



CCW

The voice for water consumers  
Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

**Portsmouth Water  
Accountability Session  
transcript**

2ND MARCH 2026

# Attendance list

Bob Taylor	CEO of Portsmouth Water
Chris Milner	CFO of Portsmouth Water
Emma Camm	Water Quality Manager of Portsmouth Water
Clare Younger	Head of Customer Strategy of Portsmouth Water
Nicky Taylor	Director of Taylor McKenzie Research (TMcK) – Lead facilitator
Rhodri Williams	Wales Board Member of Consumer Council for Water (CCW) – Chair
10 x Participants	Water Voice Community Members under Portsmouth Water

**CCW Chair:** Good evening, everyone. Thank you all very much for joining us. My name's Rhodri Williams and I'm a member of the board at CCW and my easy task, I hope, is to chair this evening's discussion.

This is a part of our Water Voice Programme and the purpose of Water Voice is simple but important. It's to give customers a stronger, more direct voice in how their water company performs, communicates and improves. In a word, it's about accountability. It's an opportunity for customers to question senior leaders from Portsmouth Water this evening, but we're doing this with all the water companies in England and Wales, directly, about the issues that matter most to them, about where improvement is needed and about what will change as a result of this discussion.

It's not a complaints hearing and it's not a technical enquiry. It's what we would describe as a structured customer-led conversation, focused on accountability, learning and hopefully, agreeing some clear, practical actions.

The topics we'll cover this evening haven't been chosen by Portsmouth Water or by the Consumer Council for Water, they've been shaped by customers through ongoing surveys and discussions within the Water Voice Panel, and that's important; it's your agenda.

I'd like to set a clear tone if I may, at the outset. We expect this to be a respectful but challenging discussion. Customers, you should be able to feel free to speak openly and honestly about your experiences and expectations and equally, we expect clear and transparent responses from Portsmouth Water's senior team. The session is being fully transcribed and will be published. A summary report will follow, and the company will be expected to publish an action plan, responding to the commitments made. That transparency is a key part of what makes this process meaningful.

Just in terms of ground rules, we'll take one person at a time, we'll keep contributions focused and we'll concentrate on forward looking actions: what will change, by when and how customers will know. I'd now like to briefly introduce the representatives of Portsmouth Water who will be joining us this evening. Firstly, Bob Taylor, the company's chief executive, along with his colleagues, Chris Milner, Emma Cam and Clare Younger.

Thank you all for being here and I hope you'll find this useful. We certainly appreciate very much the time that you're prepared to put into this process and we hope you find it useful as well. So, I will now hand back to Nicky, to begin the discussion.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Before we begin, I want to explain how the transcripts will work. Today, we'll be using the consumers who have joined us first name. We'll make sure that all names are redacted in the transcription, as created. After this session,

customers will have the opportunity to review the transcript just before it's being published, just to make sure that there's no data in there about them personally that they don't wish to be there, and obviously if anything has to be anonymised, we'll make sure that happens and it's respected.

The purpose of the transcript is of course, to accurately reflect the discussion, any actions agreed and it's not to single out any individuals. In terms of today's structure, I'll go through it very quickly for everyone, so we all know exactly what's going to happen and when.

For each question, we're going to have three questions in total that will be asked and for each one, the customer will ask the question, I'll display it on screen, Portsmouth Water will then have between five and seven minutes to respond to that question. Once that response has been listened to by the customers who are on the call, we will work together as a group to define clear actions that must form part of the company's action plan.

We are going to create a live document as we go through this discussion, which I'll also share when the time is right, and that way when we can see on the screen, all of the different actions that we have discussed, both from the responses that Portsmouth Water have given us and also, what we discuss as customers during the session itself.

At the end of that process, Portsmouth Water will have an opportunity to respond if they want to. It's entirely up to themselves to do that. I should also say, this has been set up as a webinar, so it is available for viewing for members in the wider CCW team, Defra, OFWAT, Portsmouth Water, and also the Portsmouth Water Independent Challenge Group chair and community members who wish to view the session itself.

So to get us started, it would be really nice if we could quickly go around the room and if I could ask the customers to introduce themselves by their first name, that would be fantastic and then we can look to move on. Just a very brief introduction, your first name and a little bit about yourself and we'll work our way round. We did this at the briefing session and as you know, it's completely random so it's where you sit on my screen is whether you're going to go first or not, so first up, I can see we've got Community Member 1 there, so if you want to just quickly say hello and introduce yourself.

**Community Member 1:** I'm Community Member 1, I'm 46, I live in Southbourne.

**Community Member 2:** I'm Community Member 2, I live in Hampshire near Winchester, I live in a village. That's me!

**Community Member 3:** I'm Community Member 3, I live in Portsmouth, I'm a retired civil servant.

**Community Member 4:** I'm Community Member 4, I'm 29 and I live in the city of Portsmouth.

**Community Member 5:** I'm Community Member 5, I'm 43, I live in Waterlooville and I work in administration.

**Community Member 6:** I'm Community Member 6, I live near Bognor Regis and I work for the NHS.

**Community Member 7:** I'm Community Member 7, I live in Gosport, I'm old, I spent years in corporate places, eventually fired, paid off, ran bars and various other bits and pieces.

**Community Member 8:** I'm Community Member 8, I'm from Rowlands Castle, sort of semi-retired, still working part time but very close to the new reservoir, which we're very interested to see as it progresses for the future.

**Community Member 9:** I'm Community Member 9, I'm 32 and live in Gosport.

**TMcK Facilitator:** We'll quickly introduce the Portsmouth Water representatives who are here just now, so I'll hand over to you, Bob.

**Bob Taylor:** Good evening, everyone, nice to meet you all, my name is Bob Taylor, I'm the CEO of Portsmouth Water since 2018, although I've been in the water sector for 43 years.

**Chris Milner:** Hi everyone, I'm Chris Milner and I'm the Chief Financial Officer at Portsmouth, I've been here since about September 2021, I'm not originally from the region, I'm from the North West but I now live just outside Bognor Regis too, Community Member 6, I'm in Felpham.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Thank you very much, Chris. The introductions have been a roaring success, all the technology has worked and everyone's microphones were unmuted at the right time, so congratulations.

[Community Member 10 entered into room]

**Community Member 10:** I'm Community Member 10, 36, live in Fareham and work for the MOD.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Thank you so much. Now I believe that's everyone and to get the ball rolling, as mentioned, there's going to be three questions, we'll have approximately 30 minutes for the entire cycle, for each of those cycles, I'm going to hand back now to Rhodri, who's going to introduce our first customer who's going to ask the first question, and I'll start sharing the screen after that.

**CCW Chair:** Thank you, Nicky and thank you all for that. I'll go straight now to Community Member 8, who's going to ask the first question this evening.

**Community Member 8:** Hello, good evening. Right, so we're quite interested in how you can clearly show how customers' bills are allocated, how increases are tied to measurable performance commitments, how executive rewards reflect those outcomes and how customers can easily track the progress each year? We were quite interested in this area.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Rhodri, if you want to introduce the response now?

**CCW Chair:** Thank you. Community Member 8, when you respond, could I ask that you could be as specific as possible please, setting out what's already in place, anything that's planned and what will change as a result of this discussion, by when those changes will happen and how customers will be able to see and measure progress? This is a very common theme that we at CCW hear. So to the community members, make sure you're listening carefully and taking lots of notes.

**Community Member 8:** Yes, we will!

**CCW Chair:** Who's going to start?

**Chris Milner:** Do you want me to pick it up [talking to Bob]? We'll probably be a team on this one, but to try and break this down into the individual asks, Community Member 8, so we're really clear. I think the first question is how customer bills are allocated.

**Community Member 8:** Yeah, it does sort of go into four categories, I must say.

**Chris Milner:** Four areas, yeah.

**Community Member 8:** So how your bills are allocated, that's the first one, and how increases are tied to measurable performance commitments, [2], [3], how executive rewards reflect these outcomes and then [4], how customers easily track the progress each year? So it is, I think it's like four sections.

**Chris Milner:** So I'm going to start with the second point if that's okay, how it's tied to measurable performance commitments.

So we've recently just agreed our five year investment programme for Portsmouth Water and when we do that, we put forward a plan to the regulator and that plan includes forecasts of the amount of money we feel we need to run the business, and that's benchmarked versus other companies and they assess whether that's an efficient level of money to operate the business.

But we also include extra investment to improve performance and wherever there's extra investment to improve performance, it's tied through to a target or performance commitment as it's called and essentially, we need to deliver against those targets or we have to give money back to customers, so there's a direct linkage between the plans we put forward, that OFWAT evaluate and assess and

say whether that's the right amount of money to deliver that service, and then essentially, if we deliver that service – in some circumstances there may be a small reward – but in other circumstances, there's a penalty.

So it might be worth me giving you an example. So there's one target that links to supply interruptions and supply interruptions is an area where Portsmouth performs really well. So if we deliver very reliable service to our customers and we put forward a plan that funds that very reliable service to our customers, and we deliver on that, we may get a small bonus.

But conversely, an area where we've got real challenges at the moment is our leakage performance, we're not hitting the level of leakage production that we want to, and that has a direct linkage between how much money we're allowed to charge to improve that performance and if we don't improve that performance, money is then given back to customers.

So there's components of our funding and the amount of money we're allowed to charge customers, that relates to what the efficient cost is to deliver that service and then where there's improvements in performance and we've asked for further monies to kind of support that improvement, if we don't deliver that improvement, we have to give money back to customers.

**Community Member 8:** Okay, right.

**Chris Milner:** And when we roll all of those kind of elements of service together, and compare that with the prior year, that either increases bills although in some cases, it reduces bills year on year. But all of our increases in charges are linked to the investment that we're delivering, and then that's tied through to kind of the service targets that we're committing to deliver within our plan.

