

11th June 2020
Meeting of the Customer Forum
Virtual meeting

Attendees and in attendance

Agnes Robson (AR)	Chair	
Jo Dow (JD)	Member	
Rachel Bell (RB)	Member	
Andrew Faulk (AF)	Member	
Bob Wilson (BW)	Member	
Stuart Housden (SH)	Member	
Mairi Macleod (MM)	Member	
Tom May (TM)	Member	
Sue Walker (SW)	Member	
Sam Ghibaldan (SG)	Director	
Rachael Picken (RP)	Customer Forum Support Manager	
Fraser Stewart (FS)	Customer Forum Research Support	
Rob Mustard	Scottish Water	
Brian Lironi	Scottish Water	
Tracey Gee	Scottish Water	
Tom Harvie-Clark	Scottish Water	
Fiona Templeton	Scottish Water	

Introduction

1. Apologies

There were apologies from Fraser Stewart.

2. Declaration of interest

None declared.

3. Minutes of previous meetings

The minutes of the May 2020 meeting were approved.

4. Actions from the May 2019 meeting

Outstanding actions were discussed.

RPI update: Following discussions with Scottish Water since the last Forum meeting, meetings are planned for metrics discussions in June and July, with further meetings in August to cover Prospects and Performance report. It was also noted that Scottish Water plan research relating to the Customer Portal.

Internal discussion: Transformation, customers and communities

Papers were circulated prior to the meeting for internal Forum discussion.

Customers' Expectations of the Transformation of Scottish Water

The Director introduced the paper and invited comments from the Forum. These included:

- The volume of resource and expertise to assess and ensure the application of customer views and insight needs to be increased to achieve the transformation.
- That a principles-based framework could help drive the transformation, and this could be benchmarked against other organisations.
- There is a need to strengthen the language used to encourage Scottish Water to be more proactive on developing relationships with communities of interest.
- The transformation drivers could be widened to include 'be a responsible business' and change 'value' to benefits from the potentially higher levels of investment proposed.

The Forum agreed the paper as a basis for discussions with Scottish Water.

Scottish Water

Transformation Plan

Scottish Water introduced the Transformation Plan milestones and the journey to date including:

- *Transformation Exploration and Demonstrator initiation*
Scottish Water have completed 30 demonstrators to date, with the aim of achieving value and change quickly, and learning lessons from potential pitfalls. They have been seeking to learn from other utilities and technology companies and gave an example of successfully using remote inspections to speed up and improve the service provided to developers.

The Forum asked about the challenges involved in scaling such demonstrators. Scottish Water responded by stressing that a key outcome of the demonstrators has been the understanding of the importance of changing the culture of the company so that it was accepted that some of the pilots might not be successful (deliver fast, fail fast, learn fast concept). Learnings from projects have been grouped into seven key themes. The emphasis has been around the human element of the pilots.

The challenge is the ability to integrate external thinking and how big the scaling needs to be across the organisation.

- *Initial Transformation workstreams:* increasing investment, significant efficiency challenge, drive for value and performance, customer and communities at the heart of decision making, ethical Business Practice and achieving net zero emissions.
- *Transformation Plan:* focus now on this area, with integrated live plans.

Scottish Water introduced the Transforming customer & community involvement element (one of seven workstreams) of the Transformation Plan. A Customer and Community routemap will be created in partnership with the Forum and future body. The ideas outlined to the Forum are at a very early stage of development and are shared to generate discussion. Core elements of Scottish Water's approach would be:

- **Transform their relationships with customers & communities, making them active and two way and providing opportunities to understand their changing perceptions, expectations and needs.** (This point is embedded in the Strategic Plan).
- **Transforming how they engage customers & communities:**
 - National Engagement Programme: (potential revisiting some of the timelines and impacts of Covid-19)
 - IPPF Community Engagement: (Separate sub-group to look at early customer engagement in investment decision making)
 - Customer Principles
 - Wider public benefit e.g. placemaking
 - Campaigns and education
- **Transform how customer and community views influence decision making:**
 - Internal Leadership Group: (Chaired by Chief Operating Officer and Director of Corporate Affairs, with the potential for the future customer and community challenge body to be involved in this space to provide an external perspective).
 - Insight Programme
 - Investment Appraisal Process
- **Ensuring a ‘continuing, active, independent customer perspective’:** (future customer and community challenge body). (This point is embedded in the Strategic Plan).

