

**Water Sector ADR Panel  
Meeting 26  
Minutes of Meeting on 8 December 2017 at Water UK, 36  
Broadway, London**

**Present:**

Rachel Barber  
Helen Hunter  
Claire Forbes

Sir Tony Redmond  
Sandra Webber (Chair)

Apologies: Louise Beardmore, Daksha Piparia

Secretary: Shona Flood

**ITEM 1: Minutes and actions arising from meeting on 15 November 2017**

1. The Minutes of the meeting on 15 November were agreed subject to minor amendments.

**ITEM 2: standing items**

2. Data: the website data for September had been updated but there was still a dip in applications that month. It was noted that there appeared to be a difference in outcomes between applications made by post and electronically (website/email). CEDR is to be asked if this is also common to other schemes that they operate. Data regarding the number of customers requesting assistance had been added to the monthly report.
3. Decisions: it was noted that the language used in some decisions could be off-putting and difficult to understand for some customers. It was agreed that it would be better if decisions were written using shorter sentences and plainer English.

**ITEM 3: to hear from CEDR regarding the proposed CCW/CEDR trial**

4. The Panel received a representative from CEDR. The following key points were noted:
  - a) the trial was to commence in January for 3 months;

- b) a new version of the application form had been prepared; the intention was for the CCWater case handler to offer to complete part 1 of the application form which would then be sent to the customer to read and sign to say that it represented their case. The Panel made a number of recommendations to shorten and clarify the form;
- c) customer satisfaction surveys would be ring-fenced for applications and decisions made during the trial period

#### **ITEM 4: to consider the draft annual report**

- 5. The draft annual report was considered. It was agreed that further amendments to the report would be made and that the final report would be circulated to the Panel for agreement

#### **ITEM 5: to consider and agree work and meetings programme for 2018**

- 6. It was noted that two further members of the Panel were still to be appointed and that meeting dates had not yet been finalised pending the appointments.
- 7. Provisionally it was agreed that the Panel would meet as follows:
  - a) mid-end March to review progress in implementation of recommendations, initial feedback from the trial and annual complaints overview;
  - b) May: a sub-group of the Panel would carry out an end to end review of sample cases
  - c) late June to review progress in implementation of recommendations and industry review of the complaints process
  - d) beginning September to agree format for the annual review and to consider programme for contract renewal
  - e) October/November: to carry out interviews and review of materials for the annual review;
  - f) early December agree first draft of annual review;
  - g) early January 2019 agree final report

#### **ITEM 6: AOB and actions arising**

8. Ms Flood is to ask CEDR to provide a quarterly one page narrative of 'trends' in relation to the type of applications being made, outcomes and any issues arising.
9. Ms Flood is to ask CEDR to comment on the apparent difference in outcomes between applications made by post and electronically.
10. Ms Flood is to ask CEDR to confirm the nature of the 'additional assistance' provided in each case.
11. The Panel is to review the application form and transition from CCW at the end of the trial.
12. The Panel is to review a number of decisions and re-write them in plain English to see if it is possible to achieve a balance between ensuring that the facts, law and outcomes are clearly stated and ensuring that the language used is accessible to all customers.
13. Ms Webber and Ms Flood are to amend the draft Annual report and circulate it before it is sent to all relevant stakeholders.

**NEXT MEETING:** tbc