**Community Member 8:** Okay, right, I understand that. So that's No. 2.

**Chris Milner:** That's No. 2 and I'll go onto how the customer bills are allocated. So how we allocate those bills? Essentially, we work out and agree with the regulator, what we can charge all of our customers and then we've got to work out how we recover the monies from our customers, and we've got domestic customers like yourself, who receive a bill directly from us and we've got commercial customers.

But in general, the way that we recover money is based upon either measured water consumption, so if you've got a meter, we measure how much water you've got and then effectively, we calculate the proportion of our charges that relates to the water that's consumed by customers, and then we've got quite a large proportion of our customers that are on, I guess, what we'd call water rates, so where there's no meter. But for those customers, we estimate how much they would use if they had a meter, and then we try and allocate the revenues equitably between those groups and in addition, we've got commercial customers who

might use more water and they're generally metered customers, so they are charged based upon the amount of water they use.

But essentially, what we're trying to do is work out the fairest way to recover the monies that we're allowed to spend across all of our customer base. Now, one of the things we might talk about later around affordability is we recognise that for some customers, paying a water bill is more difficult, so we put in place some social tariffs which provide discounted charges to some customers, so we support people that will struggle to pay the full amount of the charge.

But essentially, the way that we work out how our bills are allocated is we try and work out how much everyone's going to use, either by measuring it, using a meter or by assessing how much a property is likely to use and then effectively, we divide all of those kind of charging mechanisms across our customer base and seek to recover the amount of money we're allowed to charge each year.

**Community Member 8:** Okay.

**Bob Taylor:** By "amount of money", what we mean is the regulator tells us how much money in total we can collect from all of our customers kind of added together, or the revenue, to use a business term, the revenue collected by the company from customers and then as Chris has described, that's then broken down in the fairest way possible, between the different categories of customer, whether they have a meter or not and so on.

**Chris Milner:** I think one of the things that we do do, if we collect more money than we're allowed to collect, we actually give that back to customers by reducing our charges in future years. So we've got effectively, a fixed amount that we're allowed to collect to deliver our plan. It varies slightly because if for example, we've not delivered on some of our promises and we've got to give money back to customers, that will reduce bills.

But essentially, what we're trying to do is we're trying to balance those charges across our customer base as fairly as possible, taking into account that some customers will struggle to pay our bills, you know, even though our bills are relatively low for the sector, we do understand that for certain customers, it's more difficult to kind of afford our bills and that's why we have these social tariffs and support packages for our vulnerable customers.

**CCW Chair:** Thank you, both. Can I nudge you onto the last two elements of the question, please?

**Chris Milner:** Executive pay: I think I mentioned before, we've got performance targets sort of associated with our commitments within our business plan and they're agreed with the regulator, and essentially, when our board evaluates executive performance and on all of the bonuses that are in place across the

organisation for our own employees, the bonus payment is directly tied to performance versus the commitments within our business plan.

So I think OFWAT have provided guidance on this in this new legislation that's in place as well, that the government's brought into play, but all of the kind of the performance related elements of our pay, Bob and my pay and the other people on this call and all our business, ties directly to delivering on those performance commitments. So that will include things like leakage performance, interruptions performance, customer service, delivery on all of our commitments within our plan because some of the reasons why our bills have increased this time is because we've got to invest more, so we're measured to ensure that we are investing that money and we are investing that money kind of efficiently.

And there's guidelines that the regulators have provided, that we've got to demonstrate clearly that 60% of any element that's in relation to performance for customers, community and the environment, is taken into consideration when they're calculating any performance related pay.

I think the other thing that's new as well is with this new legislation, there's additional powers that OFWAT have to ban bonuses, so companies that pollute and do serious pollutions can't pay bonuses to executives. Companies that break the law and are fined and been shown to do anything illegal, and that can include pollutions, can't pay bonuses to executives. And the other one which we think is really important as well is if you're not running your business in a financially stable way, i.e. you haven't got the financial resilience to ensure that you can deliver your day-to-day services, you can also not pay bonuses.

Now, I think that was probably enforced for the first time last year when five other water companies couldn't pay bonuses, I think we were quite pleased to say we hadn't breached any of those rules but essentially, all bonuses are tied to performance and the performance commitments in our plan, and then if we breach certain rules, it's illegal now to pay executive bonuses.

In terms of how you can see that performance, we report that performance each year, so we have two quite detailed performance reports, there's our Annual Report and Accounts, which are available on our website and there's a section within that, where the board explain how they've evaluated and made decisions on how bonuses are paid. And then there's more detail as well that's included in our annual performance report, which goes through the real detail of our performance.

So we hope it's quite transparent, we go into quite a lot of detail explaining these things but I guess we're always interested in feedback from the customer groups about how we could do that better, because we're acutely conscious that it's quite a complicated industry, there's lots of performance measures, so I think we're really interested to understand how we could do this better as well.

**Community Member 8:** So obviously these annual performances, reports that you have, we should be able to see the rewards that you give.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Just quickly, Community Member 8, we're out of time in terms of response and I'm quite keen to get us started, Rhodri, was everything covered there that was required from the Portsmouth side?

**Community Member 8:** No, we've got the last section to do. How customers can easily check progress each year.

**Chris Milner:** That's also available in our annual reports, so within that, we report against each of the performance measures, we provide the detail of the investment that we've made and there's a suite of what we term "KPIs" that you can track performance against.

**CCW Chair:** Thank you, Chris and thanks for keeping that one brief. We're now going to pause and turn back to our customers, just to remind you, this part of the session is now about asking further questions of the company, it's about testing whether what you've heard is clear, credible and sufficient and we'll capture the reactions and identify any gaps or areas where greater clarity or commitment is needed, and Nicky's going to now guide us through this part of the discussion and make sure we draw out any specific actions that should now form part of the company's accountability plans. So Nicky, back to you.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Thank you very much, Rhodri. Yes, so lots of information there, what I don't want this to turn into is a Q&A between us and Portsmouth Water, they'll have a chance to come in, in the next 10 minutes or so, or 15 minutes. But right now, as customers, I want us to have a conversation around what else do you still need to see? What else do you want to hear from Portsmouth Water? What commitment do you want to see them put down on paper?

We've heard lots, Community Member 8, you asked a question, have you got any thoughts just now in terms in what you heard? And then we can go round the room.

**Community Member 8:** Well, obviously, we've got to look very closely to find these in the annual performance reports, this is where we'll find the remuneration of the executives, so that's what we needed and that's what they've told us.

So there's obviously lots of targets that they have to meet, they said it is very complicated, but OFWAT do oversee what all the water companies are doing, so they do have targets from OFWAT, so I think he's explained that very well, how they do that.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 8, did you know that the annual report existed up until now?

**Community Member 8:** No, I didn't, so in there, there will be the remuneration publicly published, so I will certainly have a look at that.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Anyone else want to jump in with their thoughts?

**Community Member 9:** Mine's the same of like the reports because you're saying they're there, but no-one knows they exist, so that's not really, I don't think it's particularly helpful because to go looking, where do we look? It's not obviously there or provided, we're lazy, I get that, as customers and consumers but I think it would be helpful for on your bill to be, "If you want to find out more, here's where you go" or like to go directly to there, or something like that.

**Community Member 2:** Like a QR code.

**Community Member 9:** Yeah, to take you directly to where you need to go, so that helps.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 9, what are you looking for? Are you looking for like a 40-page document with all of the information you need or are you looking for something ..? -

**Community Member 9:** No, just like a one pager, again, no-one reads terms and conditions because they're 40 pages long, just a single page, a pie chart, something that's really easy to read, something that's really, "This is this part, this part, this part", really easy, simple, that you don't have to have a degree to be able to understand it and read it.

**Community Member 3:** I agree, I tried looking at it the other day and it was just so much information that I just gave up. If they had something simple like that, you can see by a pie chart, bar thing, whatever, it would make life so much easier for those who aren't sort of that way, we don't have that idea how business works.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 6, I think you had your hand up there, do you want to jump in?

**Community Member 6:** I did, yeah. So I think, I can't remember the exact age but I think the average reading age of the population is about 11 or something, so I think having pretty dense kind of 40-page documents is not probably that helpful to the majority of the population.

So I think if they don't, if Portsmouth Water don't already do it, doing something in a way that people can generally understand the content and pick up the key things, and if there's a kind of easy read or some other versions of annual reports and business plans that might be available, I think it would be useful to translate that material into something like that.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Any other thoughts on that?

**Community Member 8:** So a common-sense version for the layman!

**Community Member 4:** Really agree with what everyone's saying, also just to pick up on the fact it sounded like there's a lot of positive things going on, so just yeah, if within that summary, maybe some of those things can be highlighted, that's only going to be a positive for your customers, to have a more positive outlook on the company if they don't already have one, you know? So yeah, if that could be included as well, I think that would be a good thing.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 2, go ahead?

**Community Member 2:** For me, what I would like to understand more from Portsmouth Water and generally water companies, because I think for me and for a lot of people, there's a lot of misunderstanding of what a water meter is and a lot of distrust about how a water meter would affect somebody's bill, so what I would like to understand from Portsmouth Water is how can us as a consumer, that doesn't have a water bill – sorry, water meter – how can we trust that a water meter would be a good idea to agree to? Because it's quite widespread across the country. So for me as a tenant, I would like to understand more about if I can trust a water meter.

**TMcK Facilitator:** One thing we spoke about at the briefing session, about making things really simple, it was almost like “If my bill was £1, how does that get split up amongst all of the different charges?”, can we talk about that? Does anyone remember that discussion? What that could look like?

**Community Member 10:** Yeah, just that condensed kind of report showing what the customers are actually asking for, so back to that question, if we're asking to see rewards and that, that needs to be in the condensed version and that's where they can break it down because obviously, like someone's already said, the current yearly report is a 90 page document, they need it condensed a bit to what the customer's actually asking for, whether that's good and bad and make that as clear as possible to view, I think and then that's when obviously you'd include the breakdown because that should be quite easy to include for the yearly report.

