



## Quarterly Subgroup Chairs Meeting

26 February 2025 14:00-15:30

### Attendees:

**Members:** Chair – Fallon Wilkinson (FW), Gerard Lyden (GL), Matt Rix (MRI), Mary Porter-Chorley (MPC), Lissa Balmer (LB), Lois Gill (LG), David Morris (DM), James Lancaster (JL) Oli Shelley (OS), Mike Rathbone.

**Secretariat:** Sam Mawby

Agenda Item	Meeting Minutes
<b>1. Welcome and Apologies</b>	FW welcomed everyone to the meeting.  Apologies were received from Matt Rix (Drought) and Neil Presland (Access)
<b>2. Minutes</b>	The minutes from the meeting on 2 October 2024 had been agreed ex-committee and published.
<b>3. Actions</b>	<p><b>(01_01)</b> Refine the group’s purpose to reflect the discussion – on agenda (to close).</p> <p><b>(01_02)</b> Members observed that MOSL may be looking to undertake work relating to whether Trading Parties aligned to Good Practice Guides. SM took an action to check with the MOSL team and feedback to the Steering Group – SM confirmed that MOSL do not have plans to audit Trading Party alignment Good Practice Guides (to close). The Steering Group will look at completing the initial review of wholesalers undertaken by FW and publish on the RWG webpage. The next phase of this work could look at reviewing where retailers aligned to the various guides.</p> <p><b>(01_03)</b> Doodle polls to be circulated to set up the next meetings – completed. Meetings have been put in diaries for 2025.</p>
<b>4. Review of Meeting Purpose</b>	Members were reminded of the current purpose of the Sub-group Chairs meeting as outlined in the RWG Governance Framework:  <b>‘To provide updates on sub-group activities and ensure alignment between groups.’</b>

	<p>Members considered the following proposed changes to the purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide updates on sub-group activities (a quarterly report will be submitted highlighting key activities/impact)</li> <li>• To ensure alignment between groups and with the overall strategic direction of the RWG.</li> <li>• To provide feedback/input on RWG activities as needed.</li> </ul> <p>Noted the importance of aligning the work of the various sub-groups, reviewing whether the appropriate groups were in place and to highlight whether there were any gaps/additional work that may be needed.</p> <p>Members agreed to have a standing item at each Sub-group Chairs meeting to consider potential new activity/reflect on whether the current RWG activity met the needs of the market to inform RWG Steering Group discussions.</p> <p>The members agreed the revised purpose for inclusion in the RWG Governance Framework.</p>
<p><b>5. Co-Chairs Update</b></p>	<p><b>Co-Chairs Updates:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strategic Panel Roadmap</b> – following the RWG in-person meeting in December, and discussion with JL and OS, it is clear that there is a role for the Water Efficiency and Tariffs sub-groups in the delivery of the <a href="#">roadmap</a>, particularly in relation to the Wholesaler 1 and 2 objectives. JL added that the elements that relate to the Tariffs group already feature in the work plan for the sub-group. Noted that the Water Efficiency sub-group would review whether there were additional areas of focus to the work already in progress.</li> <li>• <b>Future Focus:</b> Skip codes had been identified as a potential area of RWG focus. An email to gauge interest will be circulated to the RWG membership in the next few weeks.</li> </ul> <p>A proposal for a Bilaterals sub-group was considered at the last Steering Group meeting in light of the anticipated closure of the MOSL Bilaterals programme. A Trading Party Chair has now been identified to lead a sub-group and the Steering Group will make a final decision on whether the sub-group goes ahead in March.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Governance Framework:</b> The framework is in the process of being updated to better align</li> </ul>

	<p>with working practice and to reflect the addition of MOSL support. An updated framework will be circulated to RWG for feedback in the next few months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quarterly updates:</b> Discussed the challenges of gathering quarterly data for each sub-group in order to get a good overview of activity.</li> </ul> <p>Members committed to either submitting a report via email using the agreed template or to have a meeting with SM to gather the information needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>RWG In-person</b> 24 June 2025, Park Plaza Hotel, Leeds. All sub-group Chairs were encouraged to attend.</li> </ul> <p>Potential agenda items were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Tariffs</b> - customer reaction to price rises in terms of behaviour change.</li> <li>○ <b>Smart Meter Roll Out</b> – initial impact of good practice guide and whether further work was needed.</li> <li>○ Highlight the activity of any new groups.</li> </ul> <p>GL expressed the RWG’s thanks to MR for his time and commitment in leading the RWG as Wholesaler Chair and wished him well in his new role.</p> <p>FW and GL highlighted the Retailer and Wholesaler Vice-Chair vacancies.</p>
<p><b>6. Subgroup Updates</b></p>	<p><b>Sub-group updates:</b> A highlight level overview in table format was presented which will help to inform Steering Group discussions.</p> <p><b>Access:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group had been on pause for a variety of reasons but is now looking to conclude its work.</li> <li>• Sub-group meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> March to review draft good practice guide ahead of consulting with Trading Parties in Q1. <b>02_01</b> – SM to check that consultation slot still held and liaise with Access Chair.</li> </ul> <p><b>Complaints/Customer Service:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LW noted that the sub-group had been in existence for some years and had developed a customer service good practice guide which is reviewed regularly.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group are due to meet in March and will have a continued focus on the F7 process and the challenges that Trading Parties are having in this area.</li> <li>• Also gathering feedback from the sub-group regarding CCW's request to see drafts of Trading Party strategies for financial vulnerability to understand whether this is something that RWG want/need to be involved in.</li> <li>• Membership of the group is due to be refreshed to ensure full engagement with the work.</li> </ul> <p><b>Policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DM advised that the sub-group had paused its work until the implementation of the Bilateral Hub update anticipated for March.</li> </ul> <p><b>Customer Contact Details:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GL advised that the sub-group had met face to face in January to workshop options for sharing customer contact details in terms of what may or may not be mandated.</li> <li>• The sub-group are currently working on an RFI to inform its work which will be circulated in April.</li> <li>• Potential to submit a MIF bid but noted that it had been challenging for sub-group members to find the time to develop a proposal.</li> </ul> <p><b>Eligibility:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MR outlined that the group had been working on a draft good practice guide which would look at how de-registration should be handled in a variety of different eligibility situations. The draft is due to go out for consultation in April.</li> <li>• In the longer term the sub-group are looking to focus on temporary building supplies.</li> </ul> <p><b>Planned and Unplanned Events:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MPC advised that the recent sub-group meetings had needed to be rescheduled due to diary clashes which had slowed progress a little.</li> <li>• Sub-group will next meet on 13th March to finalise the Planned and Unplanned Events good practice guides for approval by the RWG Steering Group.</li> <li>• The sub-group will also be considering whether there is scope to raise a code change in relation to the notification template to ensure that it is workable for Trading Parties in practice.</li> <li>• Lauren Walsh (Wave Utilities) will be taking the Chair role on temporarily as MPC takes a leave of absence.</li> </ul>
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GL noted the potential overlap between the sub-group and the Customer Contact Details sub-group in relation to sensitive customers.

