

Minutes

Venue: Sydney Water City Office
Level 9, 420 George St, Sydney

Date and time: 19 February 2024
9:00am – 2:00pm

Meeting title: Customer and Community Reference Group

Independent Chair: Abigail Goldberg

Attendees:

CCRG Members

Anna Bacik – Community Representative
Inaara Jindani – Community Representative
Mary Karras – Ethnic Communities Council NSW
Bruce McClelland – Business Western Sydney
Douglas McCloskey – Public Interest Advocacy Centre
Stephen McMahon – Urban Development Institute of Australia
Donna Rogers – Community Industry Group (Illawarra)
Graham Turner – Council on the Ageing
Ross Williams – Local Government NSW

Sydney Water

Roch Cheroux – Managing Director (*part*)
Stuart Wallace – General Manager, Customer & Stakeholder Engagement
Josh Isben – Head of Customer & Strategic Insights
Izzy Kerr – Customer Research Manager
Monika Moutos – Head of Economics and Regulation (*part*)
Andrew Turner – Regulatory Economics Specialist
Flavio Romano – Regulatory Economics Manager (*part*)
Rachelle Legrand – Head of Strategy & Enterprise Plan
Sharon Bowyer – Senior Customer Governance Specialist
Katie Leroy – Senior Customer Enablement Specialist

Apologies/absent: Narelle Brown – Community Representative
Leigh Martin – Total Environment Centre
Steven Collins – Community Representative

Meeting purpose: Bi-monthly meeting according to CCRG Charter
The CCRG works with Sydney Water at a strategic level to achieve the highest possible levels of customer focus within our practices. It supports Sydney Water to ensure that our business decisions, as set out in our strategy, enterprise plan and regulatory submissions, are in the best interests of all Sydney Water customers and the community and are shaped by them.

Desired outcome: Discussion and feedback from CCRG Members

Agenda items

Item	Topic	Actions
1	<p>Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country The meeting was opened at 9:00am and the Chair welcomed participants. The Managing Director acknowledged Country and paid respects to elders past and present.</p> <p>The Chair provided an overview of the purpose of the meeting and a comparison of the base agenda structures for 2023 and 2024.</p>	
2	<p>Introductions and apologies The Chair introduced Rachelle Legrand - Head of Strategy & Enterprise Planning and Katie LeRoy - Senior Customer Enablement Specialist.</p> <p>Apologies were noted.</p>	
3	<p>Housekeeping Sydney Water advised of the evacuation requirements and administrative aspects for the venue.</p>	

	<p>The Chair confirmed the ground rules for the CCRG meeting which focus on respect, tolerance and ensuring equity for all participants.</p>	
4	<p>Minutes of previous meeting and review of actions / issues log Declaration of interests The Minutes and action/issues log of the 11 November 2023 CCRG meeting, which had been transmitted inter-session, were accepted.</p> <p>The Chair advised that no comments on the CCRG Annual Report had been received and the report was accordingly taken as accepted.</p> <p>No interests were declared.</p> <p>Action: Sydney Water to publish CCRG Annual Report on website.</p>	<p>Sydney Water to publish CCRG Annual Report on website.</p>
<p>Sydney Water update</p>		
5	<p>Managing Director update The Managing Director advised that the Sydney Water Annual Report had been published and outlined key achievements including the LTCOP, Capital Investment program, Purified Recycled Water demonstration plant, Biomethane plant at Malabar and Our Water Our Voice Customer Engagement.</p> <p>The Managing Director responded to questions from CCRG members regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sewage overflow detection devices • the IPART public hearing on Sydney Water’s Operating Licence. 	
<p>Price proposal</p>		
6	<p>CCRG engagement on price proposal – Roadmap Monika Moutas and Josh Isben provided an overview of the Roadmap that indicated timing for CCRG input including the potential opportunity to provide a message from the group regarding the price proposal when it is submitted.</p> <p><i>Key points of discussion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the CCRG being asked to comment on the details of the price proposal (as a stakeholder in their own right) or just to comment on the process of Sydney Water’s Customer Engagement program on the price proposal (including how the findings have been interpreted)? • Would the CCRG need to provide a consensus view or an outline of the different views held within the CCRG? • Additional education/information sessions on the price proposal may be warranted to provide CCRG members with background information to inform their understanding of the price proposal. <p>Chair to discuss further with CCRG members at the ‘<i>in camera</i>’ session later in the meeting. Chair to then consider outcomes of the discussion together with Sydney Water.</p> <p>Action: CCRG Customer engagement on price proposal roadmap to be updated</p>	<p>CCRG Customer engagement on price proposal roadmap to be updated</p>
7	<p>Paper for discussion: Tariff and Pricing Reform Flavio Romano, Monika Moutas and Andrew Turner provided background context to tariff reform and an outline of the Phase 6, Our Water Our Voice Customer Engagement Customer Panel session (held 18.2.2024) which covered tariff structures, options and case studies of impacts on different customer segments. Noted that the</p>	