**TMcK Facilitator:** We heard there about executive bonuses being linked to performance, is there any other things you'd like to see, to help you understand what that looks like? Community Member 4, I don't know if you were going to talk about that at all?

**Community Member 4:** I was actually going to go back to what you were saying about the breakdown of the money within the bill, I don't know whether there's any possibility that if they're doing a summary of their report, whether those two things could somehow be linked, so it would be, you know, relatable to the customer like “This is what we're investing our money in”, so for example, “A certain percentage of your monthly bill is going to pay for us to potentially be able to do XYZ”, I don't

know whether something, a structure like that might work to make it also more understandable for us?

**Community Member 9:** It's a bit like what they do, they do something similar on council tax where it's literally like a pie chart, "and this is what this, this and this goes towards", something that's simple and easy, that would be much easier to read for everyone.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Anything else that's kind of jumping out in terms of what you want to see in that report or how Portsmouth Water can make it more tangible for you?

**Community Member 7:** Just going back to remuneration, I really don't see the relevance. CEOs earn a lot of money for doing a pretty demanding job, I haven't got any hang-up what he earns, to me it's totally irrelevant.

**TMcK Facilitator:** What does everyone else think about that? Because we did speak about that a bit at the briefing session.

**Community Member 10:** But if that money could be spent elsewhere better, so if you're better taking a reward, which they did, they took a two hundred grand reward last year for reliability, if we're seeing the issues of reliability across the network, well, why have they taken a reward for that? Just because they've set the target for it, they might have set the target really low, so it doesn't add up, just to get that reward. So I personally would care that they're taking a two hundred grand reward for reliability, if we're seeing leaks and issues and burst pipes constantly. So yeah, I'd like to see each sector or target, and the reward because this comes back to the whole BP bosses taking millions of pounds in rewards, which is ridiculous. So yeah, I think transparency again.

**TMcK Facilitator:** What does everyone else think about that?

**Community Member 2:** Yeah, I completely agree, I don't think it's fair that people in high positions in the water company, Portsmouth Water, being given quite a lot of bonuses when perhaps there's still quite a lot of issues to resolve and personally to me, I also would like to see a way that the money's being invested, the people who are taking more the brunt of customer service and also just for people on the phone teams or the people who are dealing with bill enquiries or customer enquiries, so I would just like to see how equal it is across the board, that the money that we consumers are paying, it's also being invested in those who are taking more of the brunt of the public.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 6, I'll come to you in a second but I want to go back to this idea about a pie chart because you can get a pie chart and it's maybe got four bits in it, but it doesn't really give you the detail you're after, it might just

be a little bit too generic. Is there specific information that you're looking for within that to help with this transparency we're speaking about?

**Community Member 10:** I'd just say the values, if you want to go the pie chart route, rewards for the year and a pie chart, so they took, I don't know, £120,000 for the reliability, they took £250,000 for environmental biodiversity by the looks of it. So if it's just a pie chart for rewards, you can break it down, if it's a pie chart for I don't know, leaks, performance, percentages fixed, you're going to want to see a percentage of the numbers aren't you, if you're going, no matter what way you're going with it.

**Community Member 9:** Going back to obviously you're getting the bonus, if you say you've done XYZ to get it but it's kind of irrelevant to us because if we're seeing, like you say, burst pipes and supply issues, then to us it's kind of irrelevant, you haven't done what we're paying you to do. So our bills have increased to pay that bonus, as such, that's where I think the disparity is a little bit because it's like personally, if we've not seen the benefit, why have our bills increased? And you're getting a bonus for it, essentially, because that seems to be what it is, all the bills have gone up but ...

**TMcK Facilitator:** I think you spoke earlier, Community Member 9, about communication, about understanding in a way that customers can sort of get on a level with, so I suppose if they are going to be transparent about things like bonuses or what they're spending on the infrastructure, it's almost an opportunity for them to communicate through that simple graphic almost, what it is we're doing.

Does that sound like an action that we would want to see potentially?

**Community Member 9:** Yeah.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Any other thoughts on that from anyone? Community Member 6, I think you had your hand up, I don't know if it was something to do with this or another point?

**Community Member 6:** The only point I'm going to make is I think it's useful for transparency purposes to set out how the money is spent and part of that money is spent on wages and remuneration, so it seems strange not to include that in anything that's articulated to the customers.

I mean what power the customers have to do much about how those benefits are allocated, I think that's quite limited because it seems quite a regulated industry so the regulator kind of acts for us in those circumstances, but I think for the sake of transparency, it's quite useful.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Any other thoughts anyone wants to throw in just now? Community Member 8, have you got any other responses, any other thoughts around the question that has been answered?

**Community Member 8:** Yeah, I'm just a bit concerned that the wages, the rewards for the executives, how they arrive at this amount and whether it's a percentage, of what percentage it is and as the other person said, Community Member 9 said, if we haven't achieved those targets then they shouldn't have the rewards that they're given, until they've done the work, until we're happy, until they're happy. They've still got lots of targets which they haven't achieved, they already said earlier, so there shouldn't be rewards until they've achieved those targets.

**TMcK Facilitator:** I think one of the things we've been speaking about is about transparency and my question to the group is to help Portsmouth Water understand why it matters, what is it about transparency that is important for you as customers? Community Member 4, do you want to jump in here?

**Community Member 8:** Because of the size of the salaries that these top people get, that's why, some of them are just ridiculous.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 4, do you want to jump in and then I'll come to Community Member 6?

**Community Member 4:** I was going to say, I think it just helps to build trust and understanding because a lot of the things we're talking about as well, as we talked about in our previous call, sometimes we see things in the news or just from talking to people and it isn't always true, so if it's there, the information black and white, then we can then make an informed decision about that.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 6, do you want to jump in there?

**Community Member 6:** Essentially, Portsmouth Water and the other water companies are kind of monopoly suppliers, you don't have a choice as to where you can go to get your water, so I think for the sake of transparency, given people don't necessarily have that choice to shop around, it's useful to know that people are getting value for money and part of that is making sure that the remuneration for senior execs in that industry are appropriate and proportionate.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 5, do you want to jump in?

**Community Member 5:** I was just going to say, even if we do know what they're all getting paid, what kind of result are we hoping to get from that? We can't control their wages, I'm not sure why we would need to really – I understand about the bonuses, yeah, we're saying have they actually improved things – but if we're talking about just general salaries, for me that's not something I think I need to know.

**TMcK Facilitator:** That's fine, okay. Anything else before we summarise? No, okay. So I'm going to share my screen again and we've been taking lots of notes in terms of what Portsmouth Water have said in terms of the actions they're currently taking, and we've tried to summarise what the ideal response might look like, so I'll read those out as well.

And then we'll have a very quick tidy up before we go back to Portsmouth Water and they can respond to what they've heard, very quickly, and then we'll move onto the next question. Let me just find my Share button and I will share my screen.

[Shares screen]

So in terms of the Portsmouth Water response, they did obviously talk about bill allocation, they agree with the regulator what price to charge, they balance charges across their customer base and their bills are based on either measured water consumption or estimated, based on whether you have a meter or not. Bonuses are tied to company performance against this five-year plan they spoke about and obviously, increases based on measurable performance improvements across different metrics which are all value in the company's action plan, which again we've spoken about, and that annual report is made available.

We spoke about obviously from our perspective, it needs to be a lot easier, so if we come back across here, it needs to be easier to find performance metrics, instead of, I think the language we used was "buried in an annual report".

There needs to be an easier way to find it and it needs to be communicated in a way that suits customers, whether that's through QR codes on the bill or through a website. So a one-page document ideally that you can click around and find out more information, as required and in plain English and accessible.

Pie charts and visuals were mentioned, a percentage breakdown of where money goes, so what's spent on service investment versus exec bonuses etc and just have that full breakdown of rewards. And then this is an opportunity for the company to highlight any positive improvements and developments and communicate those to you in a way that is grounded against the value that we've been speaking around, through your bill.

And there was a discussion around clarifying just how those executive rewards are calculated, in particular in bonuses and how that then is tied to performances and again, in a way that the lay person can understand.

So that's hopefully captured what we've discussed. Looking at this again, just for the customers here, does this feel like an accurate summation of the actions? Is there anything else we want to add in there?

**Community Member 5:** No, for me, I think that's really good, that really clearly sets out what we've discussed.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 6, do you want to jump in there?

**Community Member 6:** Can I just say plain English isn't the same as Easy Read format, just to say that I think that yes, it needs to be in plain English but it also

needs to be in a format that's accessible for people, so you might like to add that to that.

**Community Member 8:** And I think it also needs to go onto our bills, this chart or this Easy Read, so that all the customers can see it.

**TMcK Facilitator:** These actions, when would you expect them to become available for you as customers? Is this something we want to see in five years' time or something we want to see next week? What's a fair timeframe?

**Community Member 2:** I think yearly. Every year on your bill, when you get a bill.

**Community Member 9:** I'd say within a year at least but then maybe like a quarterly document or something like that.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Something quarterly, does everyone think a quarterly document might be interesting?

**Community Member 8:** Yeah, when our bills come out.

**Community Member 2:** Yeah.

**TMcK Facilitator:** So unless you've got anything else to add in, I think what I'd like to do now is just hand back to Rhodri and then he's going to give Portsmouth Water just a brief opportunity to highlight anything very quickly, so I'll hand over to you, Rhodri.

**CCW Chair:** Back to you, Bob, to respond and if you can keep the response brief, we'd appreciate that so that we can move on but if there's anything important that you think you need to say in response to what you've heard, we're all ears.

**Bob Taylor:** Yes, well thanks to everybody, that's really valuable feedback. You know, we can be quite a jargony and kind of complicated industry in many ways, and it's always a challenge to express these things in clear and simple terms and we do do some of the things that we've talked about in the call. I don't know if you can see that, in that that's a little document, a little booklet there that came out following the publishing of our business plan and that's got little charts in, like that one there shows where £1 goes, how you split down £1 of our revenue and where the money goes.

