

Notes of Meeting No.11 of the South East Water CCG Customer Research Sub-Group
26th June 2018, South East Water, Head Office, Snodland.
Present:

Zoe McLeod (Chair)
 Leslie Sopp (Independent – research and insight)
 Karen Gibbs (KG) (CCW)
 Alison Lee (AL) (SEW)
 Nicola Blake (NB) (SEW)
 Oliver Martin (OM) (SEW)
 Jane Gould (JG) (Create 51)
 Jo East (JE) (ICS)
 Mairi Budge (MB) (Independent – research and behaviour change)

Apologies:

None

Notetaker: Julia Gorman (JFG) (SEW)

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1. Introduction Declaration of Interest	No apologies recorded. The Sub-Group had no interests to declare at this meeting.
2. Minutes and actions and challenges from the last meeting	The Sub-Group agreed the minutes from the previous meeting. ZM identified some questions with her review of the minutes. These will be picked up separately.
3. Research programme update	<p>JE provided the group with an update on progress on the WRMP research. 100 online responses have been received and the results reviewed. So far the results are showing general support for most of the areas, with PCC and Leakage reductions receiving the most support. The strong support for the Leakage reduction by 15% is higher than the WTP outcomes, which support the costs for leakage to be reduced by a further 11%. 1 in 7 people supported the current 1:100 resilience level, but the majority supported the move to 1:200. The average length of time for customers undertaking the online survey has been difficult to assess as some have lasted over an hour, which is believed to be due to breaks being taken while completing the questions. The average time is estimated to be around 22mins.</p> <p>AL provided an update on social tariff pilot study and informed the group that results will be available in the next few days.</p> <p>The bill profile surveys will be posted out to customers this week with a 2 week return window. This has been selected as in previous postal surveys this has been the time when most returns have been received. A high level review of the results should take a further week.</p> <p>LS requested a copy of the final survey form.</p> <p>Action: AL to circulate a copy of the final survey to the Research Sub-Group</p>

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	<p>AL informed the group that the survey of the large non-households will be carried out with eight customers.</p> <p>The responsible business review will be high level initially and then the full feedback will be provided later.</p> <p>The group discussed the acceptability of the plan workshops, LS noted that the majority of the workshop he attended was taken up by the moderator having to work very hard to try to get the audience to interact and bring them up to date. Issues had to be covered superficially, the audience's understanding did not allow a full detailed debate. LS questioned how useful the workshops were and what the Company were getting out of them. LS suggested the need for a deliberative approach, as customers struggled to understand the issues. OM noted the importance of the robustness of this research, but noted it was only one part of the whole programme of research, and that it was limited with time constraints. JG noted that this was only the qualitative part of the research and this would be used to inform and shape the quantitative research. KG suggested looking at the guidance from previous research to agree what packages and options are available. KG accepted that it was very difficult to get qualitative research to work for issues that were very difficult to understand.</p> <p>ZM asked about the quality of engagement for the quantitative research, in terms of standard processes, use of experts and the need for customer engagement. JG asked for suggestions on how the Company could rate engagement, when work done varies so much across the different companies. ZM proposed that the process could be assessed as good or bad against a transparent criteria and they would endeavour to be clear about how they had rated approaches. OM noted that some companies had undertaken their research early in the process, however this has meant that it was not able to include the ODIs and so they had to be patched into the research later. KG said it was better practice to do the ODI research separately as they were complex.</p> <p>AL advised that the details of the quantitative research will be ready later in the week and the details would be circulated around the Sub-Group.</p> <p>OM advised the group that financial ratios were being reviewed to check financeability of the business plan. A lot of work is needed to review and balance the financial ratios. However, OM expected that this will be complete next week. The level of the highest bill expected is available. OM noted the need to test customer acceptance of flat bill and increasing bill and proposes that Accent to test both scenarios and so double the number of surveys, as he was not sure both options in one survey would work. LS was not sure of the structure of the survey, but noted the need to understand the user of the water, who they are, and what they do. These core components of data will be needed, irrespective of the bill options along with 'trade off modelling', which Accent are experts with. KG asked what the problem was with presenting the customers with options. OM confirmed that he would need to check with Accent to make sure it did not compromise the results. LS advised that there may need to be a bigger sample.</p> <p>Action: AL to circulate to the Sub-Group the details of the acceptability quantitative research.</p> <p>Action: OM to review with Accent the options available to include testing the customers' acceptance of flat and increasing bills.</p> <p>ZM asked about the WTP assessment for social support and OM confirmed that this is in draft format at this stage. One of the areas to be resolved with the testing acceptance between increases £2, £4, and £6 and how sensitive acceptability was to these levels. AL confirmed that the plan was to start at £4 and then up and down depending on the response. 72% of</p>