Questions from the Forum were around:

- The need for resource and expertise as an enabler for the transformation in this space. Scottish Water noted they are at an early stage of thinking; and consideration of resource requirements will be required, both within this workstream and the wider Transformation Plan.
- How to ensure that the needs and aspirations of customers and communities are considered in all parts of the business. And how the insight and intelligence from across the business would be synthesized and triangulated so that it is a product that can be applied in decision-making.
- The review mechanism and metrics for demonstrating how this transformation of relationships with customers & communities engagement will be measured and achieved.

Covid-19 research

Scottish Water introduced the approach they are taking to understanding customer insights through the Covid-19 pandemic phases.

Scottish Water have continued with a triangulated approach, 3 potential prongs of activity, combined to provide a holistic view of the impact of the pandemic on customers and their needs and expectations of Scottish Water:

- *Secondary / desk tracker research*

Scottish Water have access to a significant amount of freely available sentiment and research studies to understand the impact of the current pandemic. In particular Scottish Water have highlighted topics such as health and wellbeing, household finances, employment factors, and general sentiment and personal concerns. This data is generally UK wide but provides a high level view.

Building from the papers and discussions with the Customer Forum, Scottish Water is now tracking a number of surveys: Savanta, Harris Interactive, Yougov, Two ears one mouth and Appinio.

- *SW tracker research*

Scottish Water will add approximately 3 new questions to their monthly YouGov tracker survey (reporting on 1500 respondents per quarter). Questions were finalised with input from the Customer Forum and are based around 3 keys areas: water and waste water service during the pandemic, financial impact of the pandemic and whether the pandemic has had any influence on attitudes towards climate change.

This will be supported by the ongoing Watermatters discussion forum that has now been established to track the impact of the pandemic on customers’ expectations regarding services, looking at issues including service communication, website content and capital works engagement.

- *SW longitudinal survey*

Scottish Water are considering options with regards to research with a group of participants in depth and periodically over the next 6-12 months (timing dependant on pandemic recovery period).

This will allow Scottish Water to explore more complex topics with customers, in particular stress checking SR21 priorities for investment and charging profile, and to look in more detail at household and businesses financial and employment status, and the focus on climate change in economic recovery.

Scottish Water will discuss the research brief with the Forum.

- **Future meeting plan**

Scottish Water introduced the future meeting plan for Forum discussion and reflections:

July	1. P&P Report – tone and narrative 2. Transformation 3. Future of customer body
August	1. Transformation
September	1. 2019/20 Performance update 2. Transformation
October	1. [Final agreement]

Internal discussion

This was a Forum discussion about Scottish Water’s presentation. The item was taken in private.

Activity updates

The Chair and members provided an update on activities since the last meeting.

5. Stakeholder Advisory Group (Chair, Sam Ghibaldan)

The Forum heard that the May SAG meeting had discussed the future of the SRC process, Scottish Water's transformation plan and the review of SAG. It noted that tribute had been paid to the huge contribution made by the previous Chair of the Forum, Peter Peacock, to the SRC process.

6. Net Zero routemap (Director, Andrew Faulk and Stuart Housden)

The Forum heard that members had been engaging with SW on their draft Net Zero routemap. This had included written comments and two meetings to date, with a third planned for the following week.

7. Community Engagement

The Forum heard that SW's Community Engagement group had started meeting again, with participation from several stakeholders including the Forum. It was planned that the group would meet more frequently over the next few months to facilitate prompt progress. It was agreed that it was important that communities were considered at the needs identification stage as well as in project appraisals.

8. Forum achievements (paper)

The paper had been finalised following comments provided after the May 2020 meeting and circulated to members.

AoB

None.

Meeting Closed.

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