



Customer Reference Group meeting

Friday 15 October, 2pm – 4pm, Microsoft Teams

Attendees

Customer Reference Group members: Adam Tyson, Adrian Terranova, David Langmore, Diane Wilkinson, Fatima Ahsan, Jared Slater, Mary Aldred, Robert Gaulton

Gippsland Water:

Therese Ryan, Chair of the Board
Sarah Cumming, Managing Director
Melissa Thek, General Manager Business Transformation
Nicolas Moss, General Manager Assets
Danny McDonald, Manager Corporate Affairs
Katrina Coulson, Senior Communications and Engagement Lead
Celeste Briggs, Communications and Engagement Advisor

Apologies

Michael Crane, General Manager People and Customer

Agenda items

- Welcome and introductions - All
- Urban Water Strategy overview – Nicolas Moss
- Price Submission overview – Mel Thek
- Roles and responsibilities of the CRG – Danny McDonald
- Price Submission and Urban Water Strategy engagement strategy and insights from our customers so far – Katrina Coulson
- Next steps – Danny McDonald & Katrina Coulson

Meeting summary

Following welcome and introductions, the group received presentations on Gippsland Water's Price Submission, Urban Water Strategy and associated customer engagement programs, expressing confidence in the engagement work undertaken to date.

Feedback and input was sought from members, with discussion focusing on the need to ensure engagement activities are accessible to all members of the community - including people living with a disability - and keeping the community up to date with the outcome of engagement activities.

Members agreed to give further consideration to other potential engagement program adjustments and to provide any feedback they may have to the Communications and Engagement team prior to the next meeting.



Safety and wellbeing



Customer focussed



Innovation



Accountability



Collaboration



Integrity and respect

The group discussed the issue of price and affordability, with members expressing interest in developing a deeper understanding of the costs associated with delivering water and wastewater services; and how Gippsland Water's tariffs compare with water corporations around the state.

The conversation also covered tariff structure – including the fixed and variable components – as well as debt; the need for more community education about these topics and the challenges associated with achieving the right balance between prices and service costs.

The group had a preliminary discussion about future demand modelling and forecasting, with members expressing interest in receiving further information on this topic. The need to achieve an appropriate level of risk between customers and the organisation was also discussed.

Gippsland Water agreed to provide further information on all of these topics both prior to and at the next meeting, by way of pre-reading material and presentations.

The meeting concluded with a discussion about ways in which the group could potentially assess and provide assurance to the Board and Executive on (a) the suitability of the engagement approach, and (b) how well the engagement insights will be used to shape the Price Submission, and a brief discussion regarding the process for selecting a Chair prior to the next meeting.

Next Meeting

December 2021 (date TBC).