So it's a constant challenge to get things as clearly and as simple and as impactful as possible, but there's always room for improvement. I'm not entirely surprised to hear the comments because I always think that there's more that we can be doing but culturally, we're a very open and transparent business, we are a small water company so the sorts of salaries that you read about in the national newspapers, we don't pay those in Portsmouth Water, and we pride ourselves on being a local company, been around for a long time and all of our employees or most of our

employees are local people, and that means you have to be open and transparent because our staff are our customers as well.

But as Chris has said, there's a golden thread that kind of runs through the performance that our regulator wants us to achieve, and by the way, that performance, there was a comment about whether the targets were soft or easy to reach, you know, those targets go up year on year and the regulators compare the performance between different companies, so they understand who's delivering the best performance.

In most areas, we are delivering performance that's in the top quarter of all water companies and in many cases, we're delivering leading performance. Last year actually, OFWAT singled us out as the only, the one and only leading water company in their assessment of water company performance, which we were very proud to achieve. But although our water it is very cheap, it is the cheapest, we pride ourselves on excellent performance delivery, particularly in the customer area, as part of the overall package.

But I think the comments are fair and it's an ongoing challenge we have and we will respond.

**CCW Chair:** Thank you very much, Bob. I think we can now move onto the next question, which comes from Community Member 7.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Just before we do that, Community Member 7, I need to kick Chris out and add someone else in, so I'm going to try my best to make sure I can do that. I need to add in Emma Camm. I'm going to promote Emma to a panellist and Chris, we're going to bid you farewell, so thank you very much indeed.

**CCW Chair:** Thank you, Chris and welcome Emma!

**TMcK Facilitator:** Rhodri, you can now hand over for the next bit.

**CCW Chair:** Community Member 7, over to you.

**Community Member 7:** Right, okay, it's a long question so I'll break it down, I think it would be pertinent if I broke it down into two parts. The question is, what would you do to address taste, hardness and pressure concerns and when will customers receive automatic postcode level alerts about local issues? The second part is including clear trigger thresholds for when those alerts are sent? That's the question, to Bob.

**Bob Taylor:** So the first question was a general question around water quality and taste and odour particularly, so maybe I can explain a little bit about where our water comes from. We're very fortunate that our water comes from an actual aquifer which is kind of an underground natural reservoir under the South Downs,

a chalk aquifer and we extract that water through springs, through bore holes and through a river source, the River Itchen chalk stream.

And it's very clean, high quality water as it passes through the natural filter that the limestone aquifer is comprised of, so the treatment that we have to apply to that water to make it suitable for drinking is quite light, compared to for example, water that comes out of surface water sources, out of rivers and streams, so I think that's a very positive thing.

Probably the most important part of the treatment process that we apply to the water is called disinfection, and disinfection is where we use chlorine-based compounds to kill bacteria and viruses and so on. So it's a very important part of the treatment process and we have to make the water clean enough, to make sure that the disinfection process is effective. And we also leave an element of chlorine in the water, after it leaves the treatment plant, "residual" we call it, in order to keep the water fresh within the network as it travels through the pipes and comes out of customers' taps.

The level of taste and odour complaints that we get as a company, or water quality complaints generally actually, are relatively a low level, if you compare us with others in the industry and most of those actually come from the smell of chlorine that some customers find because once that water, with the chlorine dissolved in it, gets into the atmosphere, the chlorine is released, so that's one of the reasons.

And there are other ways of disinfecting the water, ultraviolet, for example, or ozone, there are other technologies but the beautiful thing about chlorine is that you can put it into the water at the treatment site, to stay in the water, so that if anything happens in transit from there to the customer, it'll keep the water at the high quality that it should be, so that's one of the many, the main reason or one of the main reasons why chlorine based disinfection is still by far the most popular disinfection technology in our industry.

The other complaint we sometimes get as well, which is not really taste and odour related, that's really from hardness. So the water that comes out of our aquifer, because it passes through the limestone material in the aquifer, it's chalk basically, it does tend to be quite hard but from a health point of view, hard water, if you drink that water from your kitchen tap, that water is actually better for you health wise than if you were to have soft water. If you had a water softener fitted, for example, they would leave your kitchen tap unsoftened because it's that harder water is better to drink, but it does fur up sometimes your kettles and other appliances in the kitchen.

So those are the two main areas that we have concerns about or we hear about those concerns, but as I said, they are generally at a low level compared to our peers in the industry.

I think pressure was part of the conversation or the question that Community Member 7 made. Pressure varies across our network and it varies for simple engineering, hydraulic reasons. Pressure and flow work inverse to one another so when flow of water through the network is high and demand is high, pressures reduce as that water travels through the network. At night time when demand for water is relatively low, pressures raise up in the system and what we try to do with pressure is we put control valves on the system, we divide the network up into components, segments and we try to control the pressure to make it run at an even keel, between day time and night time.

And that can have a dramatic effect on the numbers of burst pipes that you have, our burst numbers in Portsmouth Water are again, one of the lowest in the industry and that's because we control the pressures very, very carefully, to try and reduce the stresses on the network, pressures going up and down during the day or between day time or night time, we try to make sure that those pressures are even and consistent 24/7. It doesn't happen all the time but that's what we aim to do wherever we can.

I think you talked about a postcode kind of communication was part of the question as well, and I'm pleased to say that we don't often get major problems that you will have read about in other parts of the country, with our supply system. We do get them from time to time occasionally but because we're small, we can respond quickly but yeah, we are increasingly using digital communication means with our customers.

We've recently installed a new billing and CRM system, this is the same system that Octopus Energy use, we're the first people in the water industry to use that system and through that, we're trying to move customers towards more digitisation and where we have email addresses and where we have mobile telephone numbers, we can use that information to warn people about problems with their supply. We also use social media as well, we use as many channels as we can including the website, we put messages up on the website to communicate the nature of a problem.

And we do use, the postcode is the kind of building block of deciding which customers we need to notify about a particular problem. Has that covered all of the points in your question, Community Member 7?

**Community Member 7:** Yes, it has. I didn't realise that the postcode implementation has already happened, I must say, so there is a committed date for automated postcode levels?

**Bob Taylor:** Yes, and it depends more so on whether we've got that data on our database that customers are willing to provide. A lot of customers don't like providing telephone numbers, mobile telephone numbers or email addresses today, because of concerns about hacking and all of those kind of things, but when

we have that information, we can use it in bulk to let people know very quickly what's going on and as a problem is being repaired, a burst pipe, for example, we can give them progress reports at regular intervals. So yeah, that is something we can do but I'm glad to say that we don't get these mega outages that go on for days and days, that is a very unusual occurrence for us.

**Community Member 7:** Okay, that's fine.

**CCW Chair:** Thank you, Bob. Nicky, back to you to take us through the next stage of the process in relation to this question, please.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Fantastic, thank you so much for that response. Obviously, I'm sure lots of you will have been taking some notes there and this is an opportunity for us to discuss over the next minutes or so, what we've heard, what you liked about it, what you want to know more about and whether this reflects your lived experiences as customers of Portsmouth Water.

Community Member 2, you've got your hand up so you can get us started.

**Community Member 2:** So I hope this is relevant because I was thinking about the part of the taste, hardness and pressure and so on, and about the different way that water is being treated. But ever since last time, when I found out that the fluoride treatment is not in the water because it's paid by the council, I was wondering, personally I'm curious to understand perhaps why Portsmouth Water is not willing to pay towards it? On the back of that, would that increase customer bills? Is that why that's not something that Portsmouth Water would do out of their own pocket?

I'm just curious, as someone who had dental issues, it's made me think since last time.

**TMcK Facilitator:** I'm sure we can get that covered towards the end of this, Community Member 2. Again, I don't want us to become a Q&A, Bob, I can see you nodding there, so you can certainly come in at the end and answer Community Member 2 on that one.

Has anyone else got any thoughts in terms of what they heard? Does it reflect your lived experience in terms of pressure? In terms of taste?

**Community Member 10:** On the pressure side, I think if I remember correctly, a few of us had issues with pressure and whatever, but what I got from that was, is it down to them not wanting to risk system, trust the system reliability then for pressure? Is that why people are experiencing pressure issues across, you know, I think mine's quite low, other people said it, so yeah, is it purely down to not necessarily trusting the system? They don't want to take that risk or they don't think their system is capable of handling that? Like you know, risk versus reward, whatever? But that is what I got from the pressure point of his answer.

**TMcK Facilitator:** What would you want there, Community Member 10? Obviously, if you're suffering from slightly lower pressure, what's the ideal situation for you?

**Community Member 10:** Obviously on the last one, we said kind of is it a fix that can be done by the company? Whether that's improvements to the system, is it down to how much can they raise the pressure at the right times? Obviously, like they've said there, we all know that pressure does drop around this time on a weekday because everyone's home, so should they be increasing the pressure? Can they increase the pressure around these times? Or is it not worth the risk because of the demand on the system with that pressure increase?

So yeah, it's knowing can they improve the pressure just like that if they wanted to, through increasing it through the system? Or is it something that needs an upgrade?

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 9, were you going to say something there?

**Community Member 9:** Yeah, about the limescale thing, saying that it's better to have more limescale. But I always thought it was better to have less limescale because it obviously blocks a lot of things, and damages appliances, taps and everything more. So that I don't really understand because I know like we have really hard water here and obviously why, but saying it's better, that's what I think is a bit strange because my understanding was it's better to not have hard water.

**TMcK Facilitator:** What does everyone else think about that? You guys experience this on a daily basis, so what are your thoughts on the hard water?

**Community Member 2:** I use a water filter.

**Community Member 9:** Yeah.

**Community Member 5:** Bob said that soft water is not as good for you to drink but they understand that hard water does damage, it can damage appliances, so it's two separate things, he's not saying hard water is [inaudible] for you. That was what I got from it.

