

### Universal Metering Programme

Contract No: C-03691

ITT December 2020

## Customer Service

### 1) Describe how you will support AW in improving its OFWAT customer metric (CMEX)

- a) Initiatives to improve AW's CMEX score
- b) Process for closing out 98% of customer complaints in 2 days
- c) Monitoring and managing their own CMEX performance

Include within your response **3 examples** where similar services have been delivered and how success was achieved.



## Introduction

We know Affinity Water has a clear target to achieve 80% metering penetration in AMP7, with a focus on the central region and in particular the communities within the Pinn and Wey WRZs. A Universal Metering Programme is always a demanding operation, especially for internal fits. Therefore, we know that a robust customer journey aligned with your Customer Experience Policy will be essential for you to meet your Per Capita Consumption commitments, while achieving a strong C-MeX/Nett Promotor Score.

We understand the elements and drivers of C-MeX, and our approach is designed to align to your strategy and agreed customer journey. Question 8 in Ofwat's guidance on C-MeX is water specific – we will influence a positive customer experience through a 'right first time' approach, a high quality service and proactive communications. We will deliver a co-created approach to drive customer excellence. This will focus on communications, quality and commitment – underpinned by our award-winning Every Customer Counts (ECC) strategy and community-specific customer-led plan.

EVERY  
CUSTOMER  
COUNTS

## Initiatives to improve Affinity Water's C-MeX score

We know that the C-MeX process is driven by two questionnaires; firstly (CSS-CSAT) with customers who have made direct contact with Affinity Water and secondly, customers who use water in your region. Our approach will consider what would drive a negative or positive response to the survey questions and what we can influence. This includes: 1. Proactive/timely communications relating to what is happening and when in their community, street and household – see link below for an example of a customer communication (to be used on UMP) regarding Covid-safe measures whilst undertaking internal meter installations:

<https://affinity-water.wistia.com/medias/k5ax83bw85>

2. When appointments are made, honour that commitment – especially when customers may have to wait-in to give access (tracking technology available for customers – 'Where's my Engineer?' app) 3. Getting the internal installations 'right first time' (e.g. using stop tap adaptors) and ensuring no future issues such as leaking joints (bring CRIMP innovation/technology to jointing), 4. Correctly proved meters – Bliker technology (takes accurate photographs of meters first time), 5. Ensure minimum interruption of supply, 6. Returning supply when promised, 7. Ensuring vulnerable customers have water/support during installation, 8. Providing support and call back to customer queries, 9 Resolving issues at that visit, and 10. Swiftly resolving complaints/expressions of dissatisfaction.

With regards to the second survey (CES-CSAT), these customers may live in the community/road where we are operating and be affected by or form an opinion of MUS/Affinity Water by the way we conduct ourselves. Therefore, we will undertake proactive communications, clear site information boards, clean and tidy sites, courteous staff, keep access open, will not impact the environment from spills and dust, and will leave the site as we found it.

We will improve your C-MeX score on a number of levels:

- ▶ Operational – delivery
- ▶ Corporate – ECC strategy and training
- ▶ Systems – MUS work management and reporting systems (OptiMUS/Oracle/Power BI)

In 2019, we worked with the Institute of Customer Service to benchmark our performance against other leading companies – this led to the development of our Every

Customer Counts (ECC) strategy (**Appendix Customer Q1A**). ECC is fully aligned to the needs of regulatory clients and designed to deliver consistent, high-levels of customer experience. It provides tangible tools and benefits to proactively support/influence our clients' overall customer satisfaction/perception by delivering a superior and consistent customer experience. ECC has been adopted by Yorkshire Water, and we are working with clients such as Severn Trent, Affinity Water and United Utilities to integrate it into their working practices.

We support our contracts with the latest in best practise and guidance, together with key initiatives such as ECC Brilliant Basics customer training (see **Appendix Customer Q1B**), WOW! Awards and our TrainWithUs competency management system. Where required, we support this with behavioural training, especially where there has been a TUPE transfer.

This is backed up by agile and flexible systems such as Oracle Cloud and our management system, OptiMUS, which will ensure efficient workflow and customer training /skills support. We will work together with you to ensure key messages relating to your customer strategy/targets are incorporated into the customer service and staff inductions/training. Our approach also takes into account the new C-MeX reporting requirements and how our actions impact C-MeX results, as well as where we impact customers/communities while undertaking the works.

We recognise that the proposed C-MeX measures will require a significant focus on customer service and that keeping customers informed and a 'right first time' approach is key to customer satisfaction. We are absolutely focused on helping Affinity Water reach your customer service goals and to serve your communities and build a lasting water legacy. We will do our part to maximise the C-MeX score and to improve Affinity Water's position on the leader board – we believe our experience, skill, people and approach to customer service will help drive Affinity Water to achieve service excellence.

We will continue to do all we can to support Affinity Water in becoming the most trusted and community focussed water company and the number one choice for customers. Our proposals to support you include:

- ▶ We will have a proactive role in Affinity Water's customer steering groups and communication cells
- ▶ EUSR Customer Training and Accreditation for all operational resources
- ▶ Every Customer Counts and Brilliant Basics training
- ▶ WOW! Awards – monthly recognition programme that rewards positive behaviours and good feedback / commendations, throughout entire workforce.
- ▶ We will fully resolve customer contacts the same day
- ▶ Establishing key touch points and removing had-offs (in collaboration with Affinity Water) so customers do not have to call back.
- ▶ Introducing a customer focused priority matrix jointly with Affinity Water, for reinstatement. This priority mechanism will provide maximum efficiency and customer satisfaction through 3 tiers of priority, P1 – first pass, P-2 within the first 24 hours, P3 by the notice end date/within two days
- ▶ 'Right first time' – reducing repeat visits which will have an immediate positive impact on current C-MeX score and strengthen the customer experience journey, e.g. crimping technology on internal fits instead of compression joints to mitigate future leaks.
- ▶ Customer journey and communication improvements

- ▶ linked to improving C-MeX scores, e.g. reducing customers need to contact (e.g. 'Where's My Engineer?' app for customers to track where our engineer is in relation to their appointment).
- ▶ Efficient and effective proving of supply utilising technology, such as an intelligent meter readout assistant which will mitigate future billing issues, which are a big cause of negative C-MeX feedback.
- ▶ Closure for 98%+ complaints in 2-days (see below).

