



CONSUMER COUNCIL FOR WATER

Minutes of the Board Meeting

Held in Public Session

Tuesday, 3 November 2009
28, Grosvenor Gardens, Victoria, London

Present:	Chair	Dame Yve Buckland
	English Regional Committee Chairs	David Bland Andrea Cook Charles Howeson Sir James Perowne
	Wales Committee Chair	Diane McCrea
	Independent Members	Mike Barnes Timothy Hornsby Colette Isaaks Narendra Makanji
	Chief Executive	Tony Smith
In attendance:	Secretary to the Board	Mike Jackson
	Deputy Chief Executive Officer	Nick Ellins
	Head of Corporate Services	Jane Morris
	Head of Consumer Relations	Carl Pegg
	Head of Public Relations	Dave Thompson
	Policy Manager	Evan Joanette (for item CB86)

Subject to formal confirmation by the Board

CB80 Welcome

Adam Gileski and John Arnold from Defra were welcomed as observers to the Board meeting.

CB81 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from Deryck Hall due to illness.

Apart from the ongoing general declarations of interests, Charles Howeson declared a specific interest as Chairman of the NHS (SW) Strategic Health Authority in the item to be discussed relating to fluoridation of water (min. no. CB48.2 of the meeting held on 8 September discussed below) and took no part in the Board discussion. He also declared an interest as a Trustee of the Duke of Cumberland Trust.

CB82 Approval and Receipt of Minutes and Matters Arising:

Minutes

82.1 The minutes of the Public Board meeting held on 8 September 2009 were submitted for approval.

AGREED: That the minutes of the Public Board Meeting held on 8 September 2009 be approved as a correct record and signed. Board Secretary

Matters arising

82.2 A member raised whether any information had been obtained in relation to possible effects on neonates with regard to the fluoridation incident (min. no. 48.2). The Deputy Chief Executive agreed to obtain the appropriate information. CCWater would defer to the advice of the Chief Medical Officer on fluoridation issues and its main concern would be to see that local views had been taken into account in any consultation. Deputy Chief Executive

82.3 With regard to sewer flooding in Alcester (min. no. 48.1)CCWater was awaiting the outcome of the Final Determinations.

CB83 Chief Executive's Report

83.1 The Chief Executive submitted a report covering the following areas where the Consumer Council for Water had taken action for the benefit of consumers. In summary, the following points were made:

- PR09: Compared with the proposals at the same stage in the previous price review, water customers were facing bills totalling £1 billion less than those proposed in 2004
- CCWater was also concerned about the level of services being provided; PR 09 was not just about prices. CCWater was pressing for appropriate levels of investment in local schemes
- 82% of customers were satisfied with the outcome of the Draft Determinations
- £2.5 million compensation was secured for customers in a year
- CCWater also engaged successfully in helping customers at a local level e.g. on flooding problems
- CCWater had not been criticised in the media on information given in response to FOI requests

Subject to formal confirmation by the Board

- Customers' interests had been represented at all the party conferences

83.2 The Head of Corporate Services indicated how it was intended to publish information on expenses in the future on the website.

AGREED: That the report be received.

CB84 Finance Report

84.1 The Finance report covered the period 1 April to 30 September 2009 and showed a 2% underspend to date (£67,000) on revenue; a £29,000 underspend on capital.

84.2 Ofwat had served notice terminating the Finance and Human Resources service level agreements. These services would be provided in house in 2010/11.

84.3 Work was being undertaken to consider the possible effect of 10% cumulative cuts. The Finance and Resources Committee would be considering the situation on 7 December.

84.4 The budget for 2010/2011 had been agreed in principle with Defra and WAG.

84.5 Opportunities to reduce costs further were being sought by closer working with Consumer Focus.

84.6 The Audit and Risk Management Committee had considered the Finance report on the previous day and commended it to the Board. The Committee had also received comparative information on CCWater expenditure on amenities and this compared favourably with the expenditure of other bodies such as Ofwat and the Gambling Commission taking into account staffing numbers and budgets.

AGREED: That the Finance report be received and noted.

CB85 Update on Carbon Reduction Commitment and Renewable Energy

85.1 The Chief Executive presented a report prepared by the PR09 Programme Manager which updated members on the position in relation to the carbon reduction commitment and renewable energy.

85.2 The Dept. of Energy and Climate had just published its 366 page response to the third consultation on the Carbon Reduction Commitment which was currently being examined.

85.3 The Forward Work Plan target had not been met because of lack of progress by other agencies but the required report would be prepared for the February 2010 Board meeting.

AGREED: (1) That the position be noted; and

(2) That CCWater investigate getting some expert advice to assist in this area of work.

PR09
Programme
Manager

Subject to formal confirmation by the Board

CB86 Quarter 2 Report on Consumer Complaints and Enquiries (1 July to 30 September 2009)

- 86.1 The Quarter 2 report on Consumer Complaints and Enquiries was presented by the Head of Consumer Relations supported by Evan Joanette.
- 86.2 It was confirmed that the statistics produced were based on the Ofwat definition of what was a 'complaint' and that a 'complaint' was differentiated from a 'contact'.
- 86.3 The more proactive role being taken by the Complaints Team on complaint handling by United Utilities was welcomed. For their part, United Utilities were determined to improve their complaint handling.
- 86.4 It was suggested that it would be helpful to break down further the 'billing and charges' complaint category into sub-categories as it accounted for 55% of complaints.
- 86.5 Customer satisfaction in year had now increased to 59% for outcome compared with the end of year target of 61%. All other measures continued to improve.
- 86.6 The Chief Executive emphasised the importance of the Service Incentive Mechanism being introduced, by Ofwat, with significant penalties and the need to maintain pressure on Ofwat with regard to its implementation.

AGREED: (1) That the report be noted; and

- (2) The local and central complaints teams were congratulated on the report and progress to date.

Head of
Consumer
Relations

CB87 Minutes of Wales and Regional Committee meetings

- 87.1 A report was submitted appending the minutes of the meetings held by English Regional Committees and the Wales Committee since they were last reported to the Board on 8 September 2009.
- 87.2 The minutes related to the following meetings:
- London and South-East Region Committee - 23 September 2009
 - Western Region Committee - 24 September 2009
- 87.3 It was commented that the minutes of the Western regional committee provided useful local examples of customer engagement in the field.
- 87.4 The implementation of the Water Framework Directive appeared to be at great cost without commensurate benefit. The case needed to be argued further in Europe.

Deputy
Chief
Executive

AGREED: That the minutes be received.

Subject to formal confirmation by the Board

CB88 Actioning of Public Board decisions

88.1 A schedule was submitted detailing the outstanding and outgoing actions from Board meetings held in public.

AGREED: That the report be received and the items identified as 'Item to be discharged' be removed from the schedule. Board Secretary

CB89 Calendar Of Meetings for Board Members

89.1 The calendar of Board member meetings was submitted for the period ending April 2010.

AGREED: That the calendar be approved subject to the dates of the meetings in April 2010 being changed from 6 April to 13 April. Board Secretary

CB90 Resolution to move into Private Session and to adopt Private Session Board decisions

AGREED: That the decision be agreed to hold the first part of the Board meeting in private session due to the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed and that the decisions made in private session be adopted by the Board.

End of meeting