

Minutes

Meeting	Vulnerability Customer Engagement Forum	
Date:	Tuesday 31 st October 2017	
Time:	10:00	
Location	Pinnacle House, Newark Road, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 5YD	
Attendees:	Martin Lord, Jo Giles, Samantha Ross, Kay Johnson Lewis, Janet Cooke, Gill Holmes, Jenny Hodson,	
Apologies	Lynne Faulder, Lorraine Jarvis, Jeff Halliwell, Helen Briggs	
Agenda Item		
Item No	Discussion point and action	Owner
1.	Welcome and Introductions	ML
	Martin Lord welcomed all to the meeting, including guest speaker Jo Giles from Cadent.	
2.	Group role and remit	Martin Lord
	Martin Lord delivered a presentation to the group, explaining the role of Customer Challenge Groups and expected outputs. Why group? Finalise business plan by Sept '18. Specific interest in/or knowledge of client groups Anglian water will be working with. PR19 need for water industry to be more innovative. Charity sectors to contribute to the innovation of Anglian Water.	
3.	Current initiatives and developments towards a vulnerability strategy at Anglian Water	Samantha Ross
	Samantha Ross delivered a presentation to the group on the current initiatives and projects being undertaken by Anglian Water. This covered the aims of Anglian Water and current assistance schemes available. Summary listed below: Demographics data will be used to help identifying areas with a high density of vulnerability indicators, deprivation and debt in which to target promotion of available assistance. Affordability trial – Working with credit reference agencies using affordability indicators to profile and identify customers with low income and high borrowing. Data will be analysed to see if information can be used to promote assistance. Utilities network – Anglian Water are part of a network with representatives from water, energy & gas. Aims of the network are to share best practice and learning to offer a more co-ordinated response to support vulnerable customers. Network have created a single leaflet covering all sectors providing guidance on what to do in an emergency, how to save money on your bill, switching tariffs and other useful information. Will be piloting leaflet over winter months to see if customers have found information useful.	

	<p>Priority Service Register (PSR) – Work has been done in gas and energy to allow a single sign up. Water Industry are working together to agree a single set of needs codes to enable data share across the sectors to reduce customer effort and extend available support.</p> <p>PSR promotion – Working in partnership with a number of district councils to signpost applicants of assisted bin collections to PSR.</p> <p>Dementia friends – Roll out to all business units. Build understanding of how to support customers that have dementia. Seek to identify dementia champions within the organisation, with the aim of becoming a dementia friendly utility.</p> <p>Age Awareness Training - delivered to Customer Care managers raising awareness within company creating an understanding of some of the challenges experienced by older customers. Looking to roll out further.</p> <p>Samaritans Training – one day training sessions delivered to a selection of employees across the business equip them with basic skills, tips and guidance to help support customers experiencing acute vulnerability, risk of suicide.</p> <p>Summary of next steps included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving service – Work towards achieving BSI certification– Gap analysis completed. • Crystal mark – Plain English award – making information simple and clear. • Partnership working with McMillan, meeting scheduled early Nov to discuss opportunities. <p>The group made a few suggestions on other schemes that could potentially be used to identify customers with limited mobility such as meals on wheels, blue badge holders and bus passes. The group challenged how Anglian Water decide and prioritise the schemes in which to deliver, if there is a timeline in place?</p> <p>Many of the initiatives that have been rolled out have been informed by our customer engagement and research, benchmarking and looking at best practice. In the process of developing a road map and strategy which we aim to finalise by the end of the financial year. AW will need to assess prioritise the initiatives to implement.</p> <p>The group asked if next time can look through engagement and research? How would business intend to roll out research?</p> <p>Will look to present final report at the next meeting. Research is being used to help inform the strategy.</p>	
4.	Anglian Water Social Tariff	Martin Lord

	<p>Martin Lord delivered a presentation on Anglian Waters Social tariff – LITE. This covered the development of the tariff, Citizens Advice’s role, delivery of the tariff and outcomes.</p> <p>LITE tariff – Licensing - Solution that is affordable and fair. Extent of cross subsidy (worked out to the penny). Not many areas were willing to pay for cross subsidy. Originally £1 per customer obtained agreement to £4 pound per customer.</p> <p>Level of acceptance from customers, determined through customer consultation. Did not want benefit passporting – independent assessment favoured.</p> <p>The group challenged how applicants were being identified?</p> <p>Majority of referrals identified by Anglian Water and signposted to customers who express difficulty in affordability their water bill.</p> <p>The group questioned if using financial distress as a trigger point could be missing out on customers who have extreme issues paying bills, but do?</p> <p>Anglian water will be carrying out a range of promotion to raise awareness. Applicants who are unsuccessful for tariff are receiving on average £3000 extra from benefit maximisations. Focus on customers not only in arrears, making sure it is signposted to those most in need – need it to be balanced.</p>	
5.	Developments in Priority Services Registration	Jo Giles Cadent
	<p>Jo Giles from Cadent delivered a presentation on Safeguarding customers, covering the journey of the Safeguarding Customers Working Group, Dementia Friendly Utilities and working with the Water Industry.</p> <p>Make easy for customers, just because complex business doesn’t need to be for customer. Collaborating ideas Industry wide (gas and electricity). Standardised approaches of working and connecting with our people to help our customers. Making the most of interactions, build partnerships in referrals. Tools and techniques for our people, seamless and professional service. How does this work for every customer? Every customer can be in a vulnerable position. Different elements - large geographical overlay, cross over and support one another. GDN don’t have a PSR – Train staff on how to deal with customer on the doorstep. Gas and Electricity, register for 1 and will be migrated to all involved. Development of a Locking cooker valve – Referral new services. Needs codes - Providing platform for training to be delivered. 4 step approach for good customer experience. Building up friendly truthful relationship with customers.. Industry wide POA process. What does a dementia friendly company look like – 5 new principles. Referral schemes (100+ schemes)</p>	

	<p>Water industry can use same information from gas and electricity as a template, to enable 2 way data share.</p> <p>The group challenged if it was fair to draw conclusions to company's who have a low level of customers on the PSR? Are they not networking and help register customers? If one company has 3% other has 15% would metrics show the lower % being less active in advertising to customer?</p> <p>Regional differences add many different factors to take into account.</p>	
6.	Group Exercise	ALL
	<p>What are the barriers to identifying vulnerable customers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assumed customer consent ➤ 'Tell once' theory ➤ Perception of DPA rather than the process – Training on how to manage ➤ Fear factor (i.e. elderly may think social services may interfere) ➤ People don't want to be descended on and told can't live alone anymore ➤ Lack of data available about customers who don't default only those who do default – Do they want help even if they are eligible ➤ Breaking down stigmas (around debt, dementia etc.) ➤ Networking with non-bill payers/direct customers ➤ Geographical affluent areas may hide deprivation ➤ Measuring profile of customer ➤ Equality impact assessment ➤ Language barriers – How can we capture this <p>The group challenged how we measure the PSR is being captured and advertised to all members of society i.e. ethnicity? Should this be measured? How important would this be?</p>	
<p>Date of next meeting:</p>	<p>TBC</p>	