example into a reason for a supply stoppage. JB said that Defra will release info on resilience through the EA.

There were no questions about the leakage research.

For the revealed preference research, DR raised that it would be of interest to hear approaches from the agencies that haven't been successful. HP to share with the WWP a general summary of the different agencies' approaches and the rationale for selecting the winner for each tender.

HP

For our continuous data analysis, DR asked if any of the hypotheses chosen have "failed" – SL confirmed not at this point.

IW asked at what point will customers be asked questions such as “Are you prepared to subsidise farming through your water bill?” PW responded that during the SDS research, we asked customers about priorities and how we go about delivering them e.g. paying farmers to support a process such as catchment management rather than build more expensive capital solutions and customers were in favour. Furthermore, the business plan will undergo acceptability testing.

SL added that the research programme is done independently and best market research practice is being used. The WWP do need to share if they aren't happy with the research.

SC raised that when asking about the acceptability of the plan, we need to provide a comparator. HP confirmed that comparative information will be used.

The group discussed the establishment of a customer research sub group (JH, JB, SC, MB, IW and DR) and the frequency of meetings.

- GC raised that being clear about the desired outcome of WWP input into the research should help members gauge the level of liaison/checking needed. This is something to be discussed at the first meeting taking account for example of the Ofwat guidance on good engagement.
- From his research experience, IW suggested that a short summary should be sufficient for each piece of research, although it would need to include example questions and the stimulus material, so that the WWP can gauge the tone. It may not be necessary for the sub group to comment on every single item of supporting information.
- IW added that there needs to be a mechanism to check that high level questions are not missed.
- SC emphasised the importance of explaining the scope of questions when sending out a document for comments.

PW added that WW will need to understand whether the WWP feel we have interpreted each item of research appropriately.

It was decided that the customer research sub group should meet quickly to elect its chair and agree level of involvement with WW on the engagement programme. DR/SL to discuss the way forward and KM/SL to book the first meeting. DR/
SL/
KM

7. Future timetable

SL suggested that we may need to be more flexible with 2018 meeting dates in order to align with key Ofwat publication/submission dates. We also may need to move the October 2017 meeting to November 17 – SL to confirm. SL

Prior to the meeting, SL had discussed the WWP's involvement in the annual review with DR and JH. JH briefly explained to the group the work that he is required to do for this.

JH asked members to send him their thoughts on whether the format of the WWP report for the annual review should be similar to last year or not. ALL

KM to use a Doodle Poll to book an additional meeting by teleconference for 7th June for members to discuss the draft WWP report for the annual review. KM

DR to consider attending the June Audit Committee meeting along with JH to deliver the report. DR

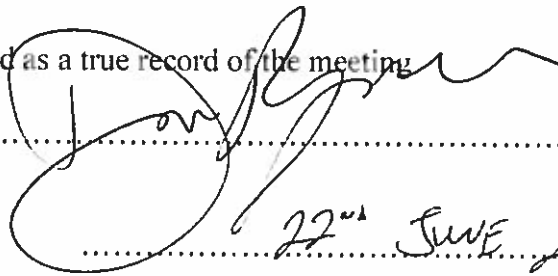
8. Any other business

At the last meeting, DR had confirmed that the Federation of Small Businesses would send a representative to WWP from the March meeting onwards. DR phoned his contact and was told that it hadn't been possible to identify someone to attend the March meeting; DR asked that the FSB gives more notice if someone can't be identified for the June meeting. DR to follow up. DR

Signed as a true record of the meeting

Chair

Date



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22nd JUNE 2017

