

WPD CUSTOMER PANEL		 WESTERN POWER DISTRIBUTION <i>Serving the Midlands, South West and Wales</i>
Last revised: 13.10.21	Meeting Minutes	Notes by: Nicki Johnson

Date/time	21 September 2021 - 10.00-12.30	
Venue	Zoom meeting	
Attendees	HA - Hafez Abdo, Nottingham Trent University MA - Mari Arthur, Afellen Cymru JC - Jonathan Cosson, Warm Wales JG - Jo Giles, Cadent RH - Richard Hellen, The Schumaker Institute RL - Prof. Ron Loveland, Welsh Assembly Government GM - Gabby Mallett (Chair) EP - Eddie Proffitt, Major Energy User's Council KR - Kate Robbins, Wessex Water JS - Jacob Shell, Coventry Citizens Advice ASp - Alex Spreadbury, B&Q DT - Dale Thompson, The British Red Cross NT - Nadine Trout, Rural England Network	WPD: PS - Phil Swift MS - Mark Shaw MC - Mike Clarke RA - Richard Allcock NJ - Nicki Johnson

Richard Allcock (RA) introduced the morning and introduced Mike Clarke who is currently seconded in to the role of External Affairs Manager.

RIIO ED2 Business Plan – an update

Discussion	<p>PS updated the group on the Business Plan process.</p> <p>GM asked whether reporting metrics were defined by Ofgem. MS explained how WPD had worked on and arrived at the reporting plans.</p> <p>RH talked about the culture and seeking employees to be ‘agents’ of the business. This could be the intelligent infrastructure approach where local champions exist for particular issues in addition to their day job.</p> <p>EP asked how WPD can reduce power cuts given they are often weather related. He noted emails on preparation and performance in storms is welcome. PS explained how we plan to improve performance in power cuts going forward by using intelligent investment, tree cutting, sophisticated use of helicopters and satellite imagery, etc. We need to balance improvements with what people are willing or able to pay.</p> <p>HA asked how WPD supports the fuel poor and changes customer behaviour. PS explained we use partner agencies to support them through our fuel poverty projects. We provide funding so partners can deliver sustainable guidance and support to our customers. HA noted Net Zero will cause more fuel poverty and the government does not seem to be focussing enough on the social impact. RH said there are good opportunities to create feedback loops with special interest groups and mentioned adjusting costs when unsuspected events occur. PS noted that the DFES was every two years and now it is an annual analysis. We are close to real time and will pick up decarbonisation changes much quicker. Our data is always</p>
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	<p>improving, we have mechanisms in place to deal with volume adjustments and we have the ability to train our own resources. Our training includes cyber resilience, system operation, DSO, etc. and we are Ofsted accredited.</p> <p>HA asked about renewable energy from wind and solar and threats to international gas supply; is the UK likely to use coal to keep the demand supply equation balanced? PS noted that generation of energy is not WPD's business but our aim is to facilitate as much renewable generation as possible being connected to our network. Our aspiration is to ensure they are not delayed by us.</p> <p>PS spoke about the National Energy Plan for Wales and RL appreciated comments were appreciated.</p> <p>EP asked about the sale of WPD to National Grid and PS updated the group on the current situation.</p>
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Customer Panel Chair update

Discussion	GM thanked the Panel for support writing the spotlight report which demonstrated the Panel had a busy and productive year. She updated the group on the outcome of the recent questions circulated to obtain views.
Decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The closed pre-meet will continue to be ten minutes long. • Surgeries will continue on zoom in between meetings - members will set questions for surgeries in advance so presenters can answer questions as part of their slides. • The main panel meetings will be quarterly with two zoom and two in-person. • The December meeting will be zoom and the plan is to run March 2022 as a face to face meeting.
Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GM and NJ to update the 12 month plan and timing will allow WPD to capture feedback for strategies. 2. NJ will set up a surgery for early December with the ER Manager to include an IIP update, succession planning and horizon planning. 3. GM to prepare questions, allowing WPD to get support from the Panel.

PSR discussion with the Panel

Discussion	<p>RA talked to the CP about Power for Life (WPD's annual awareness campaign) and obtained feedback on the PSR section of the leaflet.</p> <p>Feedback suggestions were that WPD could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include what the PSR offers, rather than just who is eligible. • Add benefits of being registered and order the support by priority. • Consider a PSR brand. • Note customers can register once and the whole industry can be informed and offer support. • Add pictures that are place based and done in partnership with trusted names and other key players to build more trust for other partners. <p>The group talked about brand awareness, partners and diverse communities where English isn't a first language. It is important to link with local organisations with</p>
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	<p>trusted positions. The most vulnerable and isolated might not read a leaflet or access the internet. MC detailed the work WPD does with referral partners to promote the register and help the hard to reach sign up.</p> <p>RA also discussed the ED2 commitments in the PSR area to obtain feedback on the final Business Plan commitments. He talked about the reach of the PSR and WPD plans to increase the customers on the PSR to capture 75% of eligible customers. He also asked whether the panel supported plans to add an App feature to allow customers to create their personal own resilience plans. RA also asked whether WPD should have vulnerability champions at depots and implement a vulnerability criteria when planning new schemes (e.g. upgrades/asset replacement schemes).</p>
Decisions	<p>Panel members supported data cleanse and the ambition to capture 75% of those eligible for the PSR.</p> <p>Support for a resilience App was mixed - some members felt the proposed App might not be used and Cost Benefit Analysis should be done. Those without smart phones need the same level of service. Others felt young families may use it so it but it must be active/up to date and said an App is a good way of collecting data and tailoring support.</p> <p>JG noted Cadent has safeguarding champions and offered help with shared materials. RH was supportive noting local champions should be a generic model and WPD is leading the way.</p>
Actions	<p>4. Power for life will be designed early next year and the group will be consulted.</p> <p>5. NJ to meet with Rural England to help them share information about referral networks</p>

The PSR Hub

Discussion	NJ updated the group on the PSR hub and some of the changes that the panel requested. There was positive feedback and the work we are doing is welcome.
Actions	<p>6. KR, JC and JG want to be involved in a PSR workshop NJ offered.</p> <p>7. Any members not present on the day can email NJ if interested in participating</p>

AOB

Discussion	The group discussed the planned December surgery on personnel and development – RH asked about the development of skills and is interested in the soft skill connectivity training and development of internal informal capability.
Actions	8. GM and NJ to plan and arrange the surgery

2021 meeting dates

- Thursday 16 December 2021

Proposed 2022 meeting dates please inform WPD of any major clashes you might know about

- Thursday 24 March 2022
- Thursday 23 June 2022
- Thursday 29 September 2022
- Thursday 15 December 2022