## Closing out complaints

Key to our approach to closing out complaints is to minimise complaints in the first place. A low level of complaints is easier to manage and swiftly resolve within two days. This will be achieved by our team improving customer understanding by proactively liaising and working with customers and stakeholders to prevent incoming contact. We provide them with, for example:

- ▶ Dedicated point of contact/case manager
- ▶ Pre/post installation information to ensure customer issues are addressed and/or mitigated
- ▶ Project information
- ▶ Regular progress updates
- ▶ Completion dates.

Our process for ensuring the two-day resolution is:

- ▶ All complaints will be logged (on Maximo) and acknowledged upon receipt. A daily log of complaints will be produced for action and circulated daily to our Contract Director, Will Browning, Framework Manager, Duncan Groombridge, and our Performance Manager.
- ▶ Our Customer Service Team (led by Mandy Mikiel) will investigate the complaint and endeavour to close out on initial contact. Complaint resolution details will be added to the complaints log and closed out. A daily log of resolutions will be sent to our Framework Manager and Performance Manager, and a weekly log sent to our Contract Director.
- ▶ Jeopardy management to notify the team of forward looking deadlines.
- ▶ For complaints requiring further investigation/input:
  - We will provide customers with initial response
  - We will provide customers with the name and contact details of the customer team member dealing with their complaint, who will provide them with a detailed response in a timely manner
  - We will keep them informed of progress
  - Close the loop with customer and log resolution
- ▶ If the customer is not fully satisfied, they can ask for their complaint to be raised for a formal review by our Contract Director
- ▶ Internal lessons learnt process reviewed weekly, incl. review of complaints not resolved within two days.
- ▶ A performance report will be sent to you monthly. Lessons learnt and action plans will be agreed with you to ensure continual improvement.
- ▶ Lessons learnt from introduction of technology and initiatives on other metering contracts will be offered.

## Monitoring and managing our own C-MeX performance

MUS will manage processes and data efficiently, and work on a proactive basis with all installs having an immediate /current action status. Our systems will log and jeopardy manage appointments, calls, installs. We will analyse the data around appointments issues, total calls, complaints,

escalations, and unresolved complaints over two days. Also, successful works delivery will be reported, such as jobs delivered on time, jobs requiring reinstatement, clearing sites and community access. Any issue will have a case manager who will ensure resolution and not hand it off, taking responsibility for a successful customer experience. As per our MIPS2 contact approach, in our contract leadership meetings, non-conformances and corrective management actions over the last period will be discussed. The action report log will be reviewed for trends and to also ensure the actions placed remain effective. We have provided a Corrective Management Action Log as **Appendix Customer Q1C**, which contains an example of a customer complaint that we dealt with effectively, recording the actions and key stages to close these out.

On our current MIPS2 contract, we measure customer contacts and monitor the past three months' trends. We receive a weekly customer contacts report from Affinity Water, from we extract data to produce a report of the contact and reasons the contact were made. This can be shown within the monthly KPI report provided to Affinity Water – see **Appendix Customer Q1D (page 7)**.

## 3 contract examples

### Thames Water Smart Metering

As part of the mobilisation of our Thames Water Smart Metering contract, we set up a bespoke call centre on our main site – with a primary aim to book appointments, answer queries and handle first contact complaints from customers. The customer service agents are responsible for accurately recording information on every customer interaction, which is used for the regulatory data provided to Ofwat. Success has been achieved by introducing key initiatives and technology such as 'Where's my Engineer?', OptiMUS. We also introduced WOW! Awards in May 2017 and won 'Best Newcomer' at the 2017 WOW! Awards. This has been a huge success – we now regularly receive over 120 customer commendations every month, 250 in November 2020; a measurable indicator of the high levels of customer service our operatives are providing.

### Yorkshire Water - Water Services Agreement

MUS is the single provider of water network reactive repair and maintenance works for Yorkshire Water, including water main/services repairs and connections, valve maintenance, fire hydrants, street furniture, tankering, and circa **70,000 domestic meter options and replacements**. All performance measures are exceeded and we have significantly contributed to Yorkshire Water's C-MeX improvement to upper quartile position. For example – right first time increase to completion rate from average of 81.9% in 2019 to 92.3% in Sept 2020. Success has been achieved through implementing ECC and WOW! Award initiatives – over 5,000 customer nominations received.

### Affinity Water – MIPS2 Developer Services

We have brought operational efficiency and a 'right first time' culture to our current Affinity Water contract. Mandy Mikiel, our Customer Liaison Manager, supports the team to meet targets and performance measures and achieve continuous high standards to achieve success – customer service and delivery performance is at an upper quartile performance level on the contract. This is currently reported to Affinity Water on a monthly basis – see **Appendix Customer Q1D (page 7)** for example KPI table.

On this contract, we have recently played a key part in helping Affinity Water land at the top of the Water UK league table on levels of service at **99.92%**.