**Community Member 9:** Yeah, because I know if you get a water softener, like he said, they don't put it on the drinking water but I thought that was more because some people can taste the salt more than anything? Or obviously, it increases the salt but I don't, yeah, I just thought it was a bit strange.

**TMcK Facilitator:** I remember when we were discussing this at the briefing session, we got in quite deep around water quality in general and things you read online and things that you see happening across England and Wales, and it was almost like a lot of myth-busting had to happen on that call.

Has anyone got anything about that you think Portsmouth Water could be looking to do, to help you understand more about your water quality? What would that look like?

**Community Member 9:** Again, maybe explain it to people a little bit, so again, like we said before, like an information page, be like “This is what the water quality is like in our area, this is why it’s like this …” and again, in layman’s terms for people that haven’t got a clue what you’re talking about, apart from all the bad stuff in the news as such, but to make it simple for you to understand the reasons why.

**TMcK Facilitator:** And why is that important to you, Community Member 9?

**Community Member 9:** Just again, because it comes with the transparency thing, that they’re being honest, and I’m giving you the information as well on it.

**TMcK Facilitator:** We heard Bob talk there around this new system they have in place in terms of being able to contact customers via the postcode alerts, when do you expect that sort of thing to happen? Have you got any thoughts in terms of how quickly you’d want to see that implemented?

**Community Member 9:** He said it was already implemented but I didn’t, I’ve never heard anything.

**Community Member 5:** Well, is it like for say a text saying, “We know your water has gone off” or something? Is it that sort of thing? I don’t think I’ve ever had that happen to me.

**Community Member 9:** No.

**TMcK Facilitator:** And I think they mentioned about getting the right details on the system because obviously, if they don’t have the details, they can’t get in touch with you, so how could they go about doing that? What’s the expectation of you as customers for Portsmouth Water to achieve that?

**Community Member 2:** I guess like sending a letter saying, “Are your details up to date?”, because obviously I think the most reliable way to contact somebody would be for the address because you know, if you change address, you let them know straightaway so your bill gets calculated or with the water meter and so on, so just sending a letter asking people if their details are up to date.

**Community Member 9:** Explaining why they want that and how it can benefit you as well because all companies want our details, and the amount of spam you get through from it, but by making it clear that it’s not for spam, it’s to give you relevant important updates for XYZ as well, because you’re more likely to actually provide it if you know that you’re not going to get spammed every two minutes with stuff you don’t care about.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 4, do you want to jump in there?

**Community Member 4:** I know you were saying as well that obviously, they're aware that not all customers maybe want to give that information and I know he mentioned that they also use social media, just I didn't follow them on social media so I've just had a look at their Instagram and it is very informative but looking at it in terms of if I was to think, "Is there a problem with supply?" or the taste of my water or anything like that, I'm not immediately seeing anything that would draw my attention to that and they have a Linktree which again, if you click on it, there's nothing – other than going to their website – there's nothing that automatically draws you to that.

So I don't know if even on the Linktree, they could have a more direct link to like current updates or live things that are happening, I don't know if that could be a thing because then that would be a direct route in for customers, if they didn't have our contact details.

**TMcK Facilitator:** I think that's a good point, I remember in our briefing session, Community Member 4, we spoke around there's so much information out there and you could be bombarded with information from a water company and actually, you become completely immune to any information because there's too much, so it becomes about getting the relevant information to you.

So I guess my question to the room is, what is relevant information? When do you want the water company to tell you something, what's happened? What do you expect?

**Community Member 7:** You want a, I mean I would like to know what the trigger thresholds are, I mean it's all very well to say it's implemented, I'd like to know if there's a pressure drop, well I can tell by my tap but I mean locally, postcode wise, it's easy to assess. Secondly, a chlorine spike, for example, there must be set levels but there aren't, well if there are, I haven't seen them, which is probably more pertinent.

**TMcK Facilitator:** So when you look at your postcode details, Community Member 7, you're expecting to see things like pressure? You're expecting to see things like water quality or is there anything else you're looking for there?

**Community Member 7:** If there's an alert coming through, say on my mobile or whatever because that's my main tool, I mean everyone uses their mobile for everything, you know, if there's – just send me a flash, "You're going to have a pressure drop tonight, forget about doing the washing up" or something because you can't do it, forget about showering because you can't.

I live in a three-storey property, I've got a shower downstairs, not an issue, it's average, it's okay. Go upstairs, forget it, the bathroom, forget it, the shower doesn't work and that's purely pressure in the house.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Is that your fault or Portsmouth Water's fault, Community Member 7? Where does the blame lie, if you like, in that one?

**Community Member 7:** I'm outing Portsmouth Water because the pressure is insufficient! Simple as that. I mean the pressure here where I live, at the end of the line so to speak, is poor. Most people in this development that I live in have put in these water pressure pumps, about 80% of the people living here but I can't afford to spend £40,000 or whatever it costs, it costs a heck of a lot of money.

But no, I mean that's one of the issues I have but I didn't realise that we have these level alerts already, I didn't realise that.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Anyone else got any thoughts on the discussions so far that they want to come in with?

**Community Member 10:** Like Community Member 4 said, I think, the social media does appear quite good but it's that separation of information. So although there's posts about being an apprentice for Portsmouth Water, I think they need that quite clear avenue to get that separation.

So if we want notifications or alerts or performance or things like that, I kind of think there needs to be a separation from your advertising of the company and what they've done in the community, to important key facts.

Whether that's another link to a different social media platform, whether it's just another social media, Portsmouth Water, I don't know, notifications or something like that or alerts, so just to separate that bit because it's like if you miss that, it goes into the ether of the social media page. Obviously yes, there is good posts on there but I don't know, just a separation on how that gets notified and communicated across, maybe.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Did someone mention in the briefing session about is it possible to treat the hardness and change that so that it's not as hard? Is that something we want to explore here?

**Multiple Community Members:** Yes. [some agree]

**Community Member 10:** I think we all said that quite a lot, I think we all wanted to know, is that something that can be treated at the source? And then how does that look for the customer?

**Community Member 9:** Yeah, or even like along the way because it's expected on us to do it.

**TMcK Facilitator:** So you mean like get a filter, Community Member 9, in terms of changing the taste of water?

**Community Member 9:** Yeah, because obviously like water filters and then you've got to buy the salt and stuff regularly, it's not like a one purchase and done as such.

**Community Member 7:** Why can't Portsmouth Water offer subsidised softening in the hardest postcodes?

**Community Member 9:** Yeah.

**TMcK Facilitator:** That's one of those things, Community Member 7, that that cost will be spread among consumers so I guess that needs to then be, what do we think about that as customers?

**Community Member 7:** If we're complaining non-stop about the hardness of water, I am, I mean I'd be quite, if Portsmouth Water wants to subsidise me I'd be interested, very interested!

**Community Member 9:** Yeah, because it will reduce the cost of appliances and stuff, generally, especially here, they break down sooner because of the build-up of limescale, like boilers and stuff, like the engineer I had-

**Community Member 7:** And kettles.

**Community Member 9:** My grandparents have a water softener and after they got it, the boiler engineer made the comment, he's like "There's not any build-up in your system at all" because they have the water softener. So actually, it makes everything else last a lot longer and reducing the costs of everything as such.

**TMcK Facilitator:** I'm going to share my screen and recap everything that's been discussed. Before I do that, is there any other points that anyone wants to raise? Is anybody sitting on anything before I move on? Are we okay?

Great, so I'll share my screen just now. I'll read out an overview of things. So we can see here that Bob spoke in a lot of detail around how the water is naturally filtered via limestone aquifers, light treatment is required, a residual chlorination is left within the water as it travels to point of use. With regards to hardness, it's naturally hard and it's better for you but admits it does damage appliances and obviously, no action is taken on this aspect of it.

Pressures are carefully controlled via using control valves and postcodes are the fundamental block by which these kind of alerts are issued, if there are any and they've got that system in place now, a new CRM system which allows them to target individuals more accurately.

Into the future, there will be an increasing use of digital communication means for postcode level alerts, things like emails, phone, social media, website to inform about disruptions, so more automation around that. And again, Bob and Emma, please do jump in once we've been through these, if there's anything else you want to add. You've got this new digital billing system, similar to what Octopus Energy have.

In terms of consumer feedback, we really just want some more clarification around why pressure is at its current levels, what drives that, so again, just a bit more communication around that. Getting critical information to customers regarding water quality and why it is the way it is in layman's terms, in an easy format, again to myth-bust, there's a lot of disinformation out there and we found in the briefing session, that it would be great to hear more about why the water quality is in fact high in the Portsmouth region.

Ensure all customer details are up to date, so how are you going to do that? Obviously for a system to work, this new system you've got, for that to work, it needs to have the information here so how are you going about that? What are the timescales? Can you separate the social somewhat because obviously information can become very difficult to get once it's on the system, and it allows customers to access what they need more quickly.

Better live reporting of key water quality indicators, so again, is it possible for postcode level information regarding pressure, chlorination levels etc or through phone alerts, as required? And is it possible to explore treating water, either whether it's to do with the hardness or the pressure, just to alleviate the burden on customers who feel that they're obviously having to invest in pressure meters, to improve the pressure or indeed, softeners to ensure their appliances last a little bit longer.

So again, over to the customers, these are the key actions we're looking to put to Portsmouth Water, does this summarise what we've discussed quite well? Is there anything else you'd like to add?

**Community Member 9:** Just like the customer details up to date, about why they need it, like I said before, so it doesn't get lost like with spam as such, that it's for this specific, for a specific reason.

**TMcK Facilitator:** So they need to explain really clearly, Community Member 9, why they're wanting that information so that you actually feel obliged to give it to them?

**Community Member 9:** Yeah.

**TMcK Facilitator:** I feel like I spoke over someone there?

**Community Member 8:** I was just going to say, they need the customer details because if you move house or you know, you leave, they need the details of the next person so that's standard information that they're going to need.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Anything else on this screen that you think we need to expand upon or look at a timeframe for?

