

Focus Group Discussion Guide

Section 1: Introduction & Recap on key information about the Customer Advisory Panel (15 mins)

Reminder of self and Blue Marble – independent market research company who run research on behalf of organisations.

Reminder of data protection – this session is being audio/video recorded but everything you say will remain confidential and we only use these for internal research purposes.

Session duration: 90 minutes in total, finishing promptly by [INSERT TIME].

Session rules: Cameras on, please go on mute when you are not speaking to avoid background noise, speak one at a time, I want to hear from everyone this evening, we have a lot to cover so I might move you on at times, use the chat function to share your thoughts on any questions you don't get to answer verbally.

Introductions: Let's start with a quick round of intros to make sure we remember each other, and introduce any new participants.

I'd now like to recap on **some information** about this research programme and its aims.

As we have already mentioned, you are part of **Portsmouth Water's Customer Advisory Panel** of customers and future customers, acting as representatives of Portsmouth Water's wider customer base. The aim of this important research programme is to get your **feedback and thoughts** on Portsmouth Water's strategy and plans as it works towards the future.

This is now the fourth session that we are running as part of this panel.

As a reminder, in previous sessions we have been discussing **the reasons behind Portsmouth Water's long-term planning (why)**, **how** PW is going to **achieve its plans**, and **what specifically it is going** to do to achieve each of these plans.

We shared with you information that explained the **challenges** that Portsmouth Water is facing now and in the future, including the **impact of changes to our climate, the needs of the environment, a growing population, and increasing customer expectations** – and its **plans** for addressing these challenges.

We then discussed how **urgently** we wanted **these plans being implemented**, whether they have to happen **immediately**, are part of an **ongoing effort**, or more long-term plans, and how ambitious we thought they are.

We also shared with you **some options** related to Portsmouth Water's long-term plans. For each plan, we shared information explaining **where PW are now, what they want to achieve, and why**. We then shared **three potential options for implementing each plan**, which included information on timings, level of investment required and potential impacts on customers' bills to get your thoughts on them.

Finally, we reviewed **a draft version of the online consultation** that PW was planning to share on its website, to ensure it is **clear, and easy to understand and complete** by its wider customer base.

Section 2: Exploring thoughts and perceptions in relation to social value (30 minutes)

As you might be aware, many companies are committed to **delivering social value across a range of areas** by carrying out different initiatives. For example, this could involve funding the protection of an area with woods and trees to protect the environment, or supporting customers who might struggle to pay their bills. These initiatives are over and above a company's standard operation. These are often funded through customers' bills (and this is the case for PW).

In line with this, Portsmouth Water is now considering its plans for delivering social value.

- What are your **initial thoughts** on this?
- What **3 words or phrases** come to mind when you think about PW delivering social value?
- What do you think '**social value**' means in this context? What do you think it **involves**?
- How **important**, if at all, is it that **companies** in general carry out initiatives that deliver social value? Why?
- And how **important**, if at all, is it that **PW** carries out initiatives that deliver social value? Why?
- How does it make you **feel** that PW is considering its plans for delivering social value?
- What **areas** of social value should PW **focus** on? Why?
- Does anyone have any **questions or concerns** about this?
- I've now got a **list of areas** that PW is currently working on / considering as its focus in the context of social value, and I'd like to get your thoughts on each potential area
- For each establish how appropriate and/or appealing each is:
 - **Financial hardship** (on top of social tariff for up to 27,500 customers).
 - **Environmental improvement in the local community** (they already do this with assistance of farms).
 - **Community support** (local schemes such as building a new clubhouse etc.).
 - **Additional support to vulnerable customers** (including through smart metering possibilities).
 - **Supporting charities and local organisations** (such as funding a CAB employee for example).
- Are there **any other areas** that PW should be considering?

Section 3 – Customers' views on how PW should fund social value (40 minutes)

I'd now like to understand your thoughts on **how PW should fund its social value plans**.

- Do you have any **thoughts on how it could go about this**?
- Can you think of **any examples that could work well based on your experiences** with other companies who carry out similar initiatives?
- What would **motivate** you as a customer to support such initiatives carried out by PW?

Keeping in mind that such initiatives are funded through customers' bills, I've got some **options here of different ways PW could be funding its social value plans** that I'd like to get your thoughts on.

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- Mandatory onto tariff (everyone pays a bit more, e.g. £1 or £2 more)
- Optional tariff to go to centralised pot.
- Optional tariff that is ring-fenced based on customer choice (for what it is used for).
- Donations (e.g. donations for a sensory garden).
- Not delivering social value at all.
 - Would your thoughts on this change if PW match funded what customers are asked to pay?

For each option:

- What are your **thoughts** on this?
- What do you **like /dislike** about it?
- Do you have any **questions / concerns**?
- What, if anything, would **motivate you to support** this option?

- Which option would you be most likely to **support**, and **why**?

- Can you think of any **other options that PW could be considering** that are not included here?

Summary (5 minutes)

- Overall, what do you think is **important for PW to keep in mind** when considering their plans for delivering social value?
- What **questions or concerns** do you have based on everything we have discussed today?
- Is there **anything else** you would like to say to Portsmouth Water before finishing?

Thanks and close