Noted that Ofwat are progressing a code change to propose an updated definition of sensitive customers:

“A vulnerable customer is a Non-Household Customer who, due to the personal circumstances of a key individual associated with the customer, or the business circumstances of the customer, may require additional provisions beyond those typically provided to a NHH customer in order to access an inclusive service. The failure to provide such inclusive service could result in detriment to the performance of the business or organisation, as well as harm to the health, wellbeing, or finances of key individuals associated with the customer.”

**Settlement:**

- FW advised that the sub-group was on pause as the code change [CPW152](#) progresses. The sub-group have met to discuss and feedback on the consultation that forms part of the code change process.
- The code change is scheduled to go to the June Code Change Committee for recommendation. At this point the sub-group will reconvene to look at a good practice guide to complement the code change, if approved.

**Smart Meter Roll Out:**

- LG highlighted that the sub-group is currently very active.
- Consultation on standardised approach to customer communications ran from 28 Jan to 18 Feb (19 responses received).
- Sub-group currently in the process of reviewing the consultation responses with the aim to produce a good practice guide for publication at the end of March.
- Additional areas of focus:
  - Looking to kick start a national information hub website which gained strong support from Trading Parties.
  - Work through highlighted exceptions.
- Ofwat has indicated it is interested in the sub-group’s work and may look to use it to inform guidance for domestic households.
- LG advised that she would be looking to step away from the sub-group in the near future and was working to identify a successor.

**Tariffs:**

- JL advised that the sub-group had recently published a good practice guide looking at Metered Tariff Structures which suggests a common structure for all metered tariffs across water, wastewater and trade effluent for the industry ready for the 2026-27 cycle. This guide effectively covered 80-85% of spids in the market and is a significant milestone for the group. The sub-group will continue its work in this area with a view to achieving whole industry alignment by the end of AMP8. This work will assist wholesalers to mitigate bill shock.
- An RFI looking at business assessed and rateable value charges is due to be published on 24<sup>th</sup> March. This would cover most of the remaining 15-20% of the spids in the market.
- The Trade Effluent workstream carried out an RFI last summer and is collating the results with a view to publishing findings in the near future. The next steps will be to draft a good practice guide for consultation, anticipated in Q2 2025.
- The sub-group circulated a request in early February via email to wholesalers to publish information for retailers to use with customers regarding price rises in 2025-26 as soon as possible.
- Potential future focus – possible areas flagged recently have been more specific to retailer charges which is really outside of the scope of the sub-group e.g. agreeing a common date by which all retailers should publish charges. FW commented that this had been raised at UKWRC, but in light of competition concerns had not been progressed.

**Water Efficiency:**

- Anticipated outputs for the sub-group relate to the [Water Efficiency road map](#) that the group had developed.
- Key focus is a research project which will look at incentives in relation to Water Efficiency. The Strategic Panel awarded funding of £80K for the project in February. Next steps are to draft a tender document in order to identify an organisation to undertake the research. The timescales for the work are demanding but the group is hoping to start seeing outputs by the end Q2.
- A subset of the group is looking at standardising an approach for calculating water efficiency savings.
- The sub-group agreed to take forward an action to create a central space for the wholesaler schemes for incentives and publishing these centrally on the RWG webpage.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A consultation for finalising the draft guidance on non-household water efficiency collaboration is scheduled for the end of April.</li> </ul> <p><b>Drought:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MR needs to step back from Chair role temporarily. GL is working to identify an alternative Chair or, if that is not possible, to put the work of the group on pause.</li> </ul>
<b>7. RWG Document Register</b>	<p>SM highlighted that work was underway to establish a document register and shared a snapshot of the proposed format.</p> <p>The register would be used to help ensure that key RWG documents were regularly reviewed with identified owners.</p> <p>The register will be circulated to the sub-group Chairs in the near future for feedback.</p>
<b>8. AOB</b>	<p>SM made the members aware that the RWG webpage updates were nearing completion and would share a link to the page when completed. Feedback on the format was welcomed.</p>
<b>9. Date of Next Meeting</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> May 1.30pm-3.00pm

**Actions from Meeting:**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Timeframe for Completion</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>02_01</b> – SM to check that consultation slot still held and liaise with Access Chair.</li> </ul>		