**Community Member 7:** Well just going back on these postcode level alerts, I've got this hang-up, I mean banks are able to send instant fraud alerts, you know, on a mobile, why can't Portsmouth Water do the same? They can't notify residents about supply causing problems, instantly, it's all very well doing it later but I want to be proactive. So I'm suggesting that they use, I mean I go back to banks are able to send instant fraud alerts.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Have you got an example, Community Member 7, of when you've had an issue with your water where you would really expect Portsmouth Water to have sent something to you?

**Community Member 7:** No, not yet.

**Community Member 9:** The one like from last summer, I know it wasn't specifically Portsmouth Water and it was more Southern Water, like the hosepipe ban, and it wasn't clear because there's a mix of Southern and Portsmouth Water all locally, so it wasn't clear who actually had a hosepipe ban and what areas, and like even just a simple communication, "This is not you as a customer that this affects" because it was all, the only way it was heard of was through the news, so you assumed that because we're within Gosport area or Fareham area etc., you were within that band and actually, a lot of people weren't and dependent on almost streets, the street next to you could have been but you're not and unless you, obviously you should know who your supplier is but just to make it really clear that it is you/isn't you, that sort of thing.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 9, why is that sort of information, why does that matter? What sort of impact can it have on you?

**Community Member 9:** Well, I mean it will affect what use you have anyway but it means like you know who to look for the information specifically to, or for because again, they told you on the news as such that it's only affecting Southern Water or they said like a catchment area, so "everyone in the Fareham area is affected" but actually, they weren't, or saying like "everyone in Gosport is affected" but they weren't, so it's just being very, like a simple email or something, or a text just to let you know, be like "You might have seen this in the news, this does directly affect you" or "this doesn't directly affect you."

**TMcK Facilitator:** Final chance if anyone's got anything else they want to add before I'll hand to Rhodri, who will give the team at Portsmouth Water a chance to

respond, has anyone else got anything they want to say? No, okay. Rhodri, I'll hand over to you then and we can finalise this part.

**CCW Chair:** Okay, thanks again all for your contributions there. Bob or Emma, back to you for a concise response, if you can please, to what you've heard our panel members say.

**Bob Taylor:** I'll turn to Emma in a minute, she's been patiently waiting there for me to stop talking, so I'll bring her in, in a sec but a few points I would respond on. On the fluoride thing, there are very few areas in the UK where there is agreement between all of the health authorities that fluoride should be added to the water, there's a lot of difference of opinion on that particular subject, between the health professionals and it is the health authorities who are the ones who make that decision, rather than the water companies and the problem is that health authority boundaries and water company boundaries don't line up with one another either.

So it's mainly in the Midlands actually, around Birmingham, there is fluoridation but in general, people can't reach agreement whether it should be done or shouldn't be done. We would be happy to do it, it does cost money but it's not very much and it would be relatively straightforward to do, but not our call unfortunately.

The thing that I wanted to make clear is that when we were talking about the health differences of soft and hard water, I wasn't talking about the scale itself, I was just talking about the water itself, where there are higher levels of carbonates in hard water than there are in soft water, which are better for your health.

There are very few water companies that soften at source nowadays, I've known in my career just a couple of situations where it happens and it's normally because of some, in a long-existing Act of Parliament that required the water company to do this. I think one of our neighbouring companies north of here in the Cheam area of South London does softening on a bulk level, but it is quite a complex process. But it's very rare in our industry now, most people are happier to get a water softener of their own and do it that way.

In terms of pressure, yeah, you know, it's not because of the stress on our system, it's because speaking as an engineer, water hydraulics is such that when you push water through a pipeline network, water loses pressure on its way from the beginning to the end of that network, so depending on your location within the system, if you're living right outside a pumping station, you will get probably quite high pressure, possibly too high pressure. But if you're living right on the end of the system, some distance away, then the pressure will be lower. So we've got to manage those hydraulic constraints, those natural constraints of the system and try to keep things as even as possible.

If anybody has a problem with their pressure, we will always send somebody out to have a look at the local situation, have a look at the internal plumbing perhaps,

make sure the stopcock outside is completely open, maybe re-lay that pipe, sometimes pipes get choked up, the connection pipe to your property, maybe we would need to replace that and put a plastic pipe in place of an old iron pipe, there are things that can be done, so please get in touch with us and we'd be very happy to help.

Emma, would you like to add anything? You've been very quiet and patient.

**Emma Camm:** Hello everyone, I'm Emma and apologies for the blocked nose, I'm just getting through the last of a cold. It's been really interesting to hear all the feedback and in terms of the myth-busting, I think that's really key and something that I'm actually looking at, at the moment, developing some really good comms to go out on social media to do a bit of myth-busting because it can be, as you've all said, there's a lot of misinformation out there and we want to be giving you the facts and giving you the details about your local water, so I think that's been really useful and interesting to hear.

I think Bob has covered off a lot of it, we've spoken about the quality of the water coming in and I just wanted, I think Community Member 7 mentioned some chlorine spikes and having some triggers around that. Obviously, the quality of the water is already really high so we don't actually have to put that much chlorine in and we very rarely have to change the chlorine set points, as it were.

So all of our sites, we've got online real time monitoring for all of the chlorine and treatment that we do and they are all alarmed to kind of shut the site off if anything untoward happens. So again, as Bob said, if you do have any specific issues or things that you're noticing that seem a bit odd, just get in touch with us so we can discuss it in a bit more detail and see what's going on. But yeah, I think that's everything that I wanted to add but it's been really useful listening and understanding what you've been talking about, so thank you.

**CCW Chair:** Right, thank you both. Nicky, anything you want to add to that at that point? Or are we happy to move onto our last question?

**TMcK Facilitator:** Yeah, I think we can go onto the final question now, Rhodri. Before we do that, I just need to play around with who's in the room and out the room. So Emma, I'm going to say bye to you now, I'm going to put you back on hold.

**CCW Chair:** Yes, and Clare is joining us for the last bit.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Let me just promote her to panellist, so I'll make sure she can come in on time. She should be on her way through the digital journey. Clare, let me just check you're here, I don't know if you want to put your camera on there.

**CCW Chair:** Here she is, hello, Clare, welcome.

**TMcK Facilitator:** So yes, if you want to hand over to the next ...

**CCW Chair:** Okay, so our next question comes from Community Member 6.

**Community Member 6:** Thank you very much, are you going to share it on the screen?

**TMcK Facilitator:** Yes, of course.

**Community Member 6:** It's partly based on my own experiences of having a small leak in the house and I wasn't aware of it for some quite significant amount of time. So the question is: Your systems already detect significant and sustained changes in household consumption, what specific policy or operational reason prevents you from contacting customers at the point of anomaly, when the anomaly is first detected rather than wait for the bills to escalate? If you can explain the thresholds you use, the processes for triggering customer contact and why the intervention is set so long after a financial impact applies. Is it fair to place the burden of proof on the customer, and will you commit to more proactive alerts?

**TMcK Facilitator:** Thanks, Community Member 6.

**CCW Chair:** Thanks for that, Community Member 6. Over to you, Bob and Clare, I don't know how you're going to divide it up but I'll leave it to you.

**Bob Taylor:** I'll kick off this one again. Thank you, Community Member 6, really topical point that you've raised there actually. So when there's a leak on a customer's supply, it's not automatic, there are two kinds of leaks basically, there's leaks that you see or that have an impact on the quality of the pressure at your tap or the water supply inside your property, in other words you can tell that there is something not right. Or there's the other kind of leaks which are ones that kind of disappear underground through pipes that are buried or whatever, and there's no major impact on your household supply and they can run for a very long time.

The thing that changes all of that is whether you have a meter or not and the thing that changes the alerting, very efficiently actually, is whether you have a smart meter or not. So if you are a metered customer, that means you pay for your water based on the volume of water that you use and if you have a leak, we can detect that, particularly if you've got a smart meter and the game changes with smart meters, in the sense that we're reading smart meters typically every hour. Whereas dumb meters, sometimes are not read, they're read typically a couple of times a year, so even if you've got a meter, if the leak is having no major impact on your supply, we won't necessarily find it until we've gone and taken a meter reading and found that the consumption is very, very high.

Now we, for water resources reasons, saving water reasons, we have embarked on a programme of installing universal smart metering for all of our customers, so this is a big project, it's more than £60m and between now and about seven years from now, we are trying to give a smart meter to every single one of our customers.

This will become the detection system for leaks and the easiest way to know whether or not you've got a leak is when that meter takes a reading at night, when you're not using water at all or very little, if there's water going through your meter then there's clearly a leak going on. And very often, those leaks can be inside the property as well as outside the property, we've just literally started putting smart meters in this year, we're up to, I think I was told today, we've just put in 10,000 smart meters and we're finding a much higher frequency of leaks inside customers' properties than we expected, and by and large, those customers are then very happy to go and get those fixed, and we tell them about it straightaway, we get that information straightaway.

But unfortunately, at the moment, less than 40% of our customers, our household customers, have a meter, the other 60% are on an unmetered basis and they pay a fixed amount of money for their water every year, based on the rateable value of the property. So in those cases, it is very difficult to detect particularly the smaller leaks and that usually happens with our active leak detection.

We have segmented our network into what we call district meter areas, these are zones of about typically 1500, 2000 properties, where we're measuring the flows of water into those zones 24/7 and we can see on that flow meter reading, again looking at night, when we expect consumption to be relatively low, we can see whether there's a high level of leakage and if there is, we send guys into find those leaks and the ones that are causing the main problem are the invisible leaks, and we use all sorts of techniques to find those, we even use sniffer dogs to smell the chlorine in the water. We also use satellites, we also use noise loggers, there's all sorts of technology in that particular area.

So I think in a nutshell, what I'm saying here is that the advent of smart metering and we're not the only water company that's doing this, the advent of smart metering is going to make it much quicker and more effective to tell customers that there's a leak going on, when it happens in the first place, straightaway.