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	<p>customers found any of the increases acceptable, 5% = £2, 16% = £4 and 51% = £6. JG asked if that was in line with KG's experience, and KG confirmed it was. ZM asked if there could be a check to confirm if those who have accepted an increase would be able to afford to pay. OM confirmed that this would be available. OM noted that there is not currently a significant difference in the view of customers in recipient of help and those who are not in recipient.</p>
<p>4. Triangulation Update</p>	<p>JE provided a handout and talked through the updated version of the triangulation process and explained that all the findings had been split into themes. This enabled mapping of the findings to CCWater's questions that should be considered. How these impact on the Business Plan and how they are to be implemented and actioned has been set out.</p> <p>ZM asked about capturing the research findings and whether they had captured suggested solutions. JG advised that this was not possible to do within the database, but that it was covered in the plan. JE identified that some were captured in the database. JE advised that not all the minutes of all meeting had been reviewed to pull out all suggestions. OM will look at the possibility of this. OM noted that all the learning from day to day events was fed back into the plan. ZM challenged SEW on the use of bilateral insight. OM, JG to look at this.</p> <p>Action: OM, JE to look at the option of reviewing all the meeting minutes to pull out the suggestions.</p> <p>Challenge: OM, JG to look at how they capture and use insight from bilateral meetings.</p> <p>KG asked if there were any contradictory findings. JE informed the group that taste and odour, had a very high preference when the bill impact was not identified, but had much lower preference in the WTP when the bill impact was presented. JE to pull out contradictions between Supercharge and WTP, so they can be reviewed by the CCG. KG asked how the contradictions were dealt with in the triangulation process. OM noted that the overall preference would be picked up in the selection of the ODIs and that the targets set would take account of WTP findings and whether they were targets the company was required to meet. LR looking at vulnerable support services and the customers who need help.</p> <p>ZM asked what level of robustness was needed to take account of the findings in the plan. ZM expected that if there are differences in the findings that the Company would need to drill down into the results for further review. OM noted that he did not believe that any of the research being undertaken could be considered to be not robust, especially as it had all been signed off by the CCG. ZM responded that the group had provided significant input in to the process but had not signed it off as they had not yet had visibility of their recommendations being taken on board.</p> <p>Action: JE to pull together the contradictions from the Supercharge and WTP findings and circulate to the group and to flag any contradictions in triangulation.</p> <p>KG said that it would be good to include a column for the Company's action, ODIs targets or how they would be achieved and any external factors. JG advised that this information was being provided at theme level. OM noted that there is already a column included for details of how each issue impacts on the business plan. JG agreed that this needed to be seen through to the conclusion. The Sub-Group asked if the findings were able to be grouped in some way for ease of reading, OM suggested this could be done by colouring coding. LS suggested it would be helpful to have drop down menu options to be able to refine and review the data.</p> <p>Action: OM will get LR to look at including drop down menu and include a column for the 'how' this will be achieved.</p>

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	<p>ZM noted that responsible business findings still needed to be included.</p> <p>ZM asked about how the group thought 'Robustness' should be defined. JE noted that sample size would have an impact, it would also need to look at the age of the research for example the reliance on PR14 research or review, may not be so robust now as things will have moved on. Consideration needed to be given whether the research is from an external report. LS suggested a combination of: Sample Size; Age; Data Source; and level of research, should be reviewed.</p> <p>ZM requested a complete list of all the sources of insight being used to support the plan.</p> <p>Action: OM to get the slide updated and cover sheets completed.</p> <p>Action: JE to produce a spreadsheet with all the sources of research used and circulate this around the group.</p>
<p>5. Engagement cover sheet review and defining quality discussion</p>	<p>The group discussed the benchmarks against which they should measure the quality of engagement. ZM asked if there were any well recognised benchmarks beyond the Ofwat principles of engagement and their Tapped In report. AL mentioned the UKWIR PR14, General Engagement review published following the last price review. KG noted the CCWater high level principles of engagement that she will circulate and LS has agreed to review these. ZM will review this with the wider CCG and feed back to the group.</p> <p>Action: SEW to review the quality of engagement assessment framework.</p> <p>Action: ZM, AL, KG to circulate possible research benchmarks they identified.</p> <p>OM asked how the Sub-Group will assess all the documents the Company has produced and suggested that the list of categories should be completed and then the Company could suggest which documents relate to the different categories.</p> <p>Action: SEW to identify the documents that relate to each of the assessment categories.</p> <p>ZM ask how the Sub-Group should define Ofwat's assessment term 'proportionate'. Ofwat's view on this is related to the size of company. OM suggested that the research cover sheets could be used for this as these will have all the data needed for this assessment. OM noted that this was much better than for prior PRs and the Company was not aware of any customer types or areas that we have not covered.</p> <p>LS suggest this assessment should consider if the Company has gone far enough with outcomes. OM noted that this was more of a challenge for the business plan level, rather than for the Engagement Strategy. KG advised that a sense check could focus on whether issues identified have been acted on and whether they were a customer priority. Another review could check if the key issues have been explored in a sufficient way.</p> <p>LS suggested cost effectiveness, could be considered under this heading including checking if the cost of research was proportionate to the overall customer value of outcomes. KG noted that cost was not a priority at this stage and the group agreed the focus should remain on outcomes and that the cost efficient assessment may be better reviewed at industry level after the Determination, as this was not currently an Ofwat requirement.</p>

