

## **Note of PR24 collaborative customer research steering group meeting**

**14 March 2022**

### **1. Actions from last meeting**

The steering group(s)' action log was shared with the meeting papers and key actions outlined at the meeting. All actions are complete or ongoing.

### **2. ODI rates research: Overview of design and analysis methodology**

Accent and PJM Economics set out further detail on the proposed methodology for the ODI rates research and indicated that this session builds on the information that has previously been shared with companies in the stage 1 report (the presentation was shared ahead of the meeting). They indicated that the design of the research would be based on two exercises; compensation and impact assessment. The strengths of this approach were outlined to attendees.

The group discussed whether the presentation of timing of incidents within research materials may affect the research results.

**Action:** Ofwat/CCW/Accent/PJM will do further work with companies, and other experts in the sector to understand what an 'average incident' would be so that this can be tested.

Steering group members also asked whether the work had been peer reviewed and PJM confirmed that this had been done and the report received positive feedback.

**Action:** Ofwat/CCW to share peer reviews with the steering group as soon as possible.

Steering group members also raised questions about sample weighting at company level, avoiding the denominator effect and ensuring that vulnerable customers are captured in the sample, which were responded to in the meeting.

### **3. ODI rates research: Cognitive interviews overview**

Accent provided feedback to the group in relation to the cognitive interviews pilot (the presentation was shared ahead of the meeting). The cognitive testing has been completed to ensure that the survey could be understood by participants, the language was clear and that the visuals were of high quality. In total 18 interviews took place split across households, non-bill payers and non-household properties.

Overall results showed that the survey was easy to complete, suitable length and that participants understood why the research was being done.

Minor changes to text and images to reflect comments made in the cognitive interviews have been circulated to steering group members.

### **4. Anonymisation, dataset and other issues raised by companies**

Ofwat presented company feedback to the questionnaire, collaborative agreement and ITT for the ODI rates research (the presentation for agenda items 4 and 5 was shared ahead of the meeting). Ofwat explained the main changes to the documents as a result of the

comments from companies following emails between Ofwat and companies. The main discussion focussed on;

- Anonymisation
- Removal of tenure on the questionnaire
- Incentive payments
- The project steering group
- Setting up a mapping task and finish group

Within this session, there was a discussion surrounding how vulnerability would be mapped and companies suggested reviewing the joint energy characteristics (PSR). Andy Clowes subsequently forwarded related information to CCW/Ofwat.

**Action:** CCW/Ofwat to review the joint energy characteristics (PSR) to determine if this can be applied to the ODI rates research.

[Accent and PJM Economics left the meeting here]

## **5. ODI rates research fieldwork - tender process, timescales and next steps**

Ofwat outlined that having a company representative on the evaluation panel for the ODI rates research tenders would be difficult in practice as there is a constrained timetable. However, Ofwat and CCW intend to be as transparent about the process with steering group members as possible.

Ofwat will circulate the revised ITT, Collaboration agreement, Order form and questionnaire for the ODI rates research fieldwork to companies after this meeting.

**Action:** Companies to respond to the revised documents by lunch time on Wednesday, 16 March, highlighting any red flags.

Within the meeting companies also asked when they would be likely to get the modelling results from the research.

**Action:** Ofwat to consider when modelling results from the ODI rates fieldwork will be made available to companies.

## **6. Next steps**

Ofwat and CCW outlined the key next steps for the collaborative research approach including beginning work on the thinking around acceptability and affordability testing.

The next steering group meeting will be on 11 April 2022.

Ofwat and CCW also took this opportunity to thank companies for all of their input to date and recognised that all parties in the collaborative research are working to very short deadlines.