But in order to get to that point, we've got to complete this installation programme across all of our customers over the next six or seven years, it's a big programme of work, but there's many water companies who are doing this at the same time.

The other main reason why we're putting in smart meters is because historically, Portsmouth Water has had abundant supplies of this high-quality water from the chalk aquifer underground and although the South East is water stressed, we've traditionally had plentiful access to that water.

That is all changing with the concern about the environment and the concerns about water abstraction does to bodies like chalk streams, for example, and we believe that over the next few years, we will have to reduce the amount of water that we take from that chalk aquifer.

But in the meantime, because of the history, our customers are the highest individual water users in the country, so what having a smart meter can do is help you to understand your consumption, as well as detecting leakages, to try to help you reduce that consumption and become more efficient.

Just to give you an idea, our customers use on average, about 160 litres per person, per day and our long-term target in the industry is to get down to 110, and this is comparable with other countries in Europe. So we've got quite a long way to go and the smart metering is one of a number of things that we're doing to make this happen.

But yeah, you know, as soon as we find that a customer has a leak, whether it's through a smart meter or a normal meter or in any other way, we do contact the customer straightaway, it's just that we don't discover those immediately because they're hidden underground ... or hidden within the plumbing of a property.

**CCW Chair:** Thank you, Bob. Clare, do you want to add anything at this point?

**Clare Younger:** Maybe just a couple of points. Water, unlike your energy markets, with our smart meters, it's not quite as reactive as you find in your energy, if you've got smart energy meters. So customers traditionally in water will be able to see their water use for the previous day, rather than hourly like you can in energy, so it is a little bit different.

But what we do look for in smart metering is what we call is consistent water use. So where your water use never drops to zero consumption, which when you do view it over an hourly basis, particularly at nighttime and things like that, that's when we'd look for the water use to drop to zero, so that's how we're using smart data to really enhance what we're doing.

A bit of context on those 10,000, so we found just under 2,300 leaks, of which around 530 are currently open. So volumes are big but a big proportion of those are being self-fixed by customers and a couple of good news stories as well, we've had one quite big supply pipe leak that we found by fitting a smart water meter and we worked really closely with the housing association that the property was with, and within 24 hours, that leak was repaired.

We had another lady whose consumption dramatically increased sort of overnight, got straight on the phone to her and her gardener had left the garden tap on, which historically, as Bob said, with an analogue meter, non-smart meter, we wouldn't have found until either the customer saw it and turned it off, by which point, she's already had that bill charge, or until we read it. So smart metering really has the capability of changing how we interact with customers on this front.

And we're doing a lot of learning in the industry, so when we think about automatic alerts and at which point we want to alert and how frequently we alert – because

we don't want to be annoying to customers – there's a lot of learning in the industry already on how we should do that. So I've worked closely with Anglian Water, to understand how they've been managing it and the industry's really good at coming together and putting in place sort of best practice, what works for customers, what responds well and we're taking as much of that learning as we can for the industry, so as we're building these things to support smart metering, we're starting from a really good position rather than starting from scratch. So those are probably the only things I'd add.

**CCW Chair:** Great, thank you, Clare, thank you, Bob. Back to you then, Nicky, to lead us through the next section.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Brilliant, thanks, Rhodri. Community Member 6, you asked the question, you've listened to the responses there, you've got your own experiences of having a leak in your property, how well did you feel that the response met with your experience?

**Community Member 6:** My experience was the leak was on my side of the property so I had to get it fixed myself. I wasn't aware of the leak, I do have a meter but it's only read every three months, so I wasn't aware of that leak for at least, I think it had been running for about two months before we saw an anomaly from our bills coming in. I have had a friend who went off on holiday to Europe for five weeks and left the hose on, so that cost them quite a lot of money, given they left the hose on for five weeks and the garden was quite flooded and next door was flooded, I don't know if Portsmouth Water could have done very much about that, to be honest!

But I suppose it's good that they're introducing new technology, I wonder why it's going to take up to kind of seven years to get that rolled out across the areas that they supply, and also I wonder how it is that they motivate people to move from rateable value charged water to kind of smart meter water usage.

The other thing is about the kind of burden of proof, so just making sure that that burden of proof doesn't fall on the customer when they do find a leak, about how long that leak's been for. So they're just a few observations from that answer, Bob, thank you.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Great, thanks, Community Member 6. Has anyone else got any other thoughts just in relation to what they've heard so far?

**Community Member 9:** So with the leaks, they said that the majority of the leaks they found, the customers were sorting themselves, is that because it was their responsibility or just because they would rather?

**Community Member 6:** It would depend on where it is on the property, if it's past the property line, I think it's your, the customer's responsibility, so that's what I had

to do on mine, it was past their road boundary, so it was my responsibility to sort it out.

**Community Member 9:** The other thing was about the whole water meter, can people request, I get they say they want every customer in seven years but if you want the water meter, can it be requested?

**Bob Taylor:** Yes.

**Community Member 9:** Or is it no, you're in a queue as such, you've got to wait?

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 2, do you want to jump in?

**Community Member 2:** For me, once again I would like to, because I mentioned this previously, I think for me, I would appreciate more information about how the water meter kind of measures your water, just because I've been influenced by people's reluctance and perhaps of you know, like we mentioned previously, about myth-busters, I've been kind of influenced by people wanting to avoid, wanting to stand against being forced water meters.

I would prefer more information about how, kind of how it works, how it affects somebody who might be a tenant, that kind of stuff. For me, I would appreciate more information to understand, obviously because it's not really a choice but to have an informed understanding of what a water meter is – because sometimes it's just scary about the unknown.

**TMcK Facilitator:** You hear all kinds of stories about these things don't you, so you want to know what the facts are, I think that makes a lot of sense.

Just looking around the room, I'm going to start calling people out, I always do this around this time, so Community Member 3 and Community Member 1, you've been listening intently, you've maybe not contributed, that's okay, it's just in case you want to put across just now before we go round the rest?

**Community Member 3:** I've had a smart meter in now about three or four years and it reduced my bills immensely, so I was quite – it just took me a while to get there but I did it, but this idea of the smart meters to be able to check on the leaks, I think that's one of the best ideas I've heard.

**TMcK Facilitator:** So it's quite a motivating reason for you then, Community Member 3, to get a smart meter?

**Community Member 3:** Yes, I think if any property owner, as they bring it out, if they can extol the properties of that, you know, the advantages of a smarter meter, I think there might be more take up.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 1, what about yourself? From what you've heard, what are your thoughts?

**Community Member 1:** Well, I think a smart meter is a great idea, I would happily have one.

**TMcK Facilitator:** I can see Portsmouth are smiling, that must be music to their ears to hear that sort of thing. I'll summarise what's been said so far but again, before I share my screen, I'd love to know if there's any other thoughts. Have they answered the question fully? Is there other things that you still want to try and understand a little bit more around?

Let me share my screen and I'm going to run through what Portsmouth Water have told us and then we'll touch on the other areas you want us to talk around, and I've got another couple of things I want to bring up before I do that.

So we spoke in our briefing session around this and there was a talk about bill shock prevention and I've noted in seven years' time, it sounds like it's going to be sorted, we'll have smart meters everywhere and things will be fully automated and under control. But that's a long time to wait, right, so we've still got this idea of a bill shock coming in. What's everyone's thoughts around where does the burden lie in terms of who's responsible for that? What can Portsmouth Water do just now, before the full rollout of smart metering, to help customers?

**Community Member 2:** For me, having more information about how the smart meter works and kind of having like, I believe they were saying that, was just having more like myth-busters, sorry someone previously [said], about having myth-busters, for being informed as a consumer on how things work.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 6?

**Community Member 6:** I just wonder about how it is that they might, if there's a reticence for people to move from rateable value bills to smart meters, how it is that they might motivate people to facilitate that process and to get them to move onto smart meters, so that's the first thing.

The second thing is maybe some customers, if they do find there's a leak, they might not be able to afford the repair, if it's the customer's responsibility, so are they able to provide support for those individuals, given it is the customer's responsibility to sort that out? Or is there something that they could put in place, so for example, I don't know, do a deal with HomeServe or someone like that, so that they can give cheap products, repair products to their customers that would mitigate some of the costs associated with that repair?

**TMcK Facilitator:** Anything else to add on that point?

**Community Member 9:** I kind of, you saying about it's from your property boundary, that it's then your responsibility, I always assumed it's just from within the property, that it was your responsibility, not the outside bit. Especially-

**TMcK Facilitator:** You need a bit more information, Community Member 9, don't you before you ...?

**Community Member 6:** Yeah, it is the outside.

**Community Member 9:** Yeah, why it's ... whose ... yeah.

**TMcK Facilitator:** One thing I picked up on which was interesting, was the fact that there's a lot of water being used per person, per household and the target is to reduce that by I think it was 38 litres per day, per person. What sort of things can Portsmouth Water do there to help you understand the importance of that? Because that's a big leap in behavioural change, so what do we think about that? How can they communicate that and make people get on board with it?

**Community Member 2:** I hope it's okay to jump in but I was wondering, perhaps if everyone gets a meter within the seven year, perhaps then things are being calculated, measured, perhaps that would actually show that perhaps the amount that, things being used is actually lower because once they get a meter, they would be measured, right? Perhaps actually it is happening that people are using a lower amount but has just not been measured yet, if that makes sense, with the meters.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 4?

**Community Member 4:** Kind of a positive thing, I guess, just to add that I don't know if it's because I've been involved with this but more recently, I've actually seen things from Portsmouth Water, kind of tips and tricks and things that we could potentially be doing as customers to reduce our water usage, so yeah, I feel like there is already steps in place of things they are doing to try and help with that.

**TMcK Facilitator:** You're literally almost apologetic there, Community Member 4, that you're saying something positive, that's perfectly okay.

**Community Member 4:** No, it's a good thing! It doesn't really answer your question of what more can they do because it's something they are already doing, so yeah, I'm sure there are other things.