	<p>majority of participants in the Customer Panel preferred to stay with the current flat pricing tariff structure for water usage.</p> <p><i>Key points of discussion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted that the Customer Panel formed their view but there are multiple ways to gain insights from broader stakeholders with greater understanding of the issues to represent the interests of customers. It is important to look at the public good for all customers and a broader set of informed stakeholders may be important to assist. May also be helpful to more formally include the CCRG as a consultative group. A view was expressed that the role of the CCRG could be to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide a view of whether Sydney Water have interpreted the customer engagement results appropriately present its own views (on tariff structures and price proposal) and to provide a rationale for different views expressed by CCRG members. The CCRG does not have to reach consensus on different views. <p>The Chair confirmed that the CCRG can comment on the customer engagement process but it doesn't have to reach consensus on views.</p> <p>CCRG members asked various questions relating to tariffs which Sydney Water responded to during the meeting.</p> <p>Chair to discuss further with CCRG members at the '<i>in camera</i>' session later in the meeting. Chair to then consider outcomes of the discussion together with Sydney Water.</p>	
8	<p>For discussion: Preparing for the April CCRG meeting – key focus on the price proposal</p> <p>This was discussed in part as part of the price proposal roadmap discussion including potential for additional educational sessions.</p>	
9	<p>Paper for noting:</p> <p>Sydney Water's Operating Licence – IPART's Draft Operating Licence Package: paper noted by the CCRG.</p>	
<p>Strategic planning</p>		
10	<p>Strategic planning update</p> <p>Stuart Wallace provided an update on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long term capital and operating plan and the current review by Infrastructure NSW (INSW). Upcoming Sydney Water Regional and Major Projects Showcase events and Supply Chain Expo. Feedback from the October 2023 CCRG meeting on 'Strategic Customer Outcomes' was presented to the Sydney Water Executive. Some changes were made directly as a result of input from the CCRG, in particular wording clarified to make more customer friendly and metrics reflecting what are important to customers. <p>Action: Sydney Water to provide CCRG members with dates of the Regional and Major Projects showcase events.</p>	<p>Sydney Water to provide CCRG members with dates of the Regional and Major Projects showcase events.</p>
<p>Customer Engagement</p>		

11	<p>Elevate Business Customer experience Ross Williams provided an update on a meeting held between Sydney Water and the Local Government Association of NSW (LGNSW) on how the organisations can work together to improve the experience for Business Customers through sharing information on sustainability water use, development application processes and meeting the needs for a greener Sydney.</p>	
12	<p>General Manager update Stuart Wallace provided an update on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purified Recycled Water Demonstration Plant – recent media has been positive. Stakeholder visits to the Plant are continuing. • Sydney Water has signed up with the Wiggles for 12 months to support education with the younger generation. Sydney Water’s Wonders of Water Van continues to support youth and community education. • A new wastewater campaign will be launched soon. <p><i>Key points of discussion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of targeting the media, government agencies and MPs to promote positive messages for PRW and to prepare the ground for community support. • The community need education on what easy options/alternatives they can use instead of putting waste (e.g. coffee grounds, fats, oils) down the toilet/sink. This could be promoted with strata managers. 	
13	<p>Paper for noting: Our Water Our Voice Customer Engagement update The CCRG noted the paper.</p>	
Performance		
14	<p>Paper For Noting: Water Services Association of Australia - Customer Perceptions Survey. The CCRG noted the paper.</p>	
Governance		
15	<p>CCRG ‘in camera’ session The Chair led an ‘in camera’ discussion with CCRG members.</p>	
16	<p>Paper for discussion: CCRG Charter - Annual Review Administrative changes to the CCRG Charter were accepted.</p>	
17	<p>Paper for discussion: 2024 Forward Plan Members suggested items for the Forward Plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green energy • Data security • Sponsorship and grants • NSW Government review on biosolids • Sewer overflows • Intelligence on impacts of future weather patterns, and opportunity to bring in the experts on this topic. <p>Sydney Water welcomed these suggestions and agreed to integrate them as possible in the Forward Plan.</p> <p>The Chair noted that she would discuss revisions to the Forward Plan together with Sydney Water following the ‘in camera’ discussion where suggestions were also put</p>	

	forward including improving the focus of the agenda, clarifying priorities and allowing more time for discussion. Action: Forward Plan to be updated	Forward Plan to be updated.
18	Other business: general Q&A, member updates No other business.	
Close		
19	The Chair thanked the CCRG members. Meeting closed at 1:30pm.	

2024 CCRG Meeting dates/times (Draft - subject to change)

Monday 8 April 2024 9am-2pm*
Monday 3 June 2024 9am-2pm*
Monday 5 August 2024 9am-2pm*
Monday 30 September 2024 9am-2pm*
Monday 11 November 2024 9am – 2pm*

*Length of CCRG meetings to be confirmed.