

**PORTSMOUTH WATER Ltd  
CUSTOMER CHALLENGE GROUP (CCG)  
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7 JUNE 2017**

**Present**

Charles Burns (Federation of Small Businesses), Caroline Brook (Winchester City Council), Karen Gibbs (CCWater), John Hall (John Hall Consulting), Lakh Jemmett (Chairman), Rod Porteous, Paul Treagust, Steve Morley, Helen Orton, and Neville Smith (all Portsmouth Water)

**Apologies**

David Howarth (Environment Agency), Douglas Kite (Natural England), Simon Oakley (Chichester District Council), Piers Bateman (Gosport Borough Council), Doug Hunt (WS Atkins), Jon Stuart (Havant & District CAB).

**ACTIONS**

**1. Purpose**

The purpose of the call was to progress actions arising from the meeting of 9 May 2017.

**2. Minutes & Actions of Meeting Held on 9 May 2017**

SM tabled the minutes and associated action log from the meeting on 9 May.

KG observed that the discussion relating to the CAP in particular did not fully reflect the points the CCG were raising. She offered to provide a suggested revision. (This was received following the meeting).

**KG**

The Company would now progress all actions as per the agreed action log.

**SM**

**3. Leakage**

RCP provided members with background to the general issue of leakage, highlighting the strategies the Company has implemented since 2012 to manage the measure. He highlighted in particular the balance between responding to a short term increase in leakage and the cost of reducing it rapidly.

Further, he described the decision the Board took in April 2016 to reduce the level of resource dedicated to leakage detection in particular following two years when the company had achieved its targets.

He stated that the impact of rapid reduction in temperature in November 2016 had significantly increased leakage. This was an event we had not previously seen this early in the year.

Finally he commented that we are entering 2017/18 from a position of high leakage and it was currently a challenge to reduce the value.

PT described the action plan we had in place to recover the situation; he described what actions we are undertaking to detect leaks quicker and more efficiently and to improve repair times.

HMGO emphasised that this is an issue that is taken most seriously at Board level and monthly update reports are being presented.

LJ acknowledged that a lot of work was being undertaken. He asked why did a backlog develop at the end of the calendar year? RCP replied that the short cold snap in November 2016 resulted in a significant increase in the number of burst and given a finite amount of resource, the Company had need to prioritise which leaks were repaired first. He continued that it is not the response time per

say which is important but the need to ensure we are repairing the most significant leaks first.

LJ then asked how the Company approached the resourcing requirement to achieve the leakage target. RCP replied that we look at information from the last 12 years, be that weather patterns, burst rates, technology improvements etc. and assess at the start of the autumn what is required to meet the annual target. A number of scenarios are considered each with an associated cost, and the Board are updated on progress throughout the period. The Board have in the past supported additional funding to deliver the target. RCP offered to share the report the Board received last autumn on the scenarios.

RCP

JH commented that he did not recall the autumn / winter of 2016 being particularly cold but more typified by a long dry period. Would this have not had a more significant impact on leakage? RCP replied that undoubtedly this had impacted on the number of bursts particularly in areas such as Gosport which were clay in nature, but agreed that the winter was not that cold but the key is cause is likely to be rapid changes in temperature which effectively “shock” the network.

KG then questioned if the Company were confident that it would achieve its 2017/18 target. NS replied that the Board believed that the actions described will result in significant progress on leakage. However, we could not say at this stage that we had 100% confidence.

It was agreed that the CCG would be updated monthly on leakage performance.

PT

Finally RCP offered to host a more detailed workshop on the issue. An invite would be sent to all members to register their interest.

RCP

#### **4.0 Water Quality Contacts**

PT presented the Company Action Plan to reduce the absolute number of water quality contacts. He firstly highlighted the Company performance relative to others in the industry.

The plan identified a number of actions on how the Company operate the network and on improving information to customers.

LJ commented that bulk of actions appeared to be “customer-related” and asked if there are any significant capital investments required to enhance the appearance / taste of the water delivered. RCP replied that we constantly sample from the distribution network and any “water quality” issues are included as a factor when we select our mains renewal programme. We do not see this as a driver for greater expenditure in the medium term.

KG welcomed the new leaflet and asked how it would be used? PT replied that it is currently in draft and would be sent to customers who contacted us on the issue of hardness, but more importantly be of higher profile on our website.

**5. Customer Engagement**

HMGO highlighted the purpose of this session was to ensure that the Company responded effectively to the CCG challenge, that had been raised at the previous meeting:-

- better visibility of the forward programme
- Timing of the programme
- CCG Input and feedback on execution of the plan.

She described how the CE strategy fed into the overall plan and the key elements of the CE plan.

The following members offered to participate in a sub-group which, in the first instance would be involved in the planning of the next CAP, 24 June 2017.

- John Hall
- Charles Burns
- Caroline Brooks
- Karen Gibbs

Ian Limb would progress this matter separately.

HMGO offered that members of the CAP be invited to attend the next CCG to share views on the engagement process that they have been through in a private session. This was welcomed.

KG asked if the Company had considered the benefit of a longer term strategy document. This would link to the Water Resources Management Plan and be of value in terms of engagement. The Company had not felt a similar document was effective at the last review but would consider this suggestion further.

**6. Conclusion**

LJ thanked the Company for preparing the presentation for the call and providing greater clarity on the action plans associated with the two failing ODIs, water quality contacts and leakage.

**7. Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 27 June 2017**

Draft agenda to be circulated to members by Tuesday 13 June

**IL**

**SM**