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	<p>ZM asked the group if the proposed questions robust methodology' assessment were reasonable. OM noted that the third bullet point regarding informed research would have to be applied only to the research that was required to be informed, as it was not appropriate to all types of research. OM also suggested that there needed to be careful consideration given to the comments on the selection of agencies used and the Sub-Group should not only comment on their views from focus groups. KG noted that one area that was very good was the ongoing opportunity given to CCG to influence the research methodology. OM advised that all the actions, challenges and CCG input will be included in the cover sheets to demonstrate the full CCG engagement.</p> <p>Action: OM to get cover sheets completed and circulated around the CCG when completed.</p> <p>Action: ZM and LS to review revised cover sheets.</p> <p>AL noted it may be worth looking at the proportionality of every CCG interaction and comment. ZM asked for the key challenges and the resulting changes to be flagged.</p> <p>Action: AL to provide examples of the possible assessment of proportionality for the CCG challenges.</p> <p>LS suggested rethinking the headings, to cover the whole process - design/methodology, delivery, input etc.</p> <p>KG proposed sharing the line of sight between sources and impact on the business plan. ZM advised that this was covered in a later section, but agreed that they needed the golden thread to run through all the assessments. OM asked about the level of CCG challenge compared to others CCGs. LS noted that the CCG would need to capture the learning curve the Company has gone on, noting the starting position and the massive strides that have been made. Timeliness once the momentum got started, provided good results and effective use of consultants. ZM agreed that there needed to be a strategic overview of the Company's journey. OM noted that the water only Company factor (having smaller resource and budget than water and sewerage companies) may be applicable for the proportionally assessment and ZM agreed. KG proposed covering the Company's use of Business As Usual (BAU) information and the dashboard. LS asked about learnings from the research and how much went into BAU. LS noted feedback of some stakeholders that they did not know how the Company covered all the work it did with its current level of staffing. LS also noted that the Company's flexibility should be included in the assessment. The CCG challenged the Company to demonstrate how feedback is provided to customers. ZM noted that she will want confirmation from the Board on its commitment to engagement going forward.</p> <p>Challenge: SEW to demonstrate how feedback is provided to customers. JG to provide the details</p> <p>Action: Confirmation to be provided on the Board's commitments going forward</p> <p>ZM asked about the level of coverage for young people. There was general discussion on what age range this group covered. OM, AL noted the Company's current school interaction. LS advised that it was very hard to get interaction with 16-18 year olds. ZM said there was some good school engagement but was unclear if and how this was evaluated.</p> <p>Action: Research Sub-Group to provide any suggestions they have for helping engagement with young people</p> <p>Action: ZM to circulate the updated Assessment Framework next week.</p>

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6. Vulnerability performance commitments	<p>AL updated the Sub-Group with issues that were covered in the Vulnerability Sub-Group meeting. Comments were requested from this Sub-Group on the questionnaire, and whether there were any additional questions that should be included. It is proposed that all the questionnaires will be carried out by telephone. The Sub-Group agreed that although it may not be ideal, a face to face questionnaire was not a cost effective option.</p> <p>Action: Response from the CCG on the view of questionnaire to be provide by 03/07/18 if possible.</p> <p>Action: AL to identify the timeline of what the CCG can expect to be tabled going forward so the CCG can plan their workload.</p>
7. AOB	No additional items were raised
8. Private session	Discussed the timetabling challenges