

Friday 27 April

## **Freeze/thaw review – request for further communications information: Dee Valley Water**

Dear Carys,

This letter and the attached data sheets provide our response to your request (of 24 April 2018) for further information on how we proactively engaged with our customers before, during and after the freeze/thaw period.

Our full communications response was outlined in Section D of our submission on April 26. We have used our best endeavours to complete the Ofwat communications data table in full for the 4 week period, but there are some data lines where the information is not available or hasn't been able to be analysed in time within the deadline.

We were pleased that our customers in the Dee Valley area were relatively unaffected by the freeze/thaw period. While our area experienced significant temperature changes over the freeze/thaw period, those changes were less rapid than experienced in some other parts of the UK, and the circumstances that arose did not result in our incident trigger levels being reached. Given this, we operated on a business as usual basis throughout, in line with our established winter preparedness plans.

We communicated proactively with our customers on two occasions with the aim of encouraging preventative actions. We issued a press release on 1 March asking customers to prepare for the cold weather, and specifically to lag their pipes. This was issued as advice on the Dee Valley website and as a proactive press release to all the media in the Dee Valley area. We issued a second proactive press release on the afternoon of Sunday 4 March to all of the local media in the Dee Valley region asking customers to report leaks and telling them how to report leaks to us.

Had an incident been triggered, we would have responded in line with our incident management plans and procedures, and mobilised a 24/7 communications team to allow for effective proactive and reactive engagement with our customers and with wider stakeholders. In practice, though, as the weather was less severe in the Dee Valley area than in some other parts of the UK, we were able to operate on a business as usual basis throughout. That meant we focused on responding to any customer queries and we targeted our proactive communications on the areas that may have been impacted. As a result, we sent a

total of 1266 proactive SMS and voice messages to customers in affected areas (between March 2 and March 9).

Yours sincerely,

**Kathryn Greenwood**  
**Head of Communications**