

**Water Sector ADR Panel
Meeting 33
Minutes of a Meeting on 25 March 2019 at Water UK, 36
Broadway, London**

Present:

Lissa Balmer
Louise Beardmore
Claire Forbes
Helen Hunter

Daksha Piparia
Sir Tony Redmond
Sandra Webber (Chair)
Katy Taqvi

Apologies

Attending

Cath Jones, CCWater

Secretary: Shona Flood

ITEM 1 Minutes and actions arising from meeting on 7 December 2018

1. The Minutes of the meeting on 7 December were agreed.
2. It was noted that:
 1. a joint letter from the Chairs of the Panel and RWD had been sent to all companies endorsing the recommendations in the 2nd End to End report as good practice;
 2. as from mid- January 2019 CCWater had started to include the fact sheet with all closure letters. It was further noted that the fact sheet would need to be updated for 2019 and that in the interests of transparency and increasing customer confidence explicit reference should be made to how the scheme was funded. A separate version for NHH might be needed.

Action

SF

ITEM 2 Standing items

3. It was noted that the number of applications to the Scheme had increased significantly during 2018/19 from previous years. It was not clear from the monthly report the number of applications completed by customers compared to the number of applications completed by customers with the assistance of CCWater and whether the provision of assistance had a significant effect on outcomes. It was agreed that certain improvements to the service provider's report were required to provide greater clarity and usability. RWD would be asked to ask the service provider to make changes to its monthly report.
4. It was noted that the customer satisfaction scores for 2018 showed improvements in overall user friendliness and helpfulness of staff in comparison to 2017 however the sample size remained relatively small. It was not clear what action the service provider took in response to the customer satisfaction survey results. It was agreed that the service provider would be asked to provide feedback.

SF

SF

5. Dissatisfaction with the 2-day time limit for customer responses was a theme in the verbatim responses. It was noted that RWD had asked the service provider for its views with regard to increasing the time limit for responses from 2 to 5 working days within the current overall timescale of 25 days. The Panel considered that if the service provider indicated that it would not be possible to increase the response time without a corresponding increase in the overall timescale it would be appropriate to increase the overall timescale to allow for this change. RWD would be advised accordingly SF
- ITEM 3 Recommendations from QMU report and response from RWD**
6. The response from RWD was discussed. It was agreed that Ms Webber would respond to RWD regarding the role of the Panel and the provision of oversight for customers. Ms Beardmore would pursue the “8-week deadline” with the Customer PAG. Ms Balmer reported on the work of the NHH complaints group. There should now be an additional remedy which customers could request: for WATRS to write to the company about preventing similar occurrences – but it was up to the company whether to tell the customer the results of its consideration. SW
- ITEM 4 Proposed timetable for retendering**
7. The proposed timetable for retendering was noted. The Panel has the role of recommending changes to the specification to RWD. A draft specification for discussion will be circulated – and on OneDrive – well in advance of the June Panel meeting so that members have a chance to comment before the meeting. The specification should include the Vision drawn up by the Panel (which links with the PR19 customer theme); other high-level principles such as ‘fair and reasonable’ and ‘natural justice’; and specific features of the customer’s progression through ADR which the Panel has introduced and wants retained. It would be important to generate some publicity for the new scheme next year including improvements since WATRS was launched. SW/SF
- ITEM 5 Proposed trial for additional information**
8. A representative from CCWater joined the meeting. The format of the proposed trial was discussed and agreed. The trial would commence in June and run for up to 6 months with an interim report being provided in September to inform the tender specification. It was further agreed that a ‘trial’ specific version of the CCWater closure letter would be produced for customers within the trial cohort explaining the process. CJ
- ITEM 6 Annual statistical report**
- It was agreed that an annual statistical report would be produced. SW/SF
The focus of the case studies would be decisions involving NHH retailers.

ITEM 7 AOB

Next meeting 19 June at 10.30am