**Community Member 3:** They've been doing this for some time because I can remember going to where they've been having community events years ago, and they were even then, harping, you know, going on about how you can reduce your water, when they've had these outreach days at community events. So they have been trying for quite some time to get that message across.

**Community Member 9:** The thing I always remember is switch off the water when you brush those teeth, like those little things and in more businesses or public places, it's like press once or two flush systems and stuff like that.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Community Member 2, do you want to jump in there?

**Community Member 2:** I would say though, what I think is though is sometimes some of the advice, in my opinion, it's a bit ridiculous in a way, like the four minutes shower, I don't know if that's Portsmouth, I know I heard it from Southern Water, but for me it's kind of like not insulting, but I don't really want a company to get to condescending about the way I use its product or service. So I think there has to be a balance between giving quite helpful advice but also being realistic, in my opinion, you can't really do that much, four minutes in the shower. So just having a balance really, what people take as serious and not get a bit like offended.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Yeah, I get that, so personalise it so you can sort of explore ways for yourself to save. Community Member 5, do you want to jump in?

**Community Member 5:** I was just wondering if, I remember when I was at school, I'm sure we had Portsmouth Water into school to give the advice and that's where Community Member 9, it triggered the turning the tap off when you're brushing your teeth, just pressing the one button on the toilet and I wonder if they're still going into schools to start that education from a young age.

**TMcK Facilitator:** Yeah, definitely. I think the other thing to take into account is okay, the water might be relatively cheap in Portsmouth but you're paying for sewage and that's obviously in relation to how much water you use, so maybe that's the other side of the coin, if you use less water, you pay less for sewage potentially. I don't know, is that something that could be communicated?

**Community Member 9:** Because ours, I'm sure they do it on like a percentage, it's like 90%, they assume 90% of your water is waste, then wasted and that's how it's calculated, rather than it being, like you have a water meter going in but not out as such, so again, you might be paying less for water but probably more for sewage because they say the whole "save your bath water to water your plants" but actually, you've already had to pay for that to be removed from your property, as such, like that sort of thing.

**TMcK Facilitator:** So I'll share the screen, I'm going to summarise things as well as I can. So Portsmouth gives a response and it was around household leak detection can only be detected quickly when there's a smart meter installed. Monitoring for consistent water use and expected patterns of use is under way and it's obviously led to a number of really important finds in terms of leaks.

They have 10,000 smart meters installed and obviously, that's allowed them to fix any leaks that they saw and there's a lot more leaks than they expected, so

obviously there's a huge amount of data being developed here and actions off the back of it. There is active leak detection and resolution happening at consumption level, monitoring across district areas as well.

Into the future, we've got a seven-year timeline to get the smart meters into every single customer, they're looking to put together best practices in terms of how and when to alert customers, to automate things in terms of what they can do to improve on things.

In terms of what we spoke around, they want to try and remove the burden of proof for leak incidents, away from the customer, obviously smart metering will help with that immensely and they don't want to have to require customers to provide photo evidence before providing support, there could be a bit more of a support from the outset, potentially.

They want to provide the ability for customers to request smart meter installation at any point without being on a wait list, that might already happen, I'm sure we'll hear about that in a second. Provide more information about what a smart meter is, how they work, measure usage, get rid of any sort of misconceptions people might have, communicate around positivity and what can be achieved through them.

Again, clearly communicate the installation of smart meters and myth-bust along the way, put financial support mechanisms in place to enable customers to deal with leaks and again, the effects associated from those leaks as well, it's not often that people can afford that. And then just have clear, pragmatic, company advice provided for how to reduce water consumption and I guess, to Community Member 2's point, in a way that is accessible to the person, that isn't going to cause them to just close that web page down and say, "No way, I enjoy a shower too much, I'm not reducing that down to four minutes."

There are a couple of questions around the seven-year timescale being a little bit too far out, and what can be done to increase that?

So that's the overall actions that we've seen, again before I hand back to Portsmouth, just having looked at those, are we happy with what we have there? Is there anything we can add?

**Community Member 8:** I think one thing they could add is there isn't much, well I was quite surprised to hear from Bob that only 40% of people have a smart meter. So I think there could be a big drive to try and get more people to use smart meters because it's just going to help them and it's going to help us. I know people with big households are not going to want that because it's going to increase their bills quite highly, but for the benefit of everybody, I think it would benefit us all if there was a big drive to get more smart meters into the area.

**Community Member 9:** Following that, I just have one more question because if everyone's obviously not using a smart meter and it's based on the average consumption and stuff, if they say everyone actually loses a lot less water, is that just going to drive the bills up higher because you're only getting charged for the actual amount rather than the assumed amount? Surely, if everyone is actually using 100 litres versus 150 or 200 litres, would that not just then pull the price up all together?

**Community Member 8:** I know, because it's still the big households that are going to use up a lot more.

**TMcK Facilitator:** I think I know what you're saying, Community Member 9, so you're saying if everyone reduces their water, they still have to take the same amount of money in?

**Community Member 9:** Yeah, so in turn, that surely, if you need say £100 and now everyone is actually using £10, where's the extra £90 going to come from? It's not going to come from thin air, as such.

**TMcK Facilitator:** So that sounds like a communication challenge for the company, certainly. Anyone else want to add in before I hand to Rhodri and move things along? We're doing great for time, we've got five minutes, we've managed to hit the target so far, so just very quickly, anything else to add? No.

Okay, Rhodri, over to you.

**CCW Chair:** Congratulations, all, for keeping us on time. Bob and Clare, do you want to respond to anything you've heard there, please?

**Bob Taylor:** Yes, thanks again everyone for your comments and perspectives and a few things I'll just pick up on there. Somebody asked a question about can somebody ask for a meter? Yeah, of course, we've had that in place for a long, long time and that's installed free of charge as well, so that is available. Actually, we saw a huge surge in people asking for a meter about a year ago, when Southern's waste water charges went up because as one of the other people said, when you have a water meter, your waste water charge is based on a percentage of how much water that you use, it's based on the same meter reading basically and there'd been very large increases in sewerage charges.

In terms of economic leverage with our customers, to help save money, then if you use less water, then that usually helps. But we've calculated that for every £1 saving on your water supply that you might make, you can save another £4, so £5 saving in total and the main areas where you can save are firstly, on your waste water bill as I've said because it's based on the same meter readings and secondly, on your energy bill as well because if you're using less water, you're usually using less energy to heat a proportion of that water as well and energy as we know, is quite an expensive commodity.

Because our water is very, very cheap, our charges are the lowest in the country, they're about half of the average for the industry, just to scale that. People are not really that interested to work hard with their meter, to use less water, to save what will at the end of the day, be a relatively small amount of money with an average bill of you know, £150, £160 a year.

But what we do have to do here, with this smart metering programme and we're about to start to rollout our communication campaign, at a large scale, is to actually explain to people that the reasons why we need to do this is to make sure there's enough water available for future generations, to make sure that there's enough water left within the natural environment in this area, where we have many beautiful chalk streams particularly.

The chalk streams get their water from the same place as where we get our water from, from that chalk reservoir underground, so in order to make sure there's water available for the future and that we can cope with the pressures of climate change, we're seeing huge impacts in our industry with climate change, and to make sure that new customers can have a water supply as well, we've got to do all of these things just to make sure that the future is secure for our children, and our children's children.

So it is a really critical area for us and it includes all of the work we do on leakage reduction and obviously, trying to give people smart meters so they can see what water they're using and find ways to use it more effectively, it's a really, really important part of what we're doing nowadays.

And we are actually planning to talk to our regulator, OFWAT, about accelerating our smart metering programme, we would ideally want to do it more quickly than we're planning at the moment but that's a conversation we need to have with our economic regulator.

I think those were the main points that came up but I think the main takeaway, please tell all of your friends that if they get a meter, it'll save them a bit on their water and it will save them a lot on their wastewater. It's a really important message.

**TMcK Facilitator:** That's great, so I'll hand over to Rhodri in a second, he's got some final remarks to put across but just from my perspective, a huge thank you to everyone for taking part in this session, it's been hugely insightful and there's been some fantastic actions we've created and we've noted throughout.

And just for everyone's awareness, we've got another session happening in October, another Accountability Session and our surveys and our communities are live and obviously, the way that you interact on them as customers has been really fantastic and we just want to make sure that that continues because I think, we can really build up ahead of steam and drive really positive change through communications and through different actions.

So if I could hand over to Rhodri, he's got a finishing spiel and then we can take it from there.

**CCW Chair:** Thank you, Nicky, I won't keep you much longer. Just to explain, we've obviously covered a lot of important themes and agreed, you've seen the notes that Nicky has been preparing, so in terms of next steps, a full transcript of the session will be published on the CCW website within five working days. Before it's published, a draft will be shared with all of you, so you can review it and raise any concerns relating to any personal comments or something that you're not happy with, and then a plain English summary will be published within 10 working days.

And then, you know, obviously there are things there that we'd like to hear back from Portsmouth Water about and they have 28 days in which to do that, and you as members of the panel will be able to reflect on that and give your view as to whether you think that plan if you like, the actions that are noted, accurately reflects what was agreed and we at CCW will monitor progress and report on delivery. The process as I said at the beginning, is designed to ensure transparency, accountability and follow-through, that's very important, not just a discussion and then it sort of disappears into the ether.

So that's it from me, can I thank you all very much indeed for the time and effort and thought that you've put into this, and to thank Bob and members of his team from Portsmouth Water for the way in which they've dealt and answered your questions this evening, we're very grateful to you for engaging with us in order to make this possible.

So thank you all for your time, honesty that you brought to the session and I think that's what your input, as members of this panel, is what gives this process credibility and purpose, so thank you very much for joining us, and I look forward to another session later in the year. Thank you very much and goodnight, all.

**Bob Taylor:** Thank you all very much.

[CLOSE